

COULD A TEMPORARY/CONTRACT JOB BE A WISE CAREER MOVE?

Summary: Have you ever thought about taking a "contractually-based" position with an employer? Find out if you should in this article.



Question: A potential financial-industry employer asked me to think about a "contractually based position with an eye toward something more permanent" instead of full employment. Is this normal these days? What should I be concerned with?

Answer: While the suggestion of an initial contract offer isn't unusual, it is in your best interest to investigate and understand the reason for the arrangement in this case. Is this the typical sign-on offer with the company? What is the percentage of contractors who are hired on—and after how long? Don't rely solely on the interviewer's responses; ask to speak with current employees, and attempt to locate a former employee, if possible.

Besides the obvious absence of certain benefits, check on health care and vacation options.

Most people prefer full employment, although a contract position is one way to get a foot in the door and prove your value. If you feel strongly about full-time employment, try to negotiate for full employment, as long as you determine in your own mind ahead of time both your desired and final walk-away positions.

If you decide this is a company you would like to learn from and gain experience, then go for it and use it as a building-block experience. Even if it ends up being time-limited, strong training and meaningful experience with an employer of choice could provide a boost to your career.

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