

Temping and Contracting

ADVERTISING FEATURE



Happy birthday: At the 30-year celebrations were (from left) Annette Fitzpatrick, Srishti Narayan, Lynley Stanford, Sina Purdie and Kate Dickenson.

In search of the best recruits

Lynley Stanford shares the secrets of a 30-year career in the recruitment industry.

CHOOSING a recruitment company – whether you are an employer or someone looking for a new challenge – is almost as important as the job itself.

The choices range from multinational companies through to boutique agencies, each of which have their different strengths.

As someone who has worked in the industry for 30 years, Lynley Stanford, manager of Stanford Recruitment, believes there is no substitute for experience. This has resulted in the firm's catchphrase "excellence through experience".

With four consultants, Stanford falls into the boutique category, and Ms Stanford believes the reason the firm has succeeded for so long is an "unswerving focus on producing recruitment solutions that work,

rather than selling a solution that may or may not work for the sake of writing the business".

She says she has seen many changes in the way companies do business over the years, including the biggest change of all – the introduction of computerisation and the Internet, meaning instant communication and, subsequently, an expectation of instant results.

"We're passionate about what we do, who we work with and for. We work equally for our clients and candidates. We love our work and take it seriously; we do it with honesty and with good humour. It's not about 'putting bums on seats'. We'd rather say goodbye to a piece of work than fill it badly."

Another reason Ms Stanford believes the company has been so successful for so long is in its own recruitment.

"We hire the best consultants – in fact, we usually train people who want to work in this area. The people we work with are intelligent, focused on people and business solutions and work well in a team."

She says the fact the company is a boutique agency enables the team to be flexible and provide its clients with a personalised service.

"We tailor our processes to handle a very wide range of recruiting assignments across a huge range of industries. This gives us enormous variety in our work," Ms Stanford says.

Some of the client areas in which Stanford operates include law, advertising, accounting, oil, IT, insurance, food, primary sector, associations, industry-good organisations, manufacturing, importing and Government.

"Government has become our biggest 'group' of clients – not surprisingly given Wellington is the capital," Ms Stanford says. "And Government organisations offer some amazing opportunities for people to grow. Not everyone suits a government agency, but those that do tend to do very well."

Ms Stanford says the company sees its role as bringing together people and companies that offer each other real value.

"A company wants a role managed; something achieved. An individual wants to develop; be worthwhile, to work with teams and individuals they fit in with comfortably and to earn fairly. We also pride ourselves on our ability to think outside the square, providing clients and candidates with opportunities that they might not have thought of before."

It is in this area that temping and contracting fits.

"Temping and contracting has been our biggest area of growth over the past five years. It matches the upsurge in project work where companies hire people with specific skills to achieve a set goal," Ms Stanford says.

"The New Zealand economy has been soaring for many years now and we simply do not have enough trained workers to fill all the gaps as a population. Consequently, we take advantage of those wonderful travellers who arrive on our shores wanting to soak up life in New Zealand and to stop and spend time living and working in our capital

city. Globalisation makes it easier for people to fit in with our way of working reasonably quickly."

To be a good temp, Ms Stanford says, requires confidence, an ability to network quickly, to be able to "read" a business and fit into its culture.

The advantages for a temp include flexibility, and opportunity to expand on skills, and exposure to a wider range of businesses.

She points out hiring staff can be an expensive exercise, both time and money-wise, and hiring temporary staff or contractors lessens much of this.

"People are really busy and there seems to be less and less time available in the normal working day, so using our services and our people to fill a gap, for a short or long-term contract, is cost-effective and a time-conserving exercise," Ms Stanford says.

"Our business is all about people. We enjoy what we do. We have a lot of laughs. But if it doesn't go right, someone gets hurt. So while we have fun, we're always focused."

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