

# Using Temp-to-Hire to Reduce Pharmacy Technician Turnover

---

While the economy is on the mend, unemployment is still high. Though this may seem like an employer's dream labor market, the current labor surplus makes hiring new employees challenging in different ways. HR Departments are flooded with resumes from people who have spent months out of work, applicants who often are using a shotgun approach to job-seeking: sending out resumes to anyone and everyone who is advertising a position that might be remotely relevant. The process of hiring a new employee requires a huge investment of time for interviewing, forming a competitive offer, and closing a candidate. It is not difficult to imagine how much this investment is compounded when you are dealing with constant employee turnover.

If you have experienced high turnover in your organization, you know the *one thing* that would make all your hiring decisions a breeze—but even the best interviews can't give you—is **first-hand experience** of a candidate's work ethic and performance.

There is a way to gain this valuable information. And staffing firms have used it in many industries for years. It's called **temp-to-hire** and very simply boils down to "try before you buy."

For years, the customer service, office/clerical, and accounting sectors have used this method to bring in new employees. It gives them a trial period, often 90 days to six months, to evaluate a person's performance on the job before officially offering the candidate a permanent position. This approach is especially effective for positions paying \$8.00 to \$15.00 per hour, which tend to experience the most turnover.

Because there is usually less emphasis placed on the screening and interviewing of candidates for these positions, there is a greater chance for a bad fit and eventual separation.

In a traditional interview-and-hire scenario, you see what the candidate wants you to see and hear – not what helps you make a hiring decision. Often, you can only verify employment at the places they allow you to call, but you are never really able to get an unvarnished reference. In a sense, you are making a major hiring decision based on "controlled" information, which may very well be incomplete or false.

## How Temp-to-Hire Works

The staffing firm meets with the hiring managers and creates a profile of the ideal candidate. Then, the staffing firm completes all the screening, due diligence, and schedules an interview with the hiring manager. Right off the bat there is an additional check by the staffing firm before a hiring manager ever hears about a potential candidate. And for the staffing firm to get repeat opportunities it must send high quality candidates, or it risks not getting asked back.

Now, the critical advantage of the temp-to-hire process begins: allowing an employer to truly evaluate the skills and potential of the candidate. They get to evaluate the candidate as they perform the duties of the job and interact with staff and management and determine how well they respond to stress in the workplace. In the event that the candidate does not work out at any point during the temp

period, the separation responsibility falls to the staffing firm – not the employer.

Freddie Dennis, RPh, Central Pharmacy Technician Manager at Forsyth Medical Center experienced the benefits of temp-to-hire first hand. “We needed employees who could catch on to our processes with very little training and maintain our workflow. The technicians came in and became a part of our team. The process was seamless,” he said. “The greatest value of this process was that our ultimate goal was to keep these employees on our staff. We were able to see their work ethic and dependability before we actually hired them. This was a great benefit because there are times when a person has a great interview but suboptimal job performance. Our agreement allowed us to weed these employees out before we, as a company, invested too much money in the recruitment and on-boarding process.”

Another way that a staffing firm can be an enormous asset is in helping determine the cause of turnover. The expertise and past experience of the staffing firm can aid in determining the root cause and possible solutions to the problem. The best staffing firms regularly survey their candidates and clients to assess satisfaction. Staffing firms like to keep their retention levels high and their turnover rates low, so they will use this feedback and their experience to try to make the best possible matches. And even then you are not leaving anything to chance if you choose temp-to-hire.

So what are the risks? First of all, there is always a degree of risk when you hire someone

– this process is used to reduce that risk. You still have to make a decision, but you now have 90 days to six months of results and feedback to base it on. There will be instances when you determine that the candidate is not working out. During those times, it is beneficial that the staffing firm shoulders that unemployment burden and not you.

From a cost standpoint, the cost of a temp-to-hire employee is not substantially different from the total cost of a regular employee, including what you already pay for taxes, administration, worker’s compensation, insurance and other costs. The staffing firm carries the administration of that employee and

the entire burden for unemployment, insurance, and benefits during the temp period, allowing the facility to focus on training and truly evaluating the candidate.

Today, with studies showing the cost of turnover at nearly six to 10

times annual salary, reducing turnover by just 10% can be a huge savings to a department’s or facility’s budget, not to mention a boost to employee morale from the newfound stability.

---

*“The greatest value of this process was that our ultimate goal was to keep these employees on our staff. We were able to see their work ethic and dependability before we actually hired them.”*

---

For more information about how a **Pharmacy Technician Temp-to-Hire Program** can help your organization, please contact Jackson Pharmacy Professionals at 1-877-500-6508.