

Where Software Meets Service?

180 Personnel. That is what I decided to name my temporary staffing agency. I arrived at that because I wanted to be the exact opposite of everything that I didn't like in an industry that I loved. I didn't like the confines and restrictions of being in a corporate environment. I wanted to be able to be flexible to meet any needs of my clientele, even if it meant I would be at break even or slightly above. For me, it was never about the money per se, but about building relationships in my community that would benefit me, benefit my clients and benefit the community as a whole.

One of the first decisions I made was choosing a vendor that could help me. Someone who could truly be a partner and grow with me. That's what I wanted to be to my clients and that's what I wanted in a vendor.

After extensive due-diligence, I decided to go with TempWorks in Eagen, MN. They had a great software platform, they could build a nice website to fully integrate with the software and they certainly said and did all the right things to sway me to sign their contract.

I signed the contract. I opted for a full suite of services specifically designed for start-ups with little to no capital. They were the EOR, they were payroll funding and processing and they invoiced the clients.

After an exhaustive on-boarding process, software training and completing all the necessary details to facilitate sending employees out, I

was ready to go. I had traveled to Indianapolis (twice), secured infrastructure in that market and had commitments from key clients. To say I was excited was an understatement!

The first temps were being presented on Monday! The clients had been approved. The employees had been submitted with all the correct paperwork. The employee approval process, according to TempWorks, usually takes "about an hour."

Despite numerous requests beginning Tuesday for Certificates of Insurance - which my clients required and had requested - I could never get a simple copy. I couldn't get an answer as to why I couldn't get a simple copy. By Friday morning, despite repeated assurances from my contact at TempWorks that this was a simple misunderstanding that would be cleared up in a matter of minutes, I still could not prove to my clients that the candidates being presented for hire were covered under a valid workers comp policy.

I got a voice mail on Friday afternoon which informed me that TempWorks had decided "to not move forward with my company". Not move forward? It's Friday! The temps are going out Monday! What do you mean you aren't moving forward?

Sadly, that voicemail was the last I ever heard from anyone at TempWorks in Eagen, MN. I did call the gentleman in Pittsburgh (I think) who left the message to inquire the reason behind the decision only to be told that he was not made aware.

I didn't roll over. I didn't take it. I was a self-funded startup staffing agency. I could either move on with business or commit those financial resources to holding TempWorks accountable. This was principle. This was ethics. I committed to holding them accountable.

After battling 14 months I finally had my day in court. TempWorks decided to come to court and accuse me of being "mentally unstable". This was their reason to not move forward with me. The three key witnesses that TempWorks presented - CEO David Dourgarian, CEO Mauri Kautzman and Executive VP Casey Krouse all gave testimony that, according to the judge in her written judgment, was "not credible." In fact, this is an excerpt from the judgment:

As of Friday morning, no one had found an alternative, and Mr. Dourgarian, the CEO, was not interested in working on a solution or providing customer service. Instead he wanted to know why he was being "harassed" by a customer who had contacted him about Tempworks' failure to secure the workers' compensation insurance they had promised to provide.

If you would like a complete copy of the written judgment contact me. I'll be happy to provide it to you. What I have found, through making my experience public and having other people in the industry contact me, is nothing short of egregious.

Sadly, this information was not available publicly when I researched staffing partners. I intend to change that. There are enough good companies in the industry that provide the same services and products

and will truly be a partner and not treat their customers this way in times of calamity or confusion. Mistakes in business happen. Nobody - and no company - is perfect. But I think it reasonable to expect that if mistakes do happen, your vendor will work with you toward a solution - not simply walk away with no communication whatsoever because they think they can.

The court finds that TempWorks cancelled the contract not because of any risk to the company but because they believed it would be inconvenient and possibly more expensive to perform, and incorrectly believed that it could simply step away from a contract that it no longer liked.

Where software meets service? Apparently slogans - though easily printed on marketing material - are not so easily or readily practiced.