

# Buoyant start to 2019 for the Office Support sector..

Sharon O'Donnell-08.04.2019



As we come to the end of Q1, our expert recruitment consultants have provided insights into the current employment market within Office Support.

In this Q1 Review, we will be looking at; current trends within the office support market, talent attraction and retention, unique industry benefits, relevant skills and qualifications, notable behaviours from professionals and any legislation changes or political events set to have an impact on the industry.

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The Office Support market is very busy right now, with a high volume of temporary roles emerging within the medical sector for instance, in regards to both public and private clinics and hospitals. There have also been a large number of roles which have opened up in the non profit sector due to unforeseen periods of leave. In Cork in particular, the first quarter of the year has been slow on the multinational side of things, whereas the SME space has been somewhat more buoyant. On the permanent side of things roles have been more scarce and there has been an increase in the influx of niche roles such as IT Audit Administrator or Training Administrator.

In terms of employee retention, employers are working hard on the permanent side in order to successfully retain staff. They are doing this through various initiatives such as offering flexibility in regards to working hours and regular salary reviews, whereas on the temporary side of things talent retention is a lot more difficult as it is more buoyant and so jobseekers are generally caught up in a number of interview processes. It is a candidate's market at the moment within office support, with companies striving to do their best to retain staff. In order to do this many are focusing their efforts on their internal career opportunities, progression and once again, flexibility.

Moving on to talent attraction, MNC's and larger organisations are at a distinct advantage in terms of their reach and presence, in particular when it comes to recent graduates. With professionals engaged in multiple processes, it can be difficult to attract the right talent as people can afford to be that bit more selective. Therefore, a strong, social online presence and attractive marketing demonstrating a fun and social work environment is key to attracting the majority of job seekers.

Some notable trends in regards to office support professionals include employees looking for opportunities which fulfill them, not just in terms of remuneration but in regards to what impact it has on them personally and what value it can add to their career. On the temp side of things, we are seeing employees being more flexible and open to temp opportunities as they can see the benefits it brings and the doors it can open. There has been an increase in the number of office support professionals engaging in temporary assignments due to the swift hiring processes involved in securing such roles. Such temporary opportunities seem to suit some jobseekers current lifestyle and circumstances. Location is also a factor for many, for example in Cork many professionals wish to avoid having to travel through the Jack Lynch tunnel at rush hour as traffic is very heavy. This is the same in the case of those who have to travel to Little Island for work and many are missing out on opportunities because of the location in these cases. Lastly, there has been an increase in demand this quarter in those seeking part-time roles, but alas the supply for such roles does not meet the current demand.

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### **Benefits**

Some unique benefits which are available on the market at the moment include flexibility as mentioned above as well as a number of employee perks such as complimentary gym membership, free lunch deliveries, subsidised food and flexible start and finish times.

### **Relevant Skills & Qualifications and Desirable Attributes:**

- Showcasing their abilities and the value they can add to an organisation is vital for temporary employees. This generally results in an increase in temp to perm conversions.
- Temps who treat their assignments like longer term opportunities are more likely to be considered for permanent positions due to work ethic, efficiency and company fit.

### **Legislation changes, political events and industry occurrences:**

The average entry level salary is now higher with most multinationals/startups offering higher salaries to graduates which is raising the bar and having an impact on the industry. The legal amendments to the Stamp 3 Visa have been received positively in the market - this includes partners of skilled workers being given access to work here in Ireland.