

Current Status: Grateful for Gig

From trendy restaurants and high-end hotels to tech festivals and shelters, Chris B. has worked almost 500 shifts with [Staffy](#). Evidently, gig-life is working for him. Why? It comes down to a mix of freedom and flexibility combined with skill and experience.



By [Nelson Tam](#)

Since joining Staffy in 2018, Chris B. has worked hundreds of shifts. Some days, a shift is 12-hours long as a line cook; others, a 5-hour serving gig at a wedding. On occasion, it means signing up for a double, moving from a daytime shift to an evening one.

"I work a lot, man. I'm a workhorse," says Chris. "I take work seriously. I owned a restaurant for 20 years so I'm used to long hours."

Like many, Chris started young, learning the ropes as a part-time Server through university. From there, he worked his way up and was offered his first full-time position in hospitality — as General Manager, no less. Now, some twenty years later, Chris has worked [Front-of-House](#) and [Back-of-House](#) in management for both restaurants and hotels.

These days, he has no interest in full-time or management work. As such, he's turned down full-time offers over the last few years. "It comes down to two things," shares Chris. "I've been successful working full time with Staffy, and when I want to go away or take a week off, I don't have to ask anybody. I'm in total control of my destiny."



As a [gig economy](#) worker who earns the majority of his income on Staffy, Chris is a rare breed. 98% of Staffy's skilled workers only use the platform to supplement their income. But similar to some of his fellow Staffy workers, Chris also appreciates the variety of work, locations, and coworkers. "I've been to so many places, I've met so many amazing people. Everything is a nice switch up. When I go to work at the homeless shelter, or I go to work at the Four Seasons, they're completely different jobs."

Typically, skilled workers only join Staffy with one speciality: nursing, personal care aide, cooking, or cleaning. But Chris leverages his experience to fill a multitude of roles. "I'm well-rounded. My experience is equal. Front-of-House, Back-of-House — I can do anything," he says. This kind of depth can come in very handy during service, where needs can change quickly.

In fact, Chris recalls a moment during a Front-of-House shift at [The Toronto Lawn and Tennis Club](#):

"A couple of cooks hadn't shown up, and one of the cooks (on shift) was struggling. I knew him because I'd been working there (with Staffy) for so long and said: "listen man, I'm going to come and give you a hand." I put on an apron, started cooking with him and he was like "holy shit, how do you know how to cook?" Suffice to say, every shift Chris was booked into moving forward was Back-of-House.

Chris may have joined Staffy three years into the platform's existence but he leads in the number of shifts completed. For those looking to add more value and get more work, he offers the following advice:

"You have to understand that your job is to replace an employee unable to work or to help through a peak period. You're not there to change anything. You need to learn to be adaptive. In some situations, you'll need to take a leadership role, in some situations you'll need to take a subordinate role. And it's identifying that when you walk into the place."

With his skill, wisdom, and work ethic, Chris is popular amongst clients. During the current [Covid-19](#) health crisis, he hasn't missed a beat. When the hospitality industry closed in mid-March, Chris picked up

Staffy's [Instacart](#) referral as a way to keep earning. But in just a short period he found himself back in demand on the app.



Over the last two months, Chris has been booked Monday to Friday as a line cook at [Haven Toronto](#), a homeless shelter for elder men. “That’s a perfect fit for me,” he says. “I’ve been an advocate for the homeless most of my life. It’s like a dream job for me there. I get to serve the community and pay my bills.”

When asked about his mindset working through these challenging times, his response was as you might expect after getting to know him:

“In a word: Grateful. I’m very grateful to be one of the very few people working right now. I don’t look at myself as a frontline worker. I look at myself like the same (worker) I was before the pandemic.”