

Get to Know

# Coni Barnette

**Q: Tell us about how your relationship with Vaco began.**

**A:** I'll start at the beginning from a client's perspective. I was working a due diligence project for a company I worked for when my boss came through one morning and said, "I don't know who you need to find, but I need you to reach out to some recruiting companies to fill these positions for this project." I was thinking he meant two to four people, not the 25 temporary employees he requested for a short-term project. I wasn't sure I'd be able to find them. One of our marketing individuals suggested I contact Vaco. Following her suggestion, I got connected with Sandra and spoke with her about our need. I didn't even have a job description at the time, so she voluntarily wrote it up for me and we critiqued it to our needs. She ended up providing me with 25 candidates rapidly and it was phenomenal. The best part about it too, was that I kept probably 15 of those temporary employees as full-time employees! That's how our relationship began in 2006 and she's been a great friend and resource ever since.

**Q: How has consulting with Vaco impacted your professional journey?**

**A:** In 2014, I notified Sandra that I was leaving my current position to take care of my mother. After relaying the information to her, she was extremely empathetic and maintained consistent contact with me on a personal level. Once my mom passed, she even followed up with a sympathy card, which made me feel as though she truly cared. As time progressed, Sandra continued to keep in touch, sending emails letting me know she was there for me whenever I decided to return back to work. There was a sense of comfort that Sandra provided, which led to the realization that she would be my one and only call once I was ready to return. I didn't need CareerBuilder or Indeed, I had Sandra who I could trust would find a fit for me whether it was consulting or full-time work. That holds true today.

**Q: What is your favorite part about being a Vaco consultant?**

**A:** My favorite part about being a Vaco consultant is how well Sandra understands the type of work I love and challenges I enjoy. She never sends me over random job opportunities that come across her desk. She has dedicated her time to learn what my skills are so she knows what consulting opportunities would be best suited for me professionally. I know she won't waste my time and will only pass along top-notch positions and recommendations. This is something she has made happen numerous times for myself, my colleagues and family members.

**Q: What is one of your favorite memories while consulting at Vaco?**

**A:** I've had some great memories in the Vaco suite at Bridgestone Arena. It could be the 11th hour and Sandra will call me and say, "Hey! Do you want to join me for a concert tonight?" I've been able to see Elton John, Keith Urban, and various Nashville Predators games. I really enjoy being able to socialize and share our love for music. It's been such a blessing to have that type of getaway outside of work where we can connect over mutual interests. I truly feel like we've built a friendship.

**Q: What opportunities has consulting opened up for your personal life?**

**A:** Sandra always finds job opportunities that are in my lane. She understands what interests me in a role and the integrity I like to uphold. Consulting has opened me up to so many opportunities because of the flexibility of creating my own schedule. It allows me to produce a whole different level of productivity and Sandra helped lead me to that realization.

**Q: You have also worked with Vaco on the client side. How would you describe that relationship and how it compares to consulting?**

**A:** From a client perspective, I always know that I'm going to receive high quality candidates to interview and bring on as employees. The longevity of our professional relationship has built a level of trust in that regard. She understands my needs and chooses top-notch candidates for us to interview. I appreciate Sandra more each and every year that I get to work with her on a personal or professional basis. 🙌

