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Se Habla Temp

Need a Spanish-speaking secretary, a Korean interpreter, or a salesman fluent in Hindi? Deborah Wainstein's Priority Staffing Solutions, Inc. can provide. A multicultural phenomenon herself, Wainstein is the daughter of a Russian-Jewish doctor and Colombian mother who spoke Spanish at home and was educated in Hebrew. "I remember being picked on, we were so different," the Brooklyn native says. "Now I've been able to work it to my benefit."

She stumbled into staffing, joining a family friend's company after abandoning her plans to become a clothing designer. Schmoozing in several tongues, she found, helped bring in the clients. In 1999, she went solo with the help of her venture-capitalist brother. Now, Priority Staffing employs nine, sends out 60 temps a day, and has 80 clients, including big outfits like Revlon and telecom service provider RCN Corp. Wainstein showed RCN executives how to audition temps for full-time sales jobs—and they haven't forgotten. "She made me look good," says human resources manager Rocco Genova. And that's a success in any language.

– *Jill Hamburg Coplan*

