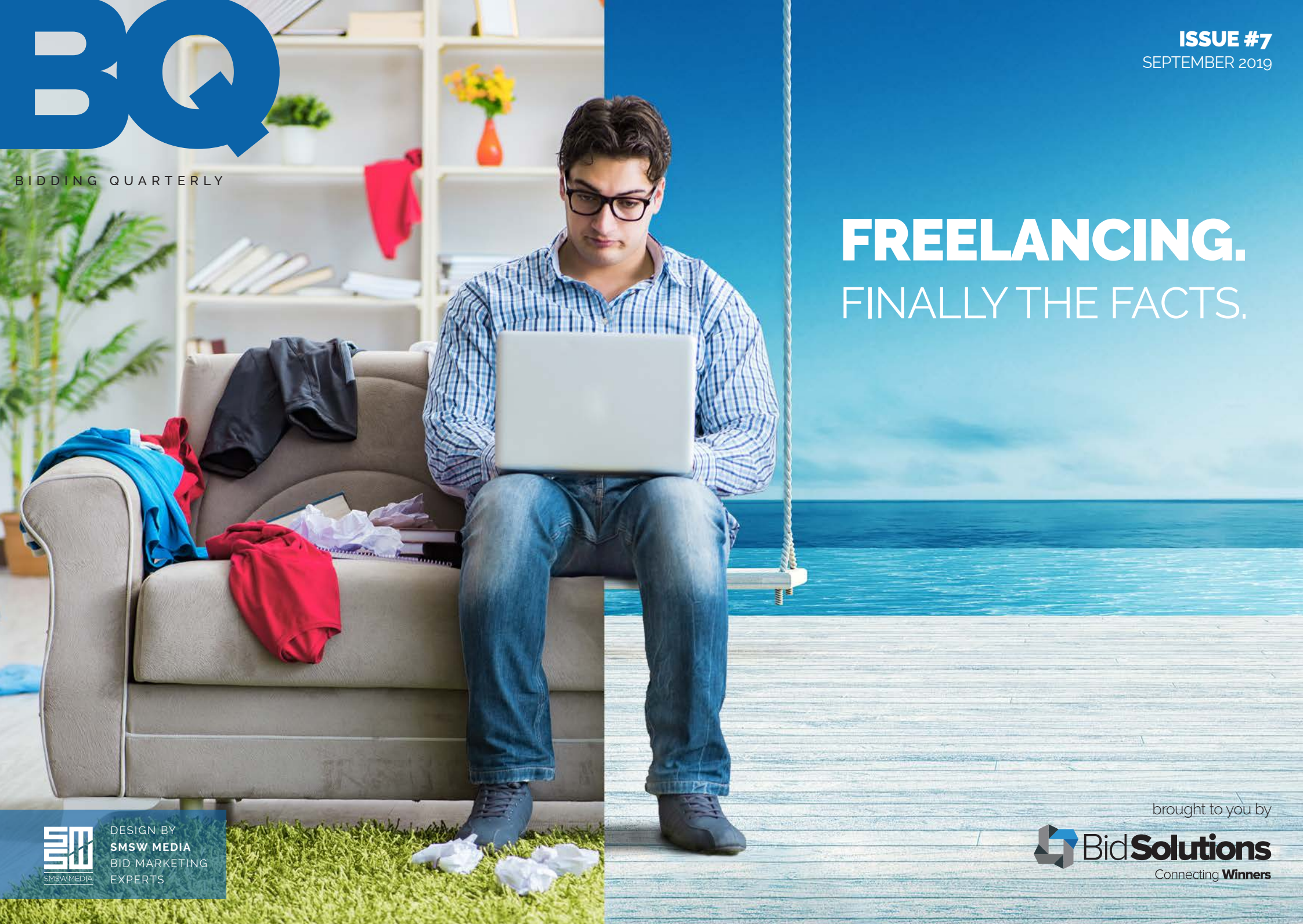




BIDDING QUARTERLY

**ISSUE #7**  
SEPTEMBER 2019

# FREELANCING. FINALLY THE FACTS.



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BID MARKETING  
EXPERTS

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# INTRODUCTION

**There are now over 1,000 bid and proposal contractors, consultants and freelancers delivering services in the UK. Having passed this milestone, it felt like an appropriate time to dig beneath the surface and find out exactly what life is like for those that made the transition - mostly from permanent employment.**

The contract market has experienced significant growth in the past five years. Whilst there are more options than ever for clients, there has never been a greater need to audit the credentials of those engaged.

The advice provided in BQ7 is the most comprehensive we have ever pulled together. This is supplemented with the key findings from the largest ever contractor survey we completed over the summer.

Mel Mae Smith (UK APMP Chair) kindly agreed to be 'In the Spotlight'. Having voiced my concerns about APMP International in BQ5, I was keen to listen to what she had to say on a wide range of subjects. She talks passionately about the benefits of joining APMP and the soon to be released 'speciality' certifications.

We also have fabulous articles from our regular BQ experts. Holger Garden presents three core questions that helped him develop a successful business. Jon Williams provides some great insight on succeeding outside of the 'corporate' world, whilst Andy Haigh talks openly about why redundancy can be a blessing in disguise.

Nigel Hudson - candid as always - talks about the importance of making hay while the sun shines and Pippa Birch provides a great list of ideas to keep contractors on their toes. Finally, Kathryn Potter talks about the importance of family and staying motivated.

Changes to IR35 legislation are just around the corner and feature heavily in much of our experts' thinking. Whilst we attempt to get to grips with the basics of these changes, the question on most freelancers' lips anxiously remains: "Will HMRC and my clients deem me a contractor OR an employee after April 2020?"

I really hope you enjoy this issue of Bidding Quarterly and that it helps you better understand your options should you be considering a move to contracting.

**Martin Smith**  
Managing Director Bid Solutions



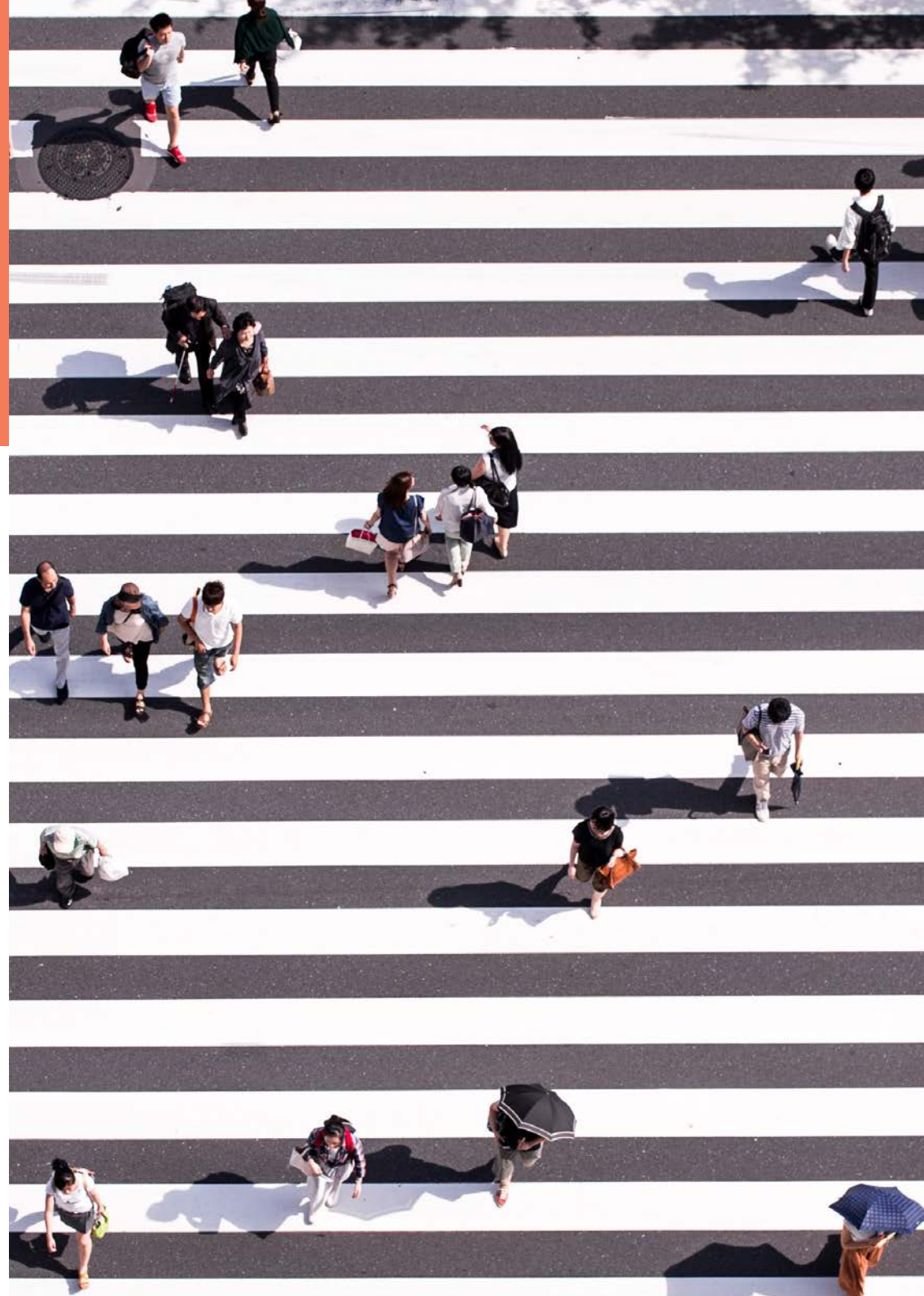
# 2019 UK CONTRACTOR SURVEY

**The survey, conducted by Bid Solutions, aimed to deliver the first meaningful research specifically focussed on the UK bid and proposal contractor market.**

More specifically, we wanted to:

- Understand contractor readiness for IR35 legislation changes
- Review contractor working practices
- Report on contractor KPIs and service quality metrics
- Understand contractor market sentiment.

In total, we received 196 completed surveys - approximately 20% of the UK bid and proposal contractor market. Whilst care must be taken interpreting data from a sample of this size, we are confident that contractors and clients seeking contractor services will find the results informative. For the full report please turn to page 22.



# KEY FINDINGS

**62%** of respondents cited flexibility of working hours as a primary reason for choosing to operate as a contractor

**83%** of respondents had more than 10 years' experience working in the bid and proposal profession

Only **10%** of respondents stated they fully understood IR35 regulations and proposed legislative changes

**49%** of respondents delivered their services remotely or from home

**98%** of those surveyed offered clients more than one core service

**75%** of all working time was spent on live bids and proposals, with only 25% spent on consulting / bid improvement projects

Almost **1 in 3** contractors stated they were generalists, working successfully across multiple industries

**60%** said their contract earnings were better than their last salary in permanent employment

**1 in 3** contractors did not always agree terms of business before embarking on a contract

Only **21%** of respondents had attended any bid or proposal training in the previous 12 months

Only **42%** used win-rate as a measure of service quality

**88%** price services on a day-rate or hourly basis

**75%** stated existing clients and word of mouth were by far the most frequently cited sources of work

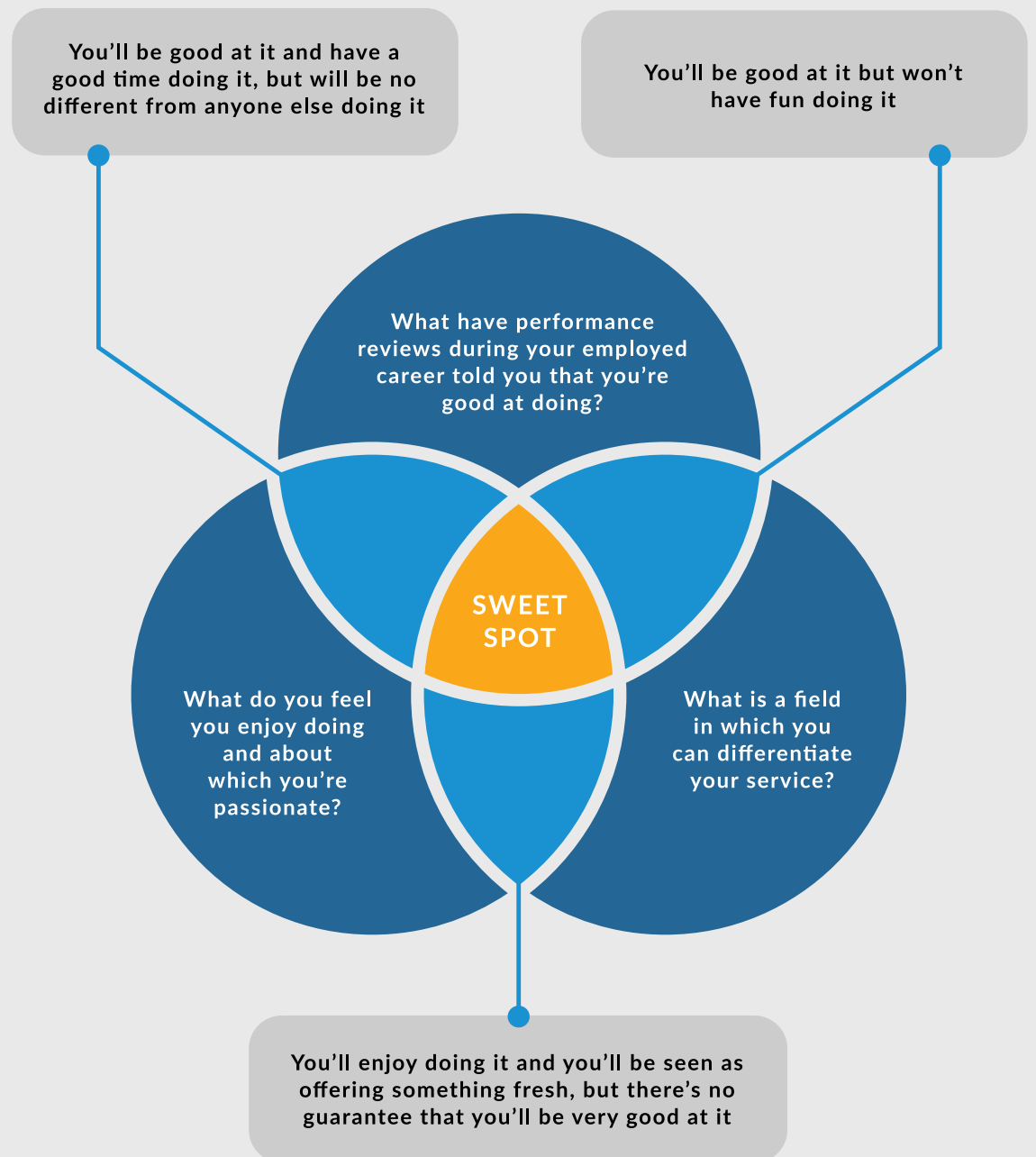
**7/10** surveyed said they would recommend contracting as a career choice.

*Holger Garden*

## FREELANCERS' GREMLINS, YOU ARE TERMINATED

**Are you considering a role change to bid freelancing? If so, is it an easy decision or are you fighting gremlins saying how scary the new world will be?**

Before I started bid freelancing seven years ago, I asked three questions (see graphic) that helped define the business choice best suited to my experience and interests.





**That approach convinced me that bidding was a profession in which I could hit the sweet spot. However, my inner gremlins conspired to put me off running a business. I needed to know what mattered most for success in a new venture. Who better to help terminate my gremlins than The Terminator himself! I've found Arnold Schwarzenegger's six rules for success to be a good blueprint for a fruitful freelancing experience:**

**1 Trust yourself.**

In coaching we say, "Notice what you notice." Take a moment to think about your own coping strategies, particularly what makes you happy. Trust your instincts about your skills, from which you gain a sense of achievement and with which you can add value to bids. Listen to colleagues in the bid community and map their insights onto what matters to you. We're very lucky to be part of such a fantastic community of talented people happy to help others.

## "NOTICE WHAT YOU NOTICE"

**2 Be flexible enough to break the rules, but never the law.**

In the context of bids, I believe 'the law' means your values and ethics. You can't do a good job if you stray from those. What about breaking the rules? Chances are you'll be called into bids at various lifecycle stages, so remain flexible in how you apply best practice. For example, you might need to fast-track response development if you're appointed late in the bid. I've had to jump into firefighting action several times very late in bid periods to develop responses without any meaningful storyboarding or win themes - instead teasing them out from bid stakeholder interviews as I went along, rather than having a plan agreed from the start. You'll need to remain flexible enough to adapt to the circumstances at the time.

**3 Don't be afraid to fail.**

Listen to prospective clients and take feedback seriously. I'm reminded of a proposal I submitted to help a business development team write an application for new product funding. The team went ahead without external support, but it transpired they used many of my action plan ideas. I could have viewed that experience as a wild goose chase but saw it instead as a reason to explore developing a better relationship. Following further discussion, we identified ways to make the proposals process more efficient and effective for better working without the cost of external support. I was asked to review subsequent proposals, and other prospects made contact following referral. My point? Every contact provides an opportunity to learn about an organisation and find new ways to bring benefits.

**4 Don't listen to naysayers.**

I thought I'd overcome my initial lack of confidence to run a business by seeking advice from the regional start-up consultant in the Government's New Enterprise scheme. To my horror, he told me that companies know their subjects and don't need external support for proposals. He said that bid consultancy is a super-niche discipline with no real market. After momentary panic, my reaction was to spend even more time thinking about how I'd add value to prospects' bids.

**5 Work your butt off.**

Treating a client's bid as my own enables me to dig deeper; I want my clients to do well since we're in the same team. In the excellent book, *The Subtle Art of Not Giving A F\*ck*, Mark Manson states, "Who you are is defined by what you're willing to struggle for." While bids shouldn't be a struggle, they do require commitment. Be the person prepared to do whatever it takes to create really strong submissions. Don't forget, though, that hard work still has to be smart. There's no shortcut for preparation and resource planning to pave the way for efficient work.

**6 Give back.**

You can give back to the profession in many ways, e.g. writing for Bidding Quarterly, sharing experiences (e.g. via forums, including APMP conferences and events), and coaching and mentoring others. Supporting others' development is hugely rewarding.

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How do these points make sense in the context of your experience? If you'd gone off the idea of freelancing, perhaps these thoughts have encouraged you to think, "I'll be back!"



Jon Williams

## AT LEAST WE DON'T CARRY LANCES

**Jousting's a dangerous sport. Picture your opponent galloping towards you on horseback at speed, a lance aimed at your chest. Best case, as a loser, you fall heavily. Worst case...**

So, back in the 12th century, some less brave nobles decided to take the easy way out. As a Times article put it recently, they'd "...hire a jouster to fight for them who was not committed to any other master and was available to fight for the highest bidder. They became known as freelances."

Not so different, perhaps, to today's world of bids and proposals, where freelancers are valiantly fighting to help their clients win. Only: minus the lances...

When I set up my first bid centre at Compaq twenty years ago, I absolutely saw the value of engaging skilled external resource to complement the extremely talented in-house team I'd built. I needed people to stretch and challenge our thinking; to act as a sounding board; to bring expert experience to support us on the most strategic deals; and, occasionally, to act as extra pairs of hands.

That's when I first worked alongside BJ Lownie - Strategic Proposals' founder, who I'd met across the negotiating table when he'd been supporting a bid to me in my procurement days. It's also when I first worked more closely with procurement guru Steve Mullins, bringing a buyer's perspective to everything we did. A couple of years later, the three of us set up the SP operation here in the UK.

So, what advice would I give to people looking to make the leap from the corporate world today? First, it's to be crystal clear on your objectives for doing so. For some, it's primarily financial - a view that they could earn more. (Frankly, I'm not sure that is always the case, especially at the most senior levels, but it's undoubtedly true for some).

For others, life/work balance is the driver. Over the years, I've taken four 30+ day holidays, something I'd never have been able to do in the 'corporate' world. Now, with a daughter born earlier this year, I work a four day week and restrict the amount of time I spend travelling. Or, to give an example from last December, I had the flexibility to decide that my next meetings in Manchester would just happen to coincide with the date of The Slow Show's latest gig...

For some, it's curiosity and variety. That's certainly true for me. I have a very low boredom threshold. The thought of staying with the same corporation for a long period horrifies me - while others crave that security. There's certainly the real risk in our world of what I term 'groundhog year', when the same contracts on which you bid three years ago all come round again.

Some want out of corporate bureaucracy. I get that too, even if Compaq was remarkable for its entrepreneurial spirit and people. (Hey, it's also where I first met Martin Smith - now, of course, leading Bid Solutions and behind this excellent publication). And even if (when providing advice from the outside) the ability to navigate organisational politics at the most senior levels is perhaps even more a feature of what we do externally than it ever was for me internally.

Some are forced out of their corporate roles, and simply need to earn a living. And who'd deny them that?

And others see it as a great way to develop their careers. That's certainly true for me and was my key driver. I had two work goals when I was younger. First, to run a successful business. Second, to be invited to travel the world to speak as an 'expert' in whatever my field turned out to be (I hadn't even heard of a 'proposal manager' until I'd turned thirty). And my role at SP has let me achieve both those goals.

There are so many ways to work outside the 'corporate' world. Genuine freelancers, who relish the chance to work solo. Small alliances, with numerous two- to four-people bands of like-minded friends, taking on the world together. (Play buzzword bingo sometime, combining a few words like 'winning', 'alliance', 'bid', 'tender', 'associates', 'creative' and 'success' and I almost guarantee you'll find a company with that name!). Perhaps combined with either of the above, getting yourself onto the books of one of the companies who maintain a list of contractors, who'll find you work from time-to-time in return for a slice of your fee.



# “A JOUSTER HIRED TO FIGHT FOR THE HIGHEST BIDDER BECAME KNOWN AS A FREELANCE”

Our model in SP here is slightly different, I guess. We operate, effectively, as a co-operative. Our directors don't take salaries; our shareholders don't draw dividends. We don't owe money to any outside investors or banks. What we earn, minus relatively lean overheads, goes to those who generate and deliver work.

With nearly thirty colleagues in the UK, we have a degree of scale: team members are surrounded by a deep talent pool of like-minded colleagues they can rely on for expertise and advice. With a methodology and tools we've honed over more than three decades, we can bring a degree of consistency whilst allowing creative people the chance to be creative. With a track record of delivering value for clients, being recognised in industry awards and carrying out thought-leading research, there's a brand name that can help open doors for new work – and a wonderful community of existing clients who kindly keep asking for more! With some financial robustness, we can invest in things like professional development, running interesting events and building new tools (such as our Proposal Benchmarker™). We (almost) have to be careful not to become too corporate!

Whatever role you choose to take – whether that's in 'corporate' life or outside – we're all bid and proposal professionals. No better or worse than our friends who've made different career choices. We are united in the common goals of wanting to help organisations to win work, to develop our careers as we personally wish, to enjoy financial security, and live happily and healthily. To be trusted partners for clients, whether they be internal colleagues or the people who engage us on projects. Whatever your choice, I wish you well.





Mel Mal Smith

## SPOTLIGHT

**Mel is without doubt one of the busiest people in our profession right now, holding down a full-time job at Harmonic whilst leading the UK Chapter of APMP at a time of rapid growth and professional development. I was delighted when she said she'd find time to answer some of my questions. It's a fascinating insight into Mel and her selfless commitment to our profession.**

### Greatest achievement personally?

My greatest personal achievement has to be completing the London to Paris cycle ride a couple of years ago. It was one of the most physically challenging things that I have ever done and in the most immense heat. I was certainly proud of myself when we reached Paris.

### Most difficult loss in bidding?

Losing the weight I gain eating late night bidding pizza!

### Biggest pet hate?

Seeing the wrong 'there, their or they're' written in bids and proposals.

### Guilty pleasure?

Eating Cadbury's Creme Eggs any time of year!

### Describe yourself in three words.

I would say that I am an approachable, motivated grafter!

### What advice would you give your 18-year-old self?

No is a complete sentence, it does not require explanation or justification.

### Who do you most admire and why?

If I had to choose one person, I'd probably go with JK Rowling. A single mum with very little money who had an incredible idea and decided to go with it. After writing her book, it was rejected countless times by publishing houses, but she didn't give up. Now she's one of the most successful British writers of all time. That persistence and self-belief is something I really admire and aspire to.

### What was your dream job growing up?

As I said at the conference last year, no one my age ever left education and said, "I want to work in bids!" Growing up, I always fancied myself as a doctor. I used to love the seemingly glamorous life of the likes of Dr Kildare and thought that I would fit right in with that. Clearly that

was not to be my path in life, and I now love my job and the people I get to meet and work with on a daily basis.

### How would you describe APMP UK to someone new into the profession?

I would say that APMP UK is a local chapter of like-minded professionals who are all part of a support network. All of our members are members for the same reason, to help raise the profile of our profession, promote bidding as a discipline in its own right and learn about best practice.

### In your opinion, what is the single biggest benefit of becoming an APMP Member?

Having access to a like-minded body of bid and proposal professionals and the networking opportunities that the Chapter creates with its events and conference.

### Does APMP UK have any detailed plans to offer services specifically for freelancers / consultants?

I believe that all bid and proposal professionals should be treated equally by APMP UK, whether they are employed or freelancers, because both populations are our members so both should have access to the benefits. It was good to see the recent launch of the Consultants Directory by APMP International, and we would encourage any UK Chapter members to list themselves if they are working as freelancers/consultants.

### The APMP Certification programme has been very successful, so much so that I often get asked 'What next?' for those attaining Professional status, but keen to continue developing. What do you recommend?

APMP is planning specialty certifications that address specific job functions related to bids, proposals and the entire business development lifecycle. For example, APMP has three 'specialty' certifications planned over the next two years. The first is specifically for Capture/Opportunity Management professionals that will be released by January 2020. The next two specialty certifications will likely address ethics (specifically for HR managers and business executives) and bid and proposal leadership (for emerging and practicing executives). Additionally, APMP has a full range of specialty certifications planned over the next five years to address

professionals in the industry who may prefer to be certified in their specific area. This is part of APMP's global commitment to provide industry certification to the widest number of professionals who are a part of the business development and work winning lifecycle.

### The role of Chair brings a lot of responsibility. How do you juggle working full time with the commitments of leading the profession's representative body?

I work long hours 😊. As a Board member (and like the rest of the Board), I am committed to doing the absolute best I can for the benefit of our members. We have an exceptionally strong Board this year and we are all passionate about APMP. My employer is committed to supporting APMP and they believe that the value we get as members is beneficial to both us as members and to our clients.

### What qualities does a member need to succeed on the UK Board?

I believe that to succeed on the Board you need to have a passion for the industry and the profession. You need a willingness to deliver for no personal gain and always remain focussed on what is best for the members.

### The 2019 UK conference looks set to be the biggest yet. What are you looking forward to most?

This year I am really looking forward to our new Professional Development Day which is being held the day before the conference itself. We have pulled together some of the leading experts in the country to deliver sessions which we believe the members will love. As for the conference itself, I am especially looking forward to meeting members that I haven't met before and connecting with others that I may only see a couple of times a year. For me, it's a brilliant opportunity to network and find out what's new in the world of bidding.

### I often speak to professionals that say the conference and certification are expensive. What are you doing to support those in the profession less able to afford high fees?

I believe that, given fees of other associations and similar certification training events in general, we are delivering value for money to our members. With the conference, we keep costs in-line with inflation by absorbing increases in operational costs. We subsidise elements of the annual conference and offer early booking and summer discounts right up until the end of August. We also offer corporate discounts for anyone booking three tickets or more. All of these things offer savings to freelancers and employed alike should they wish to take them up. We also offer members free entry to the majority of our events.

### What questions are you asking yourself lately?

I constantly ask myself, "How are my buckets being filled?" I see five buckets which I fill with time. These are: career, fulfilment, community, health and relationships. I question myself regularly as to how I am filling my buckets. Sometimes I may be spending too much time being social and too little time on my bike. Other times I find I haven't spoken to my family for weeks as I have been too busy working.

### One thing you would like to do better?

Play the saxophone! I have been learning for about two years and I am still terrible!

### If you won the lottery, what would be your first indulgence?

A new motorbike! I've got my eye on a lovely little Ducati Supersport S as my next one.



Nigel Hudson

## GIMME THE CASH!

**Can you keep a secret? I need to share something with you that might land me in a bit of bother with my employer. It is this: I'd like to be a consultant. Again.**

I might work as Director of Bids for the UK's second largest defence contractor, have circa 130 people working in my teams and manage an eight-figure budget, but seniority isn't everything. I don't earn nearly as much as you might think. In fact, my contract Bid Co-ordinators earn more in a day than me. Hardly fair, is it, given that they are the most junior people in my teams? Actually, it's nothing to do with fairness; it's about being smart.

I'd like you to think that I'm smart, given that I'm completing a doctorate in my spare time, but you and I know that I could be much smarter – and richer – if only I was braver. Taking the leap of faith into the contracting market would see me comfortably earning more than £1,000 a day and paying only 20% tax. I've done it before, when I worked as a consultant, but while that life pleased my bank manager and inflated my ego, it caused all manner of problems at home. Why? Because while some people seek riches and status, others prefer a quiet, easy, secure life.

The cashflow issues associated with providing consultancy and contract services can prove tricky, with some corporate clients insisting on six-month payment terms. This is no use when the 'rainy day fund' is low and

bills still need to be paid. My time as a consultant proved too much for my wife to bear, given that we were in the process of buying a house and that I was the main earner, so I had to cut short my consultancy career to save my marriage. After 12 months of glamorous jet-setting and working with the smartest and nicest people of my career, I had to jack it all in and get a regular job. How unexpectedly unexciting, unchallenging, stable, slow and mind-numbingly uninteresting. I felt like a racehorse chewing on last year's hay.

Of course, it's not all about money, or status, or the opportunity to make a difference on a vast scale, or to know that I'm correctly valued in the workplace (am I selling it to you?). It's about doing what's right for us and those at home. And, of course, regular employment encourages and enables levels of laziness that cannot be accommodated when employed by the day. My earnings are not linked to my output. I simply work through my job list and, so long as my employer is happy, collect my salary and bonus package. What a nice, safe, musky mouthful.

And I might have missed the goldrush, too. Things will change in April next year with the enforcement of IR35 tax rules. No longer will consultants or contractors be able to work for a single agency or client and still claim the corporation tax benefits. Instead, the agency or client will be obliged to take the tax and national insurance payment as PAYE, effectively reducing the contractors' earnings to reflect the same 40-50% tax burden as others in their salary bracket. Will those who are currently contracting take the hit on their earnings? I doubt it. There will inevitably be ways around the ruling, or day rates will be increased by 50% to cover the difference. But would you, as a hiring manager like me, accept paying nearly £200k a year for a Bid Co-ordinator? Me neither. It might just see the collapse of the contractor market and a return to traditional employment.



**MAKE HAY WHILE THE SUN SHINES.  
WHO KNOWS, YOU MAY BE EATING IT NEXT YEAR.**

Andy Haigh

## THE JUMP

**I was happily working away, managing an increasing number of bids and proposals, when the call came. Our win rate had soared from about 1:12 to better than 1:3. Morale in the team was high. Other people in the company sought to join this high performing area of the business. The work was hard, but we were motivated and, in the main, having fun.**

The basis of the call was that we were the only part of this international department that was providing good results. In every other geography, results were poor. So, those in the ivory tower had decided to disband the department worldwide! I could take redundancy or go back into one of the operating companies as a solo bid manager/writer. For me, the choice was not an easy one. Do I accept what was in effect a demotion and a pay cut, but stay with a salary and a pension? Or do I leap into a new world, on my own and not knowing where I would land? I chose the latter. It was the best decision I have ever made.

I should have made the jump years before, but my false sense of security as an employee had stopped me. Had I known then what I know now, things would have been very different. However, on the way I learned a few points which you may find helpful if you are looking at such a change.

### The Preparation

Before I made the choice to leave, there were a few things going for me which made everything easier. Firstly, I had a redundancy package. This gave me the money to get established in my new situation. Next, I was able to work my relationships in the current business and set up a six-month contract for me to deliver my services back to it, once I had left. The company got me at a 'cheap' rate, and I had some financial security above my redundancy money. This was a very big plus.

The next thing I did was to find an accountant who knew the game for freelancers and contractors. He advised me to set up my own company, which I did. This cost surprisingly little but paved the way for me to improve my income from then on. He advised me that I needed to have my own equipment (computer, phone, etc) and plan on working with several clients. If I did this, I would not fall foul of the dreaded IR35 tax rules (the Government's way of ensuring people claiming to be contractors are not in fact "disguised employees", who claim to be contractors in order to save paying their tax). I needed to look for more contracts.

### The Transition

The day I left paid employment was bittersweet. Of course, I was full of doubts and fears but I was looking forward to the freedoms. I was given the redundancy cheque and a leaving do. Then, after a week's break, I turned up again as an independent contractor!

I was an outsider. It was odd not to be part of the water-cooler intrigue any more. However, I found I was able to get more done in the working day and not carry the internal office 'baggage' home at night. I was able to come and go as I wanted, within reason. No one was micro-managing what I was doing.

It took some while for me to come to terms with the altered relationships with my ex co-workers. But it did not take long for me to work out that much of what had been going on in the workplace had been political and not actually contributing to meeting a client's needs.

I found out that I could deliver more than when I was employed. However, I needed to deliver more and not just do a 'good' job. I had to do an excellent job, every time. The downside of this was that, sometimes, I had to do more work than I had planned without getting paid. If I had set an expectation with my client of what I would achieve, then meeting that expectation was more important than getting financially rewarded if I wanted the next job.

### Finding Work

Although I had a few months of a relatively low paid contract, I was worried about what would come next. After all, I had a family and a mortgage to support. Luckily, I was given some good advice. Another contractor, who ended up working beside me, told me to do two things. Firstly, decide very clearly what I wanted to do. I needed to consider:

- What sort of work did other people think I was particularly good at?
- What sort of work did I most enjoy?
- How could I put the two together to create an 'Experience Statement' which would demonstrate these to other people?

This was not easy, and I had several attempts before I was happy. After all, if I was professing to be good at bids, a lacklustre document was not acceptable.

Then, he advised me to register with one (and a maximum of two) contractor agencies which specialised in my type of work. He said it was important to make friends with the person who handling my skill set and do whatever I could to help them do their job. As I found out, the relationship you create with the agency helps you to be considered first when suitable work turns up. You should not register with every agency you can find, as you will just become 'CV fodder'. They will have no reason to promote you for an opportunity over their 'favourites'.

### Pricing Your Services

Working out what to charge was my biggest concern. The agencies gave me some guidance about what other people were charging and what clients were paying. However, I had no track record to prove my value.

I was faced with setting a low rate and then having expectations set for future work at this level. Or, starting with the same rate as others and not getting work because I had no track record. In the end I decided to market myself on quality and not price. So, I spent even more time making my CV look fabulous.

Of course, my ex-employer did not pay this day rate. I had to take the hit just to give me a working track record, but I now had the start of a contractor work history and time to look for the next contract.

Since then I have tried to price myself slightly higher than others. I do this on the basis that:

- If you price your time at a low level, you will end up working with team leaders. You won't get any senior attention in your client's business. This means it is very difficult to get things done. So, the client's perspective will be that you are doing an adequate job, at best.
- If you price your time high, you will get the attention of more senior people and they unblock access to the information and people you need to do a good job. They will listen to your recommendations and lead the implementation. You will achieve more and the work will be more interesting. Overall, they get better results and better value for money from employing you. However, failure to meet expectations would be disastrous so you need to be very careful about the opportunities you take on. You must deliver value for money.
- On a practical level, if you work five days a week at £200 per day, you can make a living (if you work full time). Alternatively, if you work one day a week at £1,000 per day, you have the same income. However, you have four days in which to look for the next bit of work (or to enjoy your life). Plus, you get more interesting assignments. Moreover, you might work more than one day per week!

These days I tend to look at a job and give a single, fixed price for the work based on my relatively high rate. Often, I end up working more days than I originally planned but I have found that, over time, it all works out. Plus, clients like the certainty of fixed pricing.



### The Work Life Balance

The biggest plus of the jump for me was the ability to work when I wanted to and manage my own time. So much so that now I could never go back to working as an employee. All I have to do is balance the days I am engaged in paid-for work with my social and family life. There are times I have to work because I need the money and times when I turn work away because I have better things to do with my time. When I get the work I want, I can often choose to work in the evening or late at night. I can spend the day doing something else if I prefer. So long as I meet my commitments and I exceed the expectation of my clients, I can do what I want. The freedom is the greatest benefit and has enriched my life immeasurably. And if you are happy and relaxed, somehow the better and higher paying jobs seem to come through to you, too.

If you are considering 'going freelance', my recommendation is to do it and do it now! Yes, it is riskier – but not that much riskier. In my experience, the financial and personal benefits easily outweigh the disadvantages.

**I WISH YOU THE BEST  
OF LUCK – BUT DON'T  
FORGET, YOU MAKE  
YOUR OWN LUCK!**



Pippa Birch

# HOW TO KEEP YOUR FREELANCER HAPPY\*

**Yes! A whole issue of BQ devoted to freelancing and consulting! I have whinged and moaned for a long time about the fact that we are never considered in the bidding world and yet here we are, a dedicated survey and an issue of BQ lovingly devoted to us consultants – hurrah!**

Of course, we all sweep in with our big egos and large invoices, bringing nothing to the table your own staff can't provide a whole lot cheaper – right?\*

So why hire a freelancer? Generally, we provide additional capacity at times when bids coming through the door are high, or you are a company that has little or no bidding function/experience/expertise and we provide that service for you without adding to your overheads.

This is me (ooh I feel a song coming on!). I have now been freelancing for seven years, after starting in bids a few more (ahem) years ago than that. I went freelance for the flexibility, and because I thought I could make a difference and offer something other freelancers didn't seem to provide. My services include bid review,

edit, write (my first love), manage, mentor, coach and advice. I complete just one question, or I manage the whole process, including the financial submission. My clients range from tiny two-man outfits to my core clients (Civil Engineering SMEs) and even large blue-chip corporations. I have sector-hopped from Highways to Facilities Management, from Custody to Forensic Science to Energy, and back again.

And there is your reason to hire a freelancer. We are good at what we do. We love what we do. We have multiple layers of experience across several sectors that will enhance your bid. We will be coming at it from outside your company with a fresh pair of eyes - no office politics, no company fatigue, just good old bid experience and enthusiasm to enhance your team.

\*Holiday to the Bahamas would be nice. Thank you.

\*\*We don't all do that. Just in case you were wondering...



**If this is not your experience, sadly you are not alone (I know, I have seen and worked with some shockers in my time). I thought I'd offer some advice on how to keep us doing what we do best – aside from the boring contractual stuff:**

1. Choose carefully: CVs are OK, but meeting in person and getting personal recommendations are so much more important to get the best fit for your people.
2. Listen to us: We have done this work many times and have multiple layers of experience. We know how to get a good bid across the line.
3. Find out how we like to work: We can't all sit in your office for six weeks 9-to-5. Bidding doesn't work like that in general and not all freelancers can fit in with core hours or travel. However, some can – they even prefer it.
4. Make expectations clear from the start: We need to know what you need from us and how, ideally, you would like it delivered.
5. Be honest: Show us your best bits and your worst bits, let us help you improve. Without transparency and trust, we won't be able to help you to our full capabilities.
6. Make us part of your team: Give us access to your SMEs and operational staff. Invite us to team events. We need to become part of your company and earn your staff's trust too.
7. Keep talking: Regular dialogue throughout the whole process is so important to make sure all parties are doing what they need to do.
8. If it's not working, off hire us: Sometimes we aren't the best fit for what you are trying to achieve, or even don't deliver what you've asked for (I don't count myself in this category, obviously 😊).
9. Tell us how we have done: We need to know how we can improve. ALL feedback is welcomed. And we love a testimonial for our profile 😊.

News Flash: We don't get time off to be sick – if we aren't working, we aren't earning.

I've spoken lots about how I love to freelance and how to go about leaving the world of employment, but I don't think I've ever really talked about the bad bits.

I had a minor operation under general anaesthetic recently, coupled with several deadlines that I had to hit. So, I thought I would let you know how rubbish that can be...

I knew it was coming three weeks out, so I blocked two days out on my diary and told my clients I wouldn't be available. Two days. Bloody luxury for me, total panic from clients.

On the third day after the op I was back at work (albeit in my comfies), feeling exhausted, in pain and, to be honest, a bit low. I knew I was going to have to work the weekend to make up for the two days I had off.

Would I do it differently? Probably not. Here is my advice for fellow freelancers who need time off for personal reasons:

- Plan for the time off if you can
- If it is an emergency, accept it – there is nothing you can do
- Inform clients – they need to know where they stand
- Provide clients with solutions – if a bid is due in and you can't complete the work, put them in touch with other freelancers or companies who can source them, like our Bid Solutions
- Accept help from others at home
- Put your Out of Office on
- If you absolutely MUST do stuff, try and limit your hours
- Have a nap in the afternoon
- Feed yourself the good stuff
- Drink plenty of water
- Get some fresh air

**Just remember - whatever life throws at you, we are humans, not robots.**



*Kathryn Potter*

# TEAM MEMBER TO PATHFINDER

**“What do you do?” It’s an interesting and intriguing question these days, considering where I started, where I am now and what happened in between.**

**What is the motivation to stay permanent, to go contracting or freelance, or start a business? What skills are needed? What should you be aware of before taking the leap out of permanent employment into the contracting world or starting your own business?**

## PERMANENT

I started in bids as many of us do - by accident. Trained in journalism, communication and English, I wanted to work in Marketing or Organisational Communication; I wasn’t expecting to end up writing bid responses. I started as Sales Support to two Sales Managers at a busy business travel company. We formed a close-knit team. Both Sales Managers were hands-on as far as developing solutions and responses went, and I owe my colleague, Joanne, a debt of gratitude for teaching me how to develop customer-centric responses. It was a ferociously busy place to be for almost three years, with long nights and occasionally silly hours but there was always a sense of ‘team’ and mutual support.

**Skills:** a sense of humour, commitment to being part of a team, enthusiasm, willingness to work long hours, ability to transfer complicated information into something clear and concise, tenacity, ability to set boundaries.

**Prepare for:** being expected to leap in and plug the gap at a moment’s notice, rollercoaster emotions as you shift from one bid to the next, exhaustion, feeling undervalued and underpaid.

**Motivations:** wanting to be part of a team, job security, opportunities for career progression, known salary and benefits, paid holidays.

## CONTRACTOR

I then met my husband, an analyst developer contracting in IT, who was sure there was more scope and more money available to me in the contracting world. I said I didn’t know whether contracting existed in bids. It turned out it did. I was terrified, signing up for something impermanent (my first contract was a nine-month maternity cover role) and uncertain. I did take the leap though, contracting for close to 11 years (including two patches of maternity leave) and developed my skills, grew an amazing network of colleagues and friends and loved the change of scenery and challenges that came with each new opportunity.

**Skills:** in addition to what’s needed for being permanent - bidding experience, motivation, ability to learn quickly and ask questions, confidence in yourself, being able to deal with people at any organisational level, willingness to take chances, professionalism, an understanding of how small the industry actually is, developing good relationships with recruiters.

**Prepare for:** not finding a contract immediately, ups and downs between contracts, needing to find your feet quickly, being left to do the work after the permies go home, listening to complaints, self-doubt, getting paid more (and needing to be better at financial planning and budgeting - there’s no sick leave or holiday pay as a contractor), learning about things you didn’t know existed, fewer opportunities for career development/training, the opportunity to form an incredible network of people, keeping up with relevant legislation (e.g. IR35, taxes and running a company), paying for insurances and technology. Also be prepared for some animosity from permanent employees who may see you as trying to show them up.

**Motivations:** more money, opportunities to work on interesting proposals and projects across multiple sectors, varied challenges, less office politics, freedom to take time out for travelling or anything else.

## FREELANCER

Moving to freelancing from the comparative safety of contracting was a shock, although it suited me from a work-life balance perspective at the time. Freelancing is as close as it gets to running your own business (but without employing anyone or subcontracting work out). You are totally free to say when you are available and what hours you want to work, and it really is up to you to take on a role or opportunity. I was also exposed to a wider variety of roles.

**Skills:** as for contracting.

**Prepare for:** as for contracting and add in the potential for a bigger dose of uncertainty, a wobblier cash flow, sometimes needing to work extra hours to balance things.

**Motivations:** better work-life balance, more flexibility, the ability to pick your jobs.

## BUSINESS OWNER

A year ago, I decided to pursue my passion - bid content libraries. Having contracted for a decade and dealt with the challenges of outdated and at times no information, I decided I'd leap into the unknown and specialise in providing something I believe will improve the way bid teams function. Thanks to developing that network of contacts and experience across a wide range of industry sectors as a contractor, and finding I have a previously unknown knack for sales, I am doing something I really love and believe in. I get to work with people across a

range of sectors and with professionals who freelance in the world of bids who can fill in when I am maxed out. Maybe one day there will be an office with a team of people... Running a business provides you with endless potential for charting your own path - decide what you want to do and run with it.

**Skills:** everything you ever learnt from being permanent, contracting and freelancing; an ability to accept defeat, get up and keep going; willingness to learn everything about running a business.

**Prepare for:** it taking longer than planned to get off the ground, learning to stifle self-doubt, working longer hours (initially anyway), potential for a wobblier cash flow, planning everything and having an overall picture of what is happening, changing your job role entirely (depending on what you want to achieve).

**Motivations:** wanting to change the way things work, generate jobs for others, more financial freedom, pursuing your passion.

## BE PREPARED

However your journey unfolds, at each step think about your motivations, what support you need (friends, family, six-months' worth of savings...), the skills you have and the skills you need to develop - then simply enjoy the ride!



**7/10**

**SURVEYED SAID THEY  
WOULD RECOMMEND  
CONTRACTING AS  
A CAREER CHOICE**

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# WELCOME TO THE UK CONTRACTOR SURVEY 2019

The survey, conducted by Bid Solutions, aimed to deliver the first meaningful research specifically focussed on the UK bid and proposal contractor market.

## Acknowledgements

This survey would not have been possible without the fantastic support and feedback from Pippa Birch, Jon Williams, Rick Allen, Holger Garden and Simon Wellstead.



# 2019

## UK CONTRACTOR SURVEY - DETAILED ANALYSIS

We wanted to:

- Understand contractor readiness for IR35 legislation changes
- Review contractor working practices
- Report on contractor KPIs and service quality metrics
- Understand contractor market sentiment.

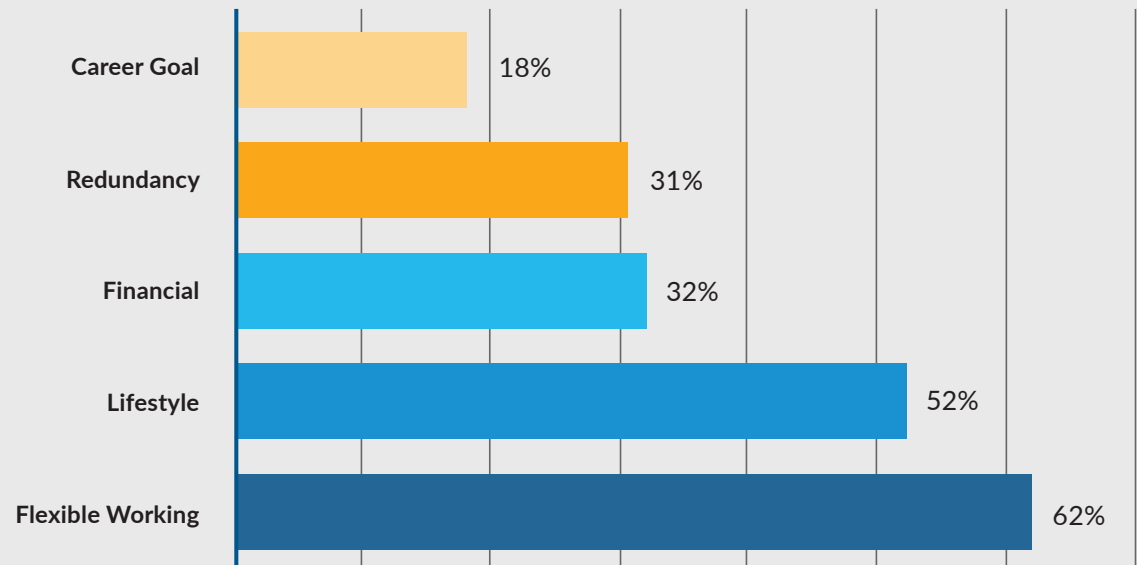
In total, we received 196 completed surveys - approximately 20% of the UK bid and proposal contractor market. Whilst care must be taken interpreting data from a sample of this size, we are confident that contractors and clients seeking contractor services will find the results informative.

### CORE REASONS FOR CHOOSING CONTRACTING

In a profession where so many reach burnout, it was no real surprise that 62% of respondents said flexibility of working hours was the primary reason for choosing to operate as a contractor. 52% also cited lifestyle as a core reason. Redundancy plays its part, with 31% stating this as core reason. Interestingly, less than one in three stated financial gain as a reason for choosing this path.

Other reasons stated included: geographical location didn't suit office work; providing a better service than existing contractors; developing bid skills; variety of work; and the only way to juggle family commitments.

Note: Multiple reasons could be selected



## CHALLENGES FACING CONTRACTORS

We received very candid feedback on the challenges currently facing contractors. 150 comments have been grouped into 10 core 'challenge' categories:

1. Managing client expectations. Many respondents stated clients setting unrealistic timescales, late engagement and pressure to win the bid as their biggest challenges.
2. Managing downtime. One of the benefits of contracting is the ability to have longer periods of leave. However, many stated that they struggled to balance extended breaks with work.
3. Feast or famine. The unpredictable nature of contracting was proving extremely stressful for many.
4. Increased competition driving day rates down. False marketing and win-rate claims made it difficult to operate on a level playing field.
5. Tender date changes (issue and submission) made it very difficult to juggle a pipeline of work and client expectations. Delays caused a high degree of anxiety.
6. Isolation. Many hadn't considered the implications of long periods spent working alone.
7. Administration required to run a successful business and the implications of IR35 legislation.
8. Work / life balance worse than when permanently employed.
9. Finding new clients. Much of the contract work is southern-based.
10. Securing a mortgage / loans with 'sporadic' income.

Despite these challenges, seven out of ten said they would recommend contracting as a career choice.

## TOTAL YEARS WORKING IN THE PROFESSION

83% of respondents had more than 10 years' experience working in the bid and proposal profession; of these, 30% had more than 20 years' experience. This suggests the contract market is comprised of very experienced professionals.

30% of respondents had been contracting for 5 years or less. 50% had been contracting for less than 10 years. This mirrors the market shift we have witnessed over recent years, with the contractor base rapidly expanding.

## WHERE DO YOU PREDOMINANTLY DELIVER SERVICES?

Almost half (49%) of respondents deliver their services remotely or from home. 32% deliver services in London and the South East. 16% work nationwide, essentially going wherever the work is. 3% regularly work across Europe / Middle East / Africa.

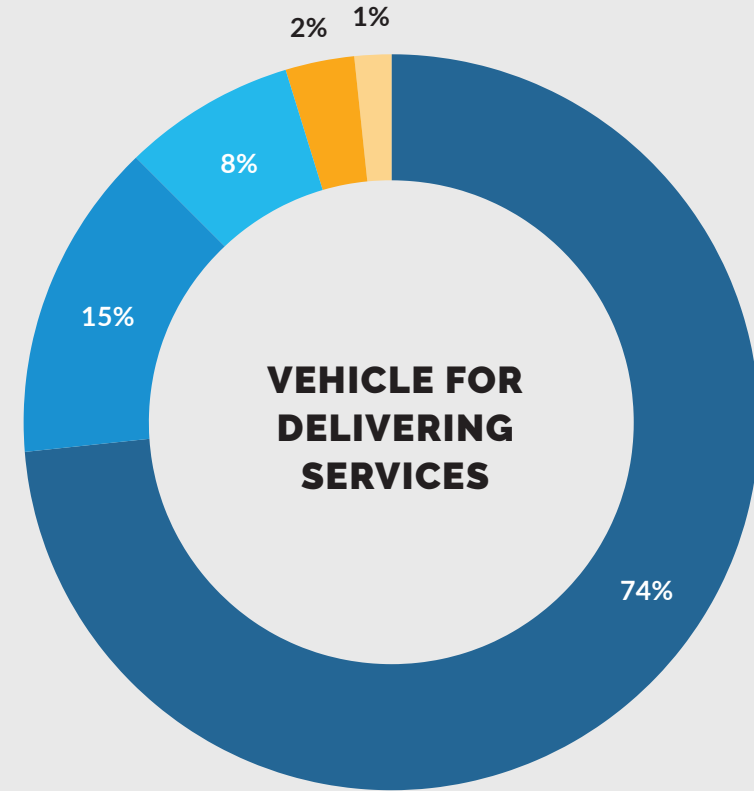
The services most delivered from home were Graphic Design (74%), Proofreading (58%) and Bid Writing (53%).

# 2019

## UK CONTRACTOR SURVEY - DETAILED ANALYSIS

How do you provide your services to the end client?

74% of respondents provide services via a limited company. 15% operate as sole traders. Only 8% are currently working through a payroll agency. This suggests that changes in IR35 regulations could affect the majority of those currently contracting.



- As a limited company
- Sole trader
- Through an employment agency
- Through another individual (not an agency)
- As a partnership

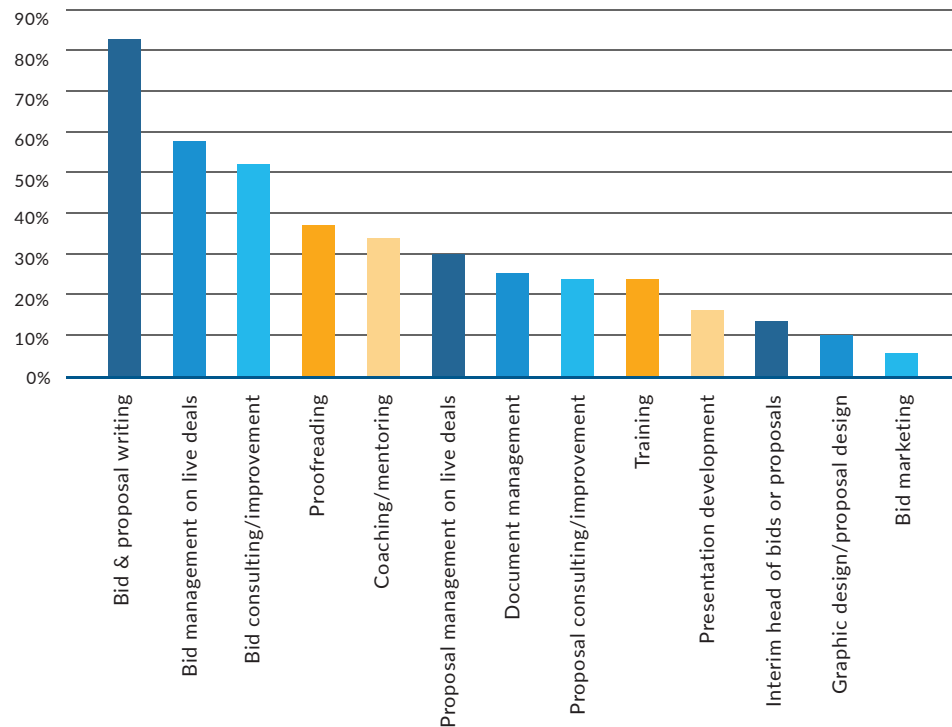


## SERVICES OFFERED

98% of those surveyed offered clients more than one service. This confirms the real strength and depth of skills contained within the UK contractor base. Bid & Proposal Writing was the most frequently sold service with 83% delivering this in the previous 12 months. Bid Management Services (on live opportunities) were delivered by 58% of respondents. 60% of those delivering Bid Management on live deals also offered Bid Writing services.

At the opposite end of the scale, only 10% sold Graphic Design Services, with 6% selling Bid Marketing. Although covered under the broader 'Consulting' headings, several other specific services were listed as being delivered: Bid Content Library Development; Capture Planning; APMP Accreditation Services; and Financial Modelling.

## SERVICES SOLD IN LAST 12 MONTHS



## SERVICE DELIVERY

85% of contractors stated they typically deliver services independently. 75% of all billable time was spent on live bids and proposals, with only 25% spent on consulting/bid improvement projects. Working on live deals often involves working under the direct instruction of a client and this could make it difficult to prove the contract is outside of IR35. It also suggests the day-to-day reality of contracting can often mean just rolling your sleeves up and getting stuck into a bid rather than being able to cherry-pick consulting assignments.

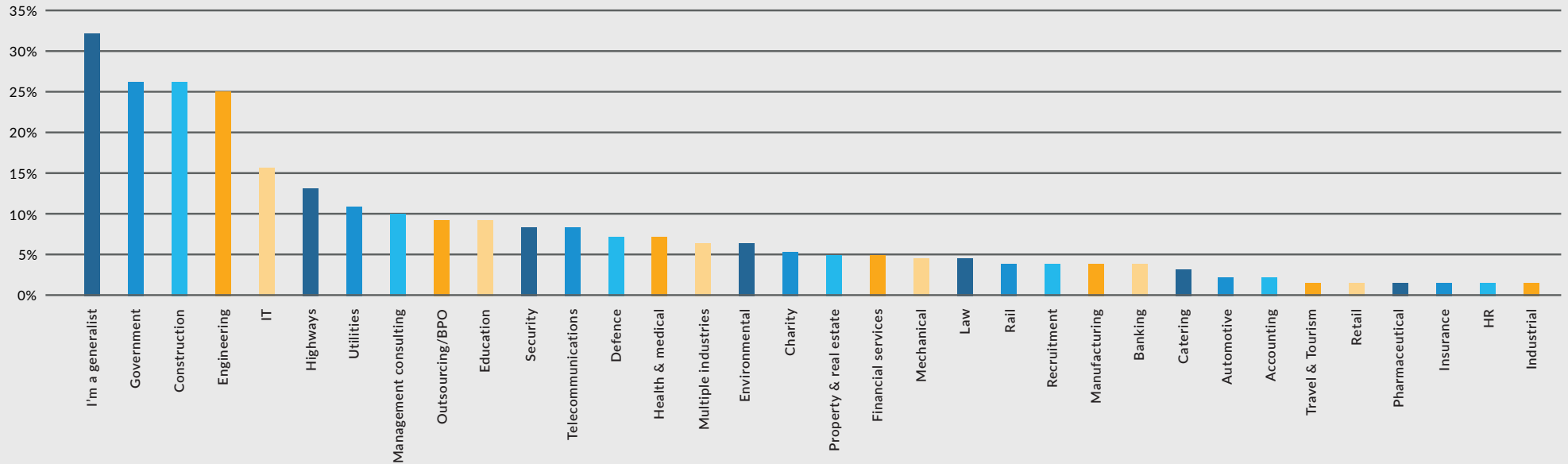
# 2019

## UK CONTRACTOR SURVEY - DETAILED ANALYSIS

### INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

One in three contractors stated they were generalists, working successfully across multiple industries. Whilst all industries are represented with specialist bid skills, most respondents were focussed on Construction, Civil Engineering, IT, Utilities and Government opportunities.

### INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE



## WORKING HOURS

Whilst 60% of contractors determine their own hours, 40% appear to be under the instruction of the client. In such instances, it can be hard to argue against being a “disguised employee”.

25% of respondents had increased their utilisation over the previous 12 months, with a corresponding number having decreased utilisation. However, 50% of those with decreased utilisation cited personal choice as the reason, with the remaining 50% citing market conditions.

When experiencing periods of excessive workload, respondents cited several coping methods; whilst 62% work increased hours, 48% regularly declined work. Only 9% increased prices to balance demand (multiple options could be selected).

## EARNINGS COMPARISON

Whilst not cited as a core reason for choosing contracting, 60% said their earnings were better than their last salary in permanent employment. Only 9% said they were earning less.

For those contracting for two or more years, 36% had seen year-on-year revenue growth (with 12% experiencing more than 50% growth), 31% had seen revenues reduce and 33% said revenue was flat.

## TRAINING & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Self-development does not appear to be a priority for most contractors. Only 21% of respondents had attended any bid or proposal training in the previous 12 months. Those that had developed skills listed the following areas of focus: Bid Writing; Capture Management; Commercial / Financial; and APMP Certification.

On average, respondents are spending just under two days per month on personal development. One in five spent no time focused on personal development.

## UNEXPECTED SURPRISES

Most respondents had a well thought through plan before transitioning to a life of contracting. 76% stated there were no unexpected surprises. From the 24% that did experience surprises (both positive and negative), there are some valuable lessons to share:

- Whilst demand for services is high, many smaller companies simply cannot afford an experienced bid contractor
- The sheer volume of administration (contracts, accounts, tax, insurance) to run a small business was overwhelming
- The period between contracts can often run into many months – this has proved very challenging for those with regular outgoings
- Working on your own can be very lonely at times
- Balancing business development whilst in a contract proved almost impossible for many
- Getting paid on time has often strained existing client relationships
- Those with a specialist skill have often had to become generalists to survive
- There is significantly more competition than anticipated
- There is no sick pay
- It is easy to find work if you are flexible and adaptive.



# 2019

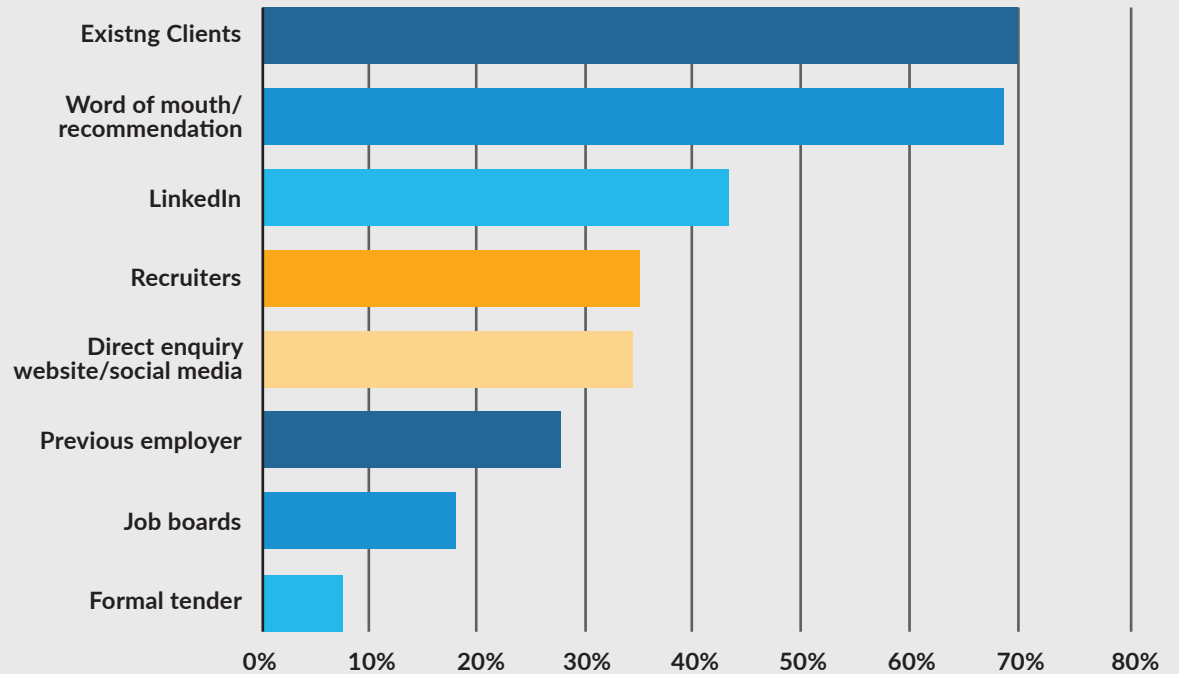
## UK CONTRACTOR SURVEY - DETAILED ANALYSIS

92% of respondents spent less than five days per month on business development; of these, 37% spent less than one day. Many respondents said they could only focus on business development when out of contract.

Only 12% said their marketing spend was planned and it was heavily concentrated on website development, with industry events and paid search following closely behind. Sponsorship and promotions received the lowest spend.

### SOURCES OF WORK

Whilst all respondents listed a mix of work sources, existing clients and word of mouth were by far the most frequently cited. Clearly, existing relationships and personal networks play a very important part in the contractor model. Formal tenders and job boards were the least cited sources of work.



## SERVICE QUALITY

All respondents appear to operate a balanced scorecard of metrics, but when it comes to measuring service quality, repeat business appears to be the most valued metric. Only 42% used win-rate as a measure of service quality, and this was evenly represented across the range of services delivered.

Win-rate as a concept appears extremely divisive, not just in the survey but across the profession. Whilst 65% of respondents claimed to track their win-rate, less than half then went on to use it as a marketing message. Claims such as 'win-rate is fake' and 'win-rate is a myth' were widely voiced, although these were countered by 'win-rate is vital to my success'.



## SERVICE PRICING

Whilst respondents operated a variety of pricing models, the overwhelming majority (88%) priced services on a day-rate or hourly basis. One in five also regularly worked on a 'project price'. Less than 5% typically worked on a 'risk-reward' basis.

## IR35

Only 10% of respondents stated they fully understood IR35 regulations and proposed legislative changes.

There are many myths and misconceptions associated with IR35. Many of the measures listed by respondents in preparation for IR35 changes will not provide adequate protection. Simply having your own equipment, business insurance or multiple clients will not individually or collectively guarantee operating outside of IR35 rules. Less than 50% of respondents regularly delivered services using their own equipment, making it hard to demonstrate the relationship is truly business to business when the client's equipment is being used.

Many contractors rely heavily on substitution clauses in order to operate outside of IR35. Ask yourself this question: On any recent assignment, could you truly have sent a replacement consultant to deliver the services - a consultant that the client had never met, interviewed or assessed? While 35% of respondents answered yes to this question, the 65% who answered no would potentially be in violation of IR35.

82% of respondents have never independently assessed IR35 risks. Addressing this must now surely become a business priority for all contractors. A good place to start, albeit not an absolute guarantee, is HMRC's own employment status checklist: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-employment-status-for-tax>.

Only 8% of respondents stated the new rules would make them reconsider operating as a contractor, although 61% were still assessing the risk.

# TERMS OF BUSINESS

**One in three contractors did not always agree terms of business before embarking on a contract. This is a significant issue for our profession that urgently needs addressing. The implications include:**

- Professional Indemnity insurances are generally invalidated without a formal contract in place
- No agreement on deliverables or timescales
- No guarantees of getting paid on time (or at all)
- No mechanism for managing disputes
- No clarity on intellectual property ownership
- It would be extremely difficult to defend an IR35 investigation.

From the survey, 98% of respondents said their payment terms were 30 days or less, with many contractors demanding some form of upfront deposit / payment. 87% said their payment terms were respected by clients; however, 15% said they had occasionally waited over six months to receive payment.

Less than half of respondents (45%) had to regularly evidence their business insurances to clients. Less than 20% had to regularly evidence general business policies (Privacy, CSR, Equal Opportunities, etc). Despite the lack of client diligence in this area, over 60% of contractors still felt that insurances and policies demanded by clients were proportionate.

Only 12% of respondents said they had developed and protected intellectual property as part of their service offering.





# FINALLY, ONE PIECE OF ADVICE...

**The final question in the survey asked, “What one piece of advice would you offer anyone considering a switch to contracting?” We have summarised the 100+ responses into some wonderful insights and advice - mostly lessons learned the hard way! Don’t say you weren’t warned...**

- Get a good accountant and ensure you understand the basics of cash flow, profit and loss and balance sheets. Have a business plan, even if a simple one.
- Start while you have another job or at least have some clients lined up – or angle for redundancy and a pay-off.
- Find a good proofreader.
- Don’t be pressured into dropping your rate.
- Be realistic with earnings potential and have a rainy-day fund.
- Don’t try to be all things to all people. Pick a niche and build a client base. Work out your USP.
- Set KPIs and continuously self-assess your performance.
- Trust in your knowledge and capabilities.
- Treat clients with full respect regardless of how you feel about their process or team.
- Be prepared to never switch off – no more holidays where you forget about work.
- Never take sides in internal politics.
- Never be afraid to challenge a client if it really matters.
- Network, then network some more.
- Be honest with yourself about your abilities. You need to be a self-starter.
- Be good at what you do – there is a lot of competition.
- Go for it!

# IR35

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

**IR35 is the name given to tax legislation, introduced back in April 2000, that is intended to identify individuals who could be paying less tax than they should be. Most contractors, by their own admission, have not fully understood its implications.**

The legislation specifically targets those people who supply services to clients via their own company, generally known as a personal service company (PSC) whether it is a limited company or a limited liability partnership. In many instances, the HMRC believe these individuals are simply just “disguised employees”. IR35 is intended to ensure that two people working in a similar role for the same employer pay the same PAYE taxes and National Insurance.

Under proposed changes to legislation due to come into effect in April 2020, medium and large companies will be responsible for determining whether the contractors they hire fall within the scope of IR35 legislation and are liable to pay a higher rate of tax. This is a seismic change, not

just for the burden it puts on the end client, but also for the contractor. Overnight, contractors will have to prove they are providing a business service and are not, for all intents and purposes, just acting as a temporary employee. Contractors that do get caught up in the change could be deemed an employee by HMRC but would still not be under direct employment by the company providing the contract, therefore potentially missing out on bonuses, benefits or ‘perks’ that employees often have.

A contractor generally takes many more risks running their business than an employee does. There is significantly more uncertainty when operating as a contractor. One benefit that has helped many mitigate this risk is a more tax efficient way of taking money out of their PSC – generally a mix of salary and dividends and allowable expenses. If this benefit is wiped out, many contractors may seriously question the viability of the risks versus the rewards. People contract for many reasons - not just financial – but it is forcing a significant and essential part of the workforce to reconsider their options.







It is generally agreed that there are four main areas that HMRC would review to determine if you are operating within or outside of IR35:

1. How much control do you have? Can you always demonstrate that you are in charge of the services you perform, where you perform them, when you perform them and how you perform them? In a bid scenario with immovable deadlines it might be very hard to prove that you have control of when and how the service is delivered. More often than not, you would be working to a clients' bid plan and timescales.
2. Are you exposed to financial risk? Can you prove that you have the same financial risks as other directors operating similar businesses? Employees typically have no financial risks. If HMRC can see a regular monthly 'salary' from one client, it might argue there is no financial risk and that IR35 is applicable.
3. Equipment. If your clients provide you with the equipment to deliver your services (IT, phone, proposal templates, proposal software, etc), HMRC might interpret this as an employee / employer relationship as opposed to business to business. The contractor is not taking any real financial risk in regard to purchasing equipment to deliver the service.
4. Working Relationship. HMRC looks very closely at the implied relationship of any service contract to determine if it mirrors employee / employer or limited company / client. For instance, if the contract explicitly details notice periods or a fixed period of work, it would be deemed too similar to employment, not delivery of a service. Also, could you readily send in a substitute contractor to deliver the services without the client's prior approval?

It is fair to say there is still much confusion surrounding this legislation and even the government has contradicted itself on several occasions. Two examples (taken from the HMRC website) are provided below demonstrating the potential difficulties and how a contractor may have a mixture of IR35 and non-IR35 turnover under the new legislation.

John would be considered self-employed for this contract	John would be considered an employee for this contract
<p>John is taken on by a manufacturing firm to design and implement a new bid process. John and the firm have agreed a price for the job and when he will deliver the new process. John will mainly work at home, using his own equipment to complete the task. John is free to work for other clients but faces a contractual penalty if he doesn't deliver the process on time, to the agreed standard. This represents a significant financial risk to John if he fails to deliver the final bid process as agreed.</p>	<p>The manufacturing firm needs someone to maintain and update a bid library. It hires John to work for three days a week, eight hours each day. The firm provides John with a laptop so he can work at its offices or at home with permission. He reports to the Head of Bids and must follow their style guide and format to update the bid library. The firm is responsible for providing and updating the proposal software John needs to do his work. If John must work longer than his contracted hours, he will be paid overtime. John can work elsewhere on the days he is not working at the firm, with their agreement.</p>

Without wishing to state the obvious, we are by no means tax experts and the information provided here is purely for background. If you are unsure about your IR35 status, we strongly recommend you consult a solicitor and an accountant.

# ABOUT OUR EXPERTS



PIPPA BIRCH

## HIGHWAYS & CIVIL ENGINEERING EXPERT

Pippa has been a Bid Writer for over 15 years, working as an employee for major companies within the Highways and Civil Engineering Sector for the first ten. She started freelancing in 2012 which led her to write for companies across a variety of sectors (construction, facilities management, custody and forensics).



NIGEL HUDSON

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXPERT

Nigel is passionate about professional development. He designed and delivered the APMP award-winning Bid Academy for Vodafone and co-authored Europe's leading proposal syllabus with Strategic Proposals. He's trained more than 4,000 people worldwide.



HOLGER GARDEN

## CONSTRUCTION EXPERT & PROFESSIONAL COACH

Holger is a bid manager and writer, and a personal / team performance coach. He spends most of his time supporting construction clients bidding for civil infrastructure and building projects, but his transferable skills have led to his work in the medical, charity and security arenas also. He works with businesses of all sizes to help them win more work.



KATHRYN POTTER

## CONTENT EXPERT

Kathryn's experience in bid writing covers sectors as varied as IT outsourcing to financial services, security services to reprographics and construction and rail. She sees content as the cornerstone of proposal development and understands that no matter what, it needs to be relevant and up-to-date.



ANDREW HAIGH

## PUBLIC SECTOR BIDDING EXPERT

Andrew is an expert in bidding and tendering, specialising in competitive formal bids into EU Public Sector organisations. Andy is an authority on EU procurement legislation and can bring all these capabilities together to initiate and drive major complex bids through to a successful completion.



MARTIN SMITH

## MANAGING DIRECTOR, BID SOLUTIONS

Martin is passionate about helping clients win new business. With increasingly savvy procurement professionals, more competition and new technology changing the way we bid, it is his job as Managing Director to ensure Bid Solutions provides market leading people, tools, training and solutions to help you win more business.



## MEL MAE SMITH

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXPERT**

Mel chairs the Board of the UK Association of Proposal Management Professionals (APMP UK). She is passionate about developing and improving the bids and proposals industry and sharing her skills with clients. Mel is a Principal Business Winning Consultant for Harmonic.



## JON WILLIAMS

### **PROPOSAL MANAGEMENT & APMP TRAINING EXPERT**

Jon and his team work with clients worldwide to help them establish winning proposal capabilities and to capture major deals. He has built and led numerous bid and proposal centres; managed, reviewed and benchmarked countless proposals; worked in over thirty countries; and trained many thousands of course participants.



# BQ

DESIGN BY  
**SMSW MEDIA**  
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