

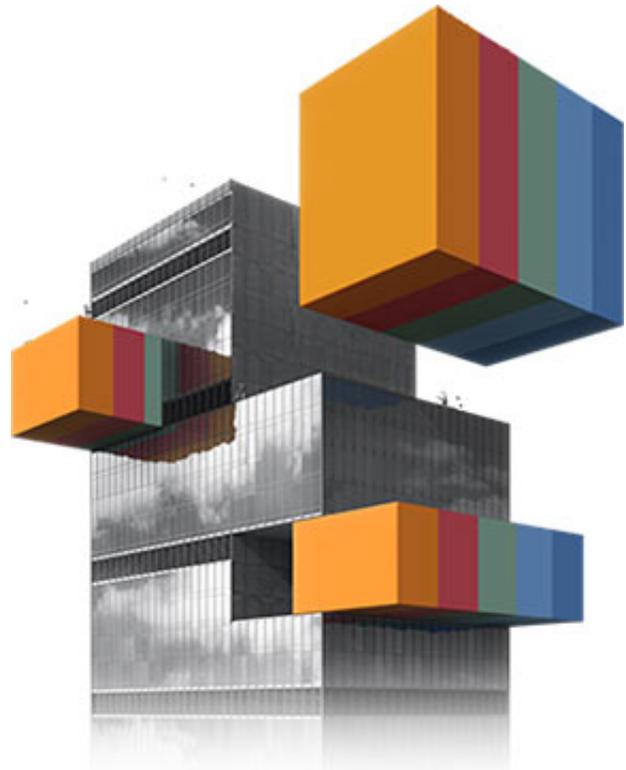
## Decisions, Decisions, Decisions...

### Selecting the right work model doesn't need to be difficult

In the changing world of work, managers have multiple work models to choose from, technological advances are making it easier to get work done, and candidates have more choices on how to be engaged. With all these options, you'll need a degree in work mechanics to understand it all and make the right choices. Instead, I'm offering a few fundamentals to get you started down your path as a manager.

#### **Work Models of Many Forms**

As a manager, you know the type and amount of work that needs to get done. What you may not know is the best way to get it done. Recent GAO Reports indicate that the contingent workforce can range from 5 percent to more than a third of the total workforce to complete work across most organizational functions.<sup>1</sup> However, these engagement models typically only represent what's on the surface and does not factor the "other workforce" or work models options.



Companies deploy a variety of non-traditional work models, sometimes up to twice the size of their contingent workforce. These models can include packaging work into projects and engaging consulting firms, outsourcing work, or unbundling work and engaging freelancer networks and crowdsourcing firms.

## Make the Right Decision

So, how do you decide among these and other options, as a manager?

Advancements in cost-per-hire models, decision support frameworks, and classification systems now enable managers to focus on identifying best conditions for each model. Ideally, these tools support the determination of the optimal work model in real-time, taking into account the unique factors impacting your business, market, and industry. For example, consider using a project service provider or a virtual freelancer network such as Upwork, if work can be clearly defined into tasks with clear deliverables and is non-core to the business. Conversely, a permanent worker model is often ideal when work product is core to your business, intellectual property needs to be retained, and workers are tightly integrated into company culture. The astute manager combines multiple work models to complete a body of work, leveraging the best conditions of each. The bottom line is that investment in building decision models and selecting the right work model will drive greater efficiency in terms of speed of work delivery and balancing of staff resources, while lowering organizational cost.

Now, what does this mean for the worker? Similarly, workers have options and depending upon their personal preferences can be engaged on a permanent, contingent, part-time, or freelancer basis. Permanent positions traditionally offer job stability, career development, and enhanced benefits; while contingent workers and consultants are driven by flexibility in schedule, variety of work assignments, and pay. With the latter, a recent Ardent Partners survey indicates that the flexible workforce is continuing to expand with estimates of nearly 45% of the total workforce by 2017.<sup>2</sup> Bottom line: there is a work type for everyone and understanding these motivations as a manager is key to selecting the right model and securing the future talent you need.

Navigating the changing world of work can be difficult. But, with a complete understanding of your options and decision tools to get work done—while understanding workforce drivers—it can be a lot less challenging.

Peter Ludwig



Director, Strategic Client Solutions & Consulting Services Project Management Office



<sup>1</sup> GAO-15-168R: Published: Apr 20, 2015. Publicly Released: May 20, 2015

<sup>2</sup> The State of Contingent Workforce Management 2014-2015, Ardent Partners