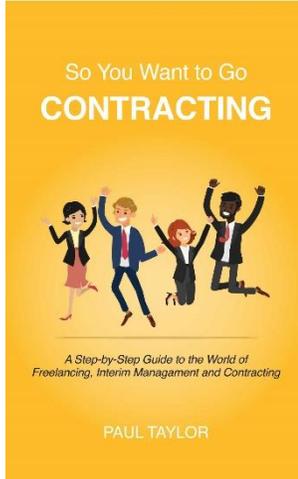


Do you want to Freelance or Contracting?



(Step-by-Step Guide to the World of Freelancing, Interim Management and Contracting).

Paul Taylor

Consultant | Chair and NED | Speaker | Author | Mentor | Lecturer

21st March 2019

About me – Paul Taylor

- Consultant with nearly 30 years experience of implementing change across the financial services, oil/gas, charities and professional bodies.
- Been contracting or freelancing for nearly 12 years
- Chair and NED for a variety of industry and social enterprises
- Author on several areas and recently published a book called “So you want to go contracting”
- Speaker on a variety of subjects (e.g. change , freelancing, technology, financial services, etc)
- Mentor to various people on areas on career planning, career changes, etc.
- An Associate Lecturer for the Open University STEM school teaching Technology Management.
- Obtained an MBA from the Open University in 1999 and is currently studying for a PhD at Middlesex University.
- Member of the British Computer Society

So You Want to Go
CONTRACTING



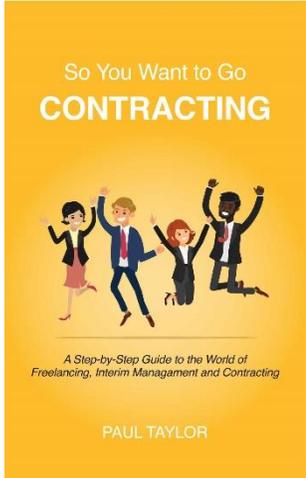
*A Step-by-Step Guide to the World of
Freelancing, Interim Management and Contracting*

PAUL TAYLOR

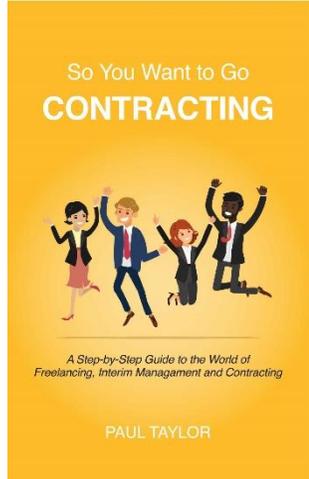
What exactly is contract, freelancing, etc?

Three terms are often used:

- Freelancer
 - Separate clients across several different sites.
 - Charge their clients an hourly rate or a fixed price.
 - Work on their own premises
 - Contractor
 - A single client site for a fixed period of time (such as several months)
 - Fixed hourly or daily rate.
 - Interim manager
 - Brought into to perform a 'stop gap' role , while the client recruits a permanent replacement.
-
- From my experience, the job roles titles make no difference.
 - You will either be hired (or not) by a client because of your skills and experience.



So you want to go contracting?



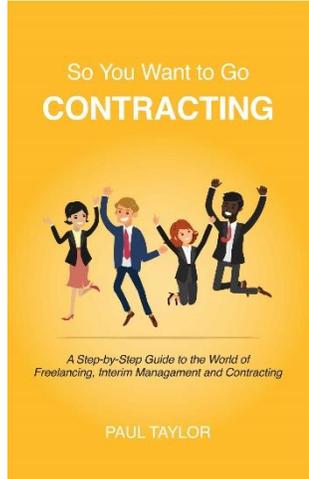
Is it a good choice for you?

How to set yourself up as a contractor?

How to get your first assignment?

How to operate on a day-to-day basis?

So you want to go contracting?



Is it a good choice for you?

How to set yourself up as a contractor?

How to get your first assignment?

How to operate on a day-to-day basis?

Is it a good choice for you?

Freelancing, contracting, interim management is not suitable for everybody !!!!

Therefore please think before making any decision !!

Why do people want to become a contractor?

- Poor Job Satisfaction
- Poor Work–Life Balance
- Poor Salary
- People Being Promoted above You
- Dull Work
- No Career Progression
- Being Promoted Away from Your Job
- Being Made Redundant from Permanent Work



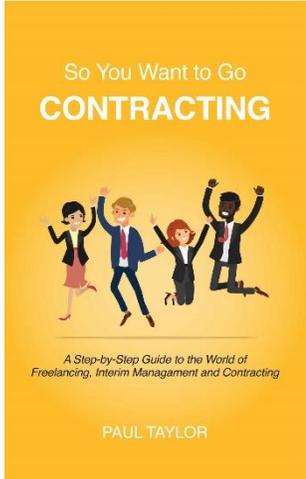
Is it a good choice for you?

Why do firms want contractors?

- Specialist Skills.
- Interim Management
- Change/Project Management
- Company Expansion
- Company Downsizing

Who would be your competition?

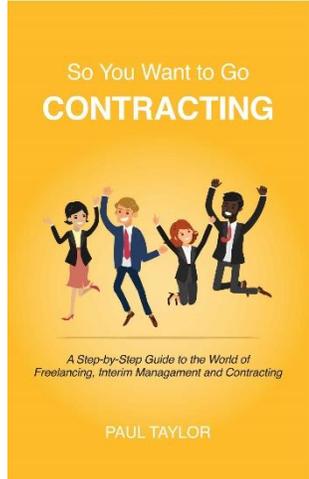
- Other Contractors
- Larger Consultancy Firms
- Permanent Staff at Client Sites



Is it a good choice for you?

The good points of being a contractor

- Control over Your Destiny
- Increase Earning Power
- More Interesting Work (including moving towards a portfolio career if that appeals?)
- It Is Easier to Leave If It Is Not Working Out
- Gaps between Contracts and Assignments
- No More (Or Reduced at Least) Office Politics
- Improved Work-Life Balance



Is it a good choice for you?

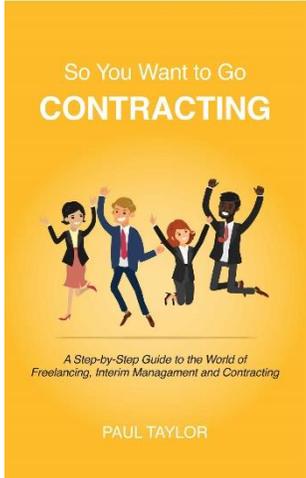
The bad points of being a contractor

- Gaps between Assignments
- Work Often Arrives At Short Notice
- No Sick Pay, Holiday Pay, Pension, Insurance, etc.
- Overheads of Running Your Own Company
- Keeping Your Skills Up-To-Date and Relevant
- The Constant Need to Look for Work
- No Management Progression

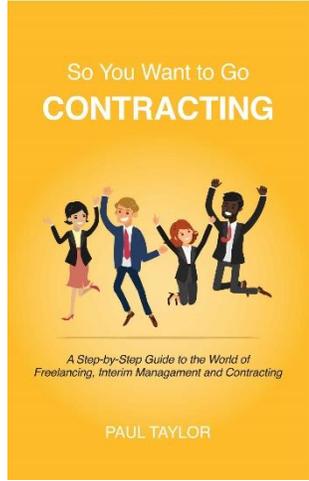
Finally remember your personal situation. If your personal circumstances (such as young family) require stability then contracting may not be for you (yet)!

Freelancing, contracting, interim management is not suitable for everybody !!!!

Therefore please find before making any decision !!



So you want to go contracting?



Is it a good choice for you?

How to set yourself up as a contractor?

How to get your first assignment?

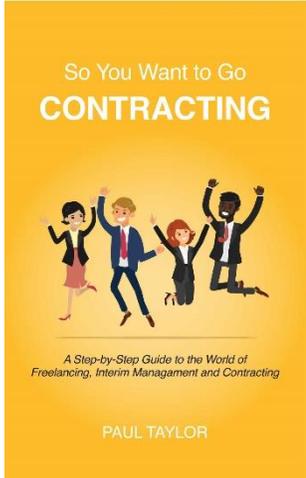
How to operate on a day-to-day basis?

How to set yourself up?

Perfect planning prevents **** poor performance!!!

Do Research On Your Industry

- Spend some time on this because it is important you do not rush without thinking
- Each industry will operate differently - e.g. Oil/Gas is very different to Government
- There are vast sources of data
 - People who have (or still are) contracting.
 - Various books in the market place
 - Social media and internet articles
 - Post messages on social media. People do answer
 - Understand that there is a seasonable movement for getting work - e.g. Summer, Xmas, etc
 - Speak to trade bodies
 - Attend presentation and webinars



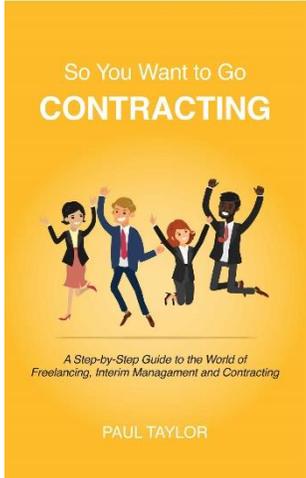
How to set yourself up?

Do You Have Sufficient Experience?

- Look yourself in the mirror and ask yourself,

“Do I have sufficient experience to actually make a living being a contractor?”

- It is important to ensure that you have sufficient experience to make the jump.
- I have seen a number of people make the jump too early without sufficient experience, which has caused problems down the line.
 - People either cannot get work.
 - People get poorly paid,
 - Working for challenging clients or end up working away from home for long periods of time.
- Have some sort of grounding in your industry before making the jump.



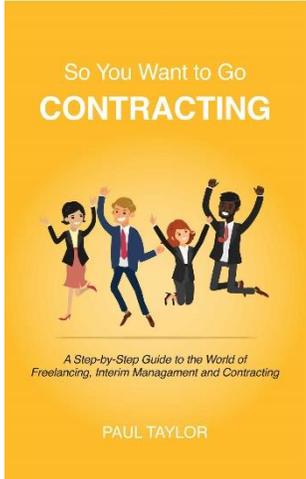
How to set yourself up?

Understand what you are – i.e. why would people employ you

- Be very specific and clear
- Hard skills (e.g. technology) vs soft skills (e.g. coping with stressful turnarounds)
- 20 words maximum to ensure it is sharp - e.g. "*Project Manager with a successful record dealing with large enterprise-wide change*"

Build a Cash Buffer

- It could take a while to get a piece of work and / or get your first invoice paid and this provides insurance
- The size of your cash buffer really depends on a person's own circumstances.
- Building this cash buffer could mean cutting down on expenses in the short term



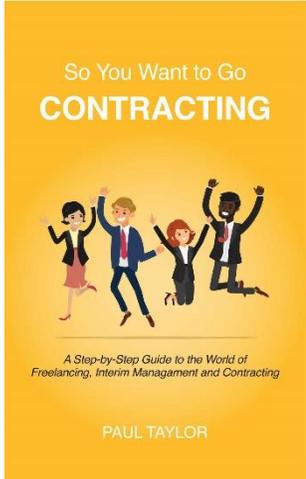
How to set yourself up?

Understand How You Will Get Work

- Agencies
- Direct to the client
- Employed via bigger consultancies
- Trade or specialist web-sites

What Rate Should I Charge?

- Need amount income to pay your bills as well as to live
- Two main ways
 - Day rate vs fixed rate per project / assignment
- What actual rate should you charge
 - Ensure you have sufficient income to cover your expenses etc.
 - What the market and potential clients are willing to pay



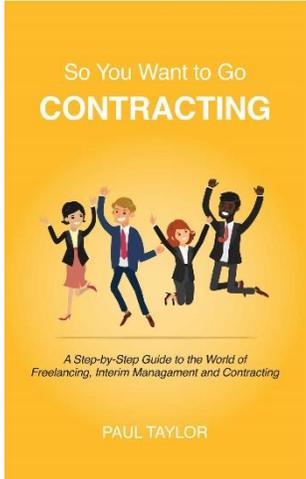
How to set yourself up?

Sort Out Your Pension

- A pension is probably a good idea
- But best to speak to a qualified advisor

Where to Work

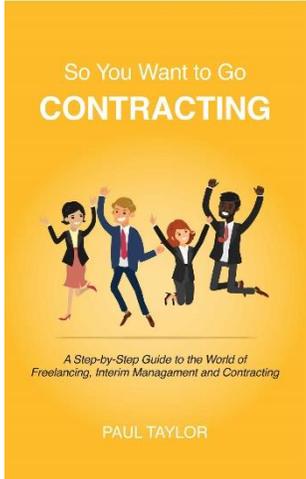
- Are you prepared to work away from home?
- This can be off putting for some people
- If so then who pays for travel, accommodation, etc



How to set yourself up?

Write a High Impact and Targeted CV

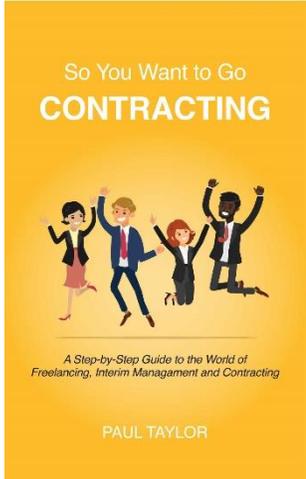
- A CV is a personal brochure to get you on the next stage of the process.
- A good CV will help but a bad one will stop you getting work
- Fours pages maximum split as follows
 1. Personal details – covering your name, address, email and telephone numbers
 2. A statement about yourself (e.g. “A Change Manager with over 25 years delivering change in the Oil/Gas Industry”) with key employment and skill highlights.
 3. A list of jobs or previous assignment in reverse data order
 4. List of relevant qualifications.
 5. List of interests especially if they are relevant to the job. For example pro bono or NED experience
- CVs may need to be tailored to assignments – especially part #2 above.
- This is extra work but worthwhile



How to set yourself up?

Learn Great Interview Skills

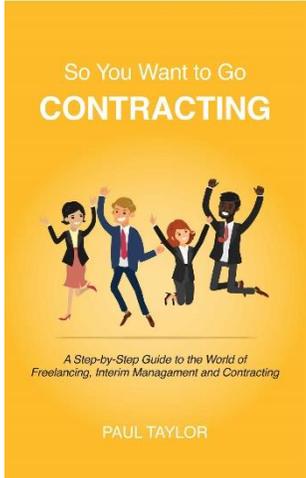
- Interviewing is a two way process.
 - They are interview you
 - You are seeing if you would like to work there
- Different formats ranging from formal process to sitting down for a coffee
- Regardless of the interview's format, the actual techniques are the same; viz:
 - Research the client
 - Prepare on what questions you are likely to be asked
 - Prepare some questions to ask the client.
 - Plan your journey to the interview (so you are not late)
 - Dress appropriately
 - Always be pleasant and friendly. Lots of smiles and happy body language.
 - When you leave the interview, always end on a high note with a hearty handshake and say, "Thanks."



How to set yourself up?

What Is Your Legal Set-Up?

- Umbrella company
 - Simple to join but can be inflexible
 - You will need an accountant.
 - Although often used by first time contractors.
- Your own limited company
 - Can take a while to set up but gives you flexibility
- Sole Trader
 - Very quick to set up but has unlimited liability.
- Traditionally, nearly all contractors go down the Umbrella Company and/or Own Limited Company options.
- Very few (if any) have taken the Sole Trader option
- However the main driver is who your client is happy or willing to engage with – therefore check !!



How to set yourself up?

IR35

- Complex piece of tax regulation to trap ‘disguised employees’.
 - People who are contracting in “name and structure” but effectively a long term employee.
 - If they are caught then they are taxed as an employer and not a contractor.
- Get proper legal advice (from your accountant, agent or employment lawyer) if you are concerned
- IR35 is being revised in 2020 for the private sector.

Ensure You Have the Correct Insurance in Place.

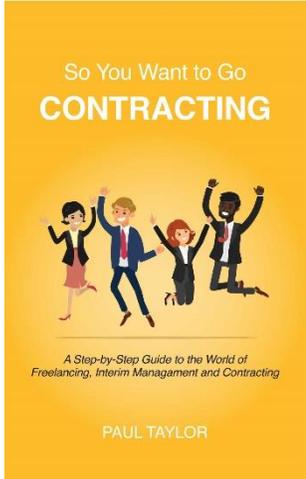
- Professional Indemnity - covers you for financial loss to your client for your mistakes or poor advice.
- Public Domain. covers you if you accidentally cause an accident on the work place
- Employer’s Liability. This is only needed if you have employees.
- However check what your clients need or demand



How to set yourself up?

Web-site

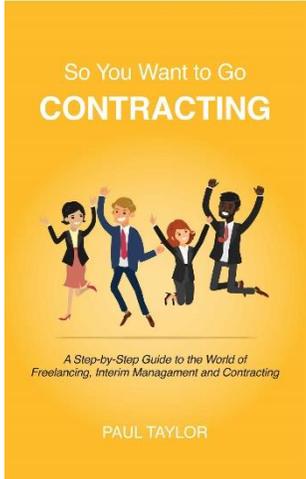
- There are four main stages:
 1. Registering a domain name
 2. Hosting the site
 3. Designing the site
 4. Maintaining the site
- My rule-of-thumb when design web sites is 'keep it simple' or 'less is more'. Nothing turns people off more than complex and hard to use websites.
- It should contain:
 - A simple logo
 - An (up-to-date) picture of yourself
 - A summary of your skills (taken from your CV)
 - Email contact detail
 - Links any other applicable sites



How to set yourself up?

LinkedIn Profile

- Remember social media is used heavily
- Tips / hints
 - Ensure there is suitable (and up-to-date) photo of you.
 - Ensure your headline is relevant; e.g. Consultant with experience of implementing technology change.
 - Ensure your job history is up-to-date and it matches your CV.
 - Ensure you have sent invites to all your key contacts. This should give the impression you are well connected.
 - Ask for recommendations. This should add gravitas to your profile.
 - Ensure any other achievements (such as qualification, publications, etc.) are included

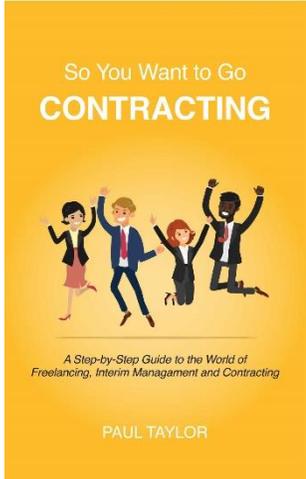


How to set yourself up?

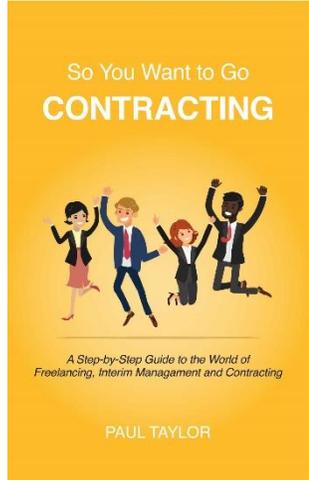
Others points

- Ensure your email signature is up-to-date and reflects that you are contracting.
- Business Cards
- Letter headed stationery
- Marketing materials (such as a brochure or presentation banner) or case studies.

Remember - Perfect planning prevents * poor performance !!!!***



So you want to go contracting?



Is it a good choice for you?

How to set yourself up as a contractor?

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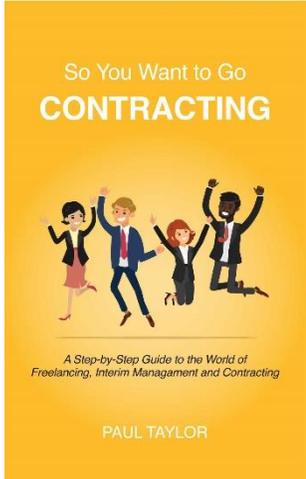
How to get your first assignment?

You May Need to Leave Your Permanent Job before Getting a Contract

- This is a big step and most people are very nervous when making it
- Clients will not wait for longer than four weeks for a start date.

Let the market know you are available

- Be proactive and determined.
- You need to let the market know you are available for work.
 - Send your CVs to any suitable agencies (and try to speak to a real person)
 - Send your CV to any direct contacts at possible clients (and follow-up with a telephone call)
 - Load and (re-load) your CV onto various job websites or job boards



How to get your first assignment?

Apply for roles

- You need to start hunting for roles.
- Send your CV to apply for roles.
 - Remember earlier advice regarding tailoring your CV
- When applied, try and speak to a human to see if you are suitable or not.
- What happens if two (or more agencies) approach you about the same position?
 - First come first served.
- Keep an activity log (or spreadsheet) of all the roles you have applied to track progress.

Be determined !!!

- Do not expect to get a contract straight away.
- Keep pushing and chasing.
- This can be frustrating, hard work, and sometimes very demotivating,

So You Want to Go
CONTRACTING



*A Step-by-Step Guide to the World of
Freelancing, Interim Management and Contracting*

PAUL TAYLOR

How to get your first assignment?

The interview or selection process

- Please remember interview preparation advice in the earlier section
- You should receive feedback reasonably quickly from the client which could cover anything
 - They want to make you an offer
 - You were not suitable and will not be taken forward
 - They have not made up their mind because they have other people to see.
 - Ask you to come back for another interview.
- However this also gives you the opportunity to determine whether you want to continue with the application.
- If you do not like the client or role then do not be afraid to withdraw your application.

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How to get your first assignment?

When you are offering a contract

- Pre-employment checks
 - Before anything is signed then there are often a set of (tedious) pre-employment checks
 - Personal - references, criminal records, legal proof to work in location, qualifications, gaps in employment, etc
 - Corporate - Certificate of incorporation, VAT certificate, Bank details etc
- Receiving, reviewing and (hopefully) signing the contract
 - Review it thoroughly to ensure it matches what was discussed / agreed earlier
 - Various points need checking

Rate	VAT	Start Date	Length	Hours of work
Work Location	Job Description	Notice Period (both ways)		Insurances reqd?
IR35 impact?	Invoicing process?		Intellectual Property?	

- If you are unhappy or unclear with any of the arrangements then it is important they are raised because once the contract is signed then it is very hard to change it.
- 'Lock in' or 'exclusivity' clause

So You Want to Go
CONTRACTING



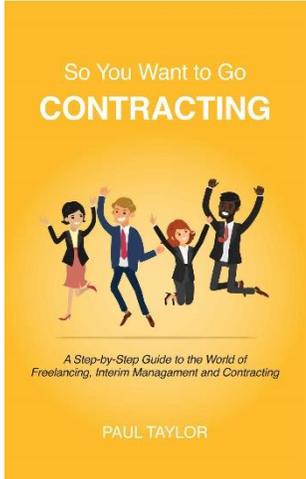
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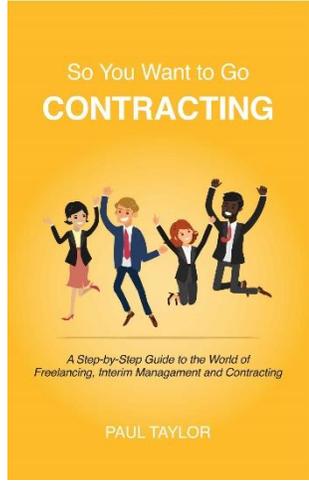
How to get your first assignment?

Starting a contracting

- Not that different to starting a permanent or any other role.
- However as an expensive contractor then you will be expected to get down to work immediately.
- Therefore you be thrown in at the deep end with reading, meeting key people and getting down to work.



So you want to go contracting?



Is it a good choice for you?

How to set yourself up as a contractor?

How to get your first assignment?

How to operate on a day-to-day basis?

How to operate on a day to day basis?

Maintain and Protect Your Reputation

- Your reputation is arguably your biggest asset as a contractor.
- Most industries are very small and tight knit and it is amazing who knows who.
- Therefore
 - Do not let people down. Deliver what you promised and, if possible, try and over-deliver.
 - Do not try to make other people look bad or at fault. Do not blame them for problems or set them up for failure.
 - Feel free to help them out.
 - Be open, honest and have high integrity.
 - Delivering bad news is a key skill for a contractor. Do not try to hide problems and do not lie.
 - Be nice and easy to work with. Be happy, be open, have good body language and be easy to contact (i.e. answer emails and telephone calls).
 - Try to look professional. Dress smartly. If you have a rucksack, make sure it is not torn or with logos on it.
 - Turn up on time.

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How to operate on a day to day basis?

Keep Your Skills Up to Date

- What skills need updating?
 - Check with clients and try and understand what skills they require.
 - Speak to agencies because they will know what skills their client are looking for.
 - Speak to other contractors to see what they feel is required.
 - Read the trade press, any relevant industry reports and various social media sites
- How to obtain new skills:
 - You will pick up new skills (and experiences) when you are working in a contract
 - Various business schools, colleges, universities and training companies run
 - You can read books (paper or electronic) to learn new skills.
 - It is possible to learn from social media web-sites (such as LinkedIn and Twitter).
 - One other good route is looking at YouTube videos.
 - There are also a large number of webinars and seminars covering a wide range of subjects.
 - Finally there are number of professional qualifications you can obtain such as PRINCE (for Project Management), ITIL (for Technology Service Management) and various accountancy qualifications.

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How to operate on a day to day basis?

Managing Your Business Affairs on a Day to Day Basis

- Raising Invoices and Tracking Them for Payment
- Pay People You Owe Money to
- Manage Your Business Expenses (And Ensure They Are Genuinely Business Related)
- Remember to Pay Yourself
- Monitor and Manage Your Cash Position

Regular Events That Need Management

- Year End Accounts
- Corporate Tax (For Own Limited Company Only)
- Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) Returns
- VAT Return
- Companies House Annual Return

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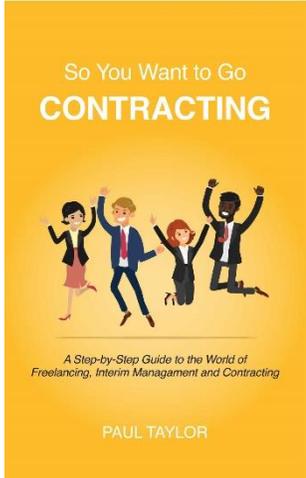
How to operate on a day to day basis?

Approaching the End of a Contract – Should I Stay or Go?

- The Client Does Not Extend You
- You Do Not Want to Be Extended
- You Are Being Extended

A Few Other Points to Remember

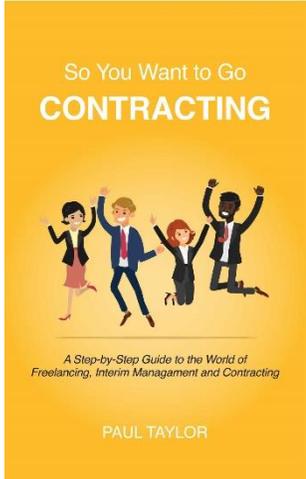
- Keep Networking
- Maintain Your Cash Buffer
- Keep Monitoring Your Personal Finances
- Keep your CV Up-to-Date
- Keep Your Web-Site Up to Date
- Keep Your LinkedIn Page Up to Date



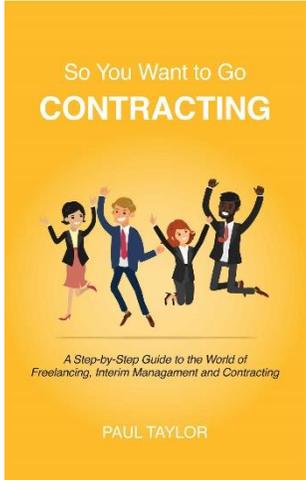
How to operate on a day to day basis?

Remember to Look After Yourself

- Keep the Cash Buffer Healthy
- Look After Yourself Personally
- Do Not Be Afraid to Ask for Help and Assistance



So you want to go contracting?



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ENJOY THE JOURNEY !!!!

Thanks for listening

Workshop on “So You Want to Go Contracting or Freelance?”

7th May 2019 6:30pm - 8:00pm at BCS London.

My contact details:

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Twitter: @paultaylor1001

Linkedin: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/paultaylor1>

