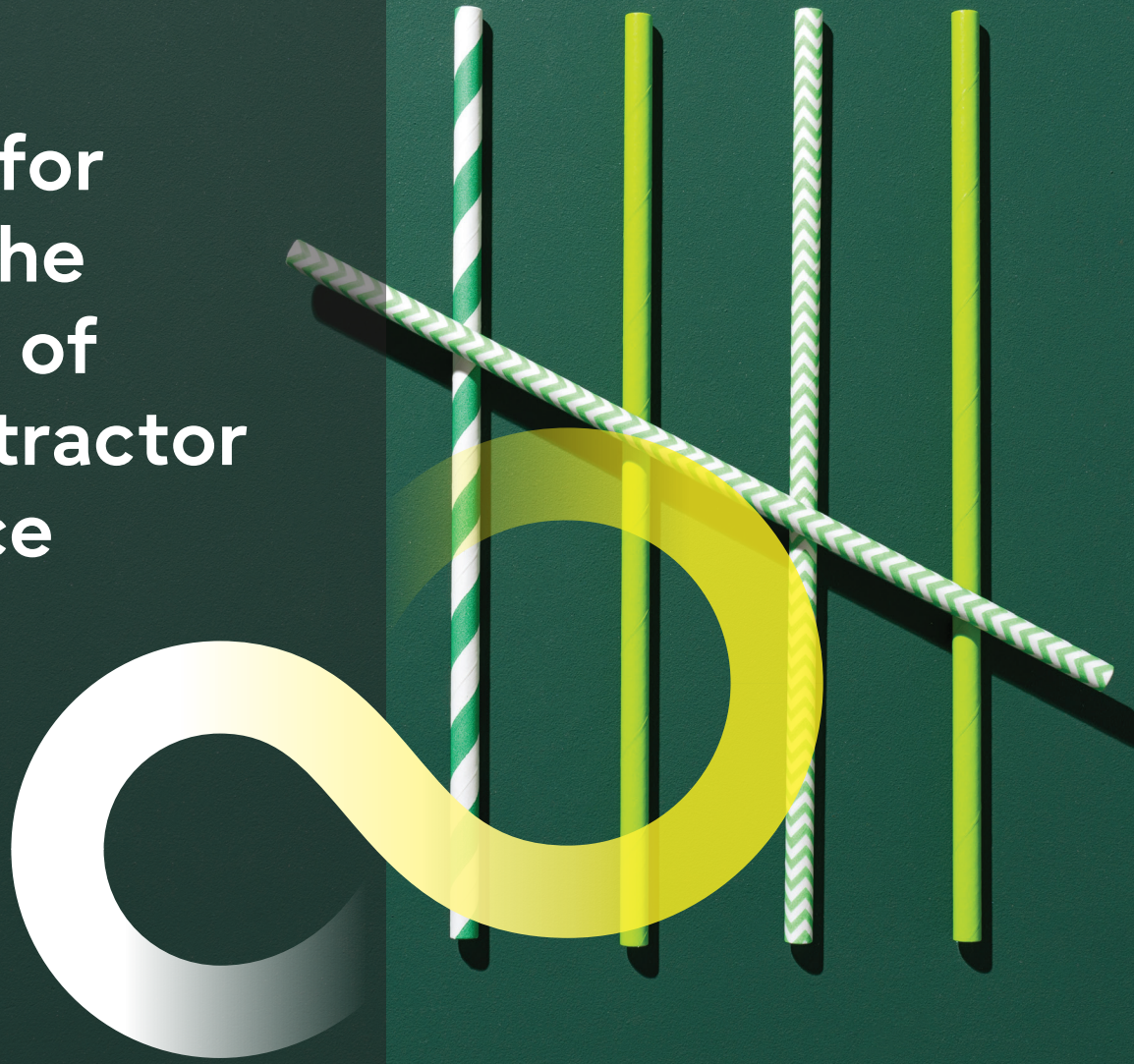




Five tips for getting the most out of your contractor workforce



If you're tackling a large transformation project, you've probably engaged a team of contractors to support delivery. Managed well, the additional skills and labour they provide can be invaluable. But managed poorly, they can drive up costs but fail to deliver the outcomes you require.

Here's some tips to ensure contractors deliver your project outcomes:

1. Build blended contractor/staff teams.

Blended teams of contractors and permanent staff give you the best of both worlds. Contractors provide niche subject matter expertise and advanced project delivery experience. They can provide the specialist skills and advice you need to accelerate delivery. But permanent staff provide invaluable context, real-life use cases, and they are motivated to get the right outcomes because they are the ones who will benefit. This blended approach allows for genuine and sustainable knowledge transfer empowering your staff to continue the work (or deliver future projects) independently. When it works, you shouldn't be able to tell which people are the permanents and which are the contractors in your team - we're all in this together.

2. Give contractors visibility across your wider organisation.

The more the team understands about the problem (and the context in which the problem exists) the better able they will be to deliver the right outcomes. Expose your contractors to the broader business, what they do, and what they are trying to achieve. Make sure they understand your goals. Embedding a contractor on-site or within an existing team will also speed this visibility. This approach will create a better solution for your primary project but may also unlock other opportunities to leverage the contractor's insights and specific skills on additional work.

3. Focus on business outcomes.

Measure your entire team (including your contractors) by your outcomes-based business metrics. Look beyond functional 'outputs' and towards meaningful 'outcomes' which deliver the benefits you seek. Expect contractors to understand and deliver your business goals and measure them on their achievement (not their attendance). Where appropriate, include them in team-based recognition and rewards. A highly engaged team working towards a shared outcome is a powerful accelerator.

4. Look for qualities, not qualifications.

Many capable staff are over-looked in traditional recruitment processes as they do not have the 'right' qualification or the specific number of years of experience listed in a position description. Think more broadly and look for transferable skills. The qualities which are most valuable and highly transferable include flexibility, relationship building, service-centricity, authenticity, technical adeptness, and resilience. These qualities often make up for any short-fall in formal qualifications.

5. Align your contractors to your business processes.

Contractors work for you (not the other way around). Where sensible, align their reporting processes and cadence to your internal processes and timeframes. Align their milestones to your business goals and outcomes. Common practices simplify operations and support the development of engaged high-functioning teams.

