

# contracting

an attractive way  
to meet your talent needs.

Contracting is fast becoming a hot trend in Singapore. A blended workforce is an extremely attractive HR strategy as it not only provides companies with the flexibility to shape their team, it also helps deepen internal capabilities to address increasing and changing customer demands.



## why do companies hire contractors?

International organisations hire a blend of contractors and permanent employees to remain agile and stay competitive. Contractors are typically brought in for their expertise for a temporary period of time, usually to work on short-term projects or to fill in for employees who are on maternity or sabbatical leave. Contracting talent are particularly in demand within start-ups and SMEs (small-and-medium enterprise) as they often have HR budget constraints, but need an extra pair of hands to manage the temporary increase in business demands or unique client requests.

In Singapore, companies are most likely to hire contract workers to manage business restructuring, and such transformation projects require niche and specific skills from a small group of talent. Instead of engaging an external company to provide consultation services or to develop new processes, companies typically hire contractors who have had prior experience from these companies to work on these projects.

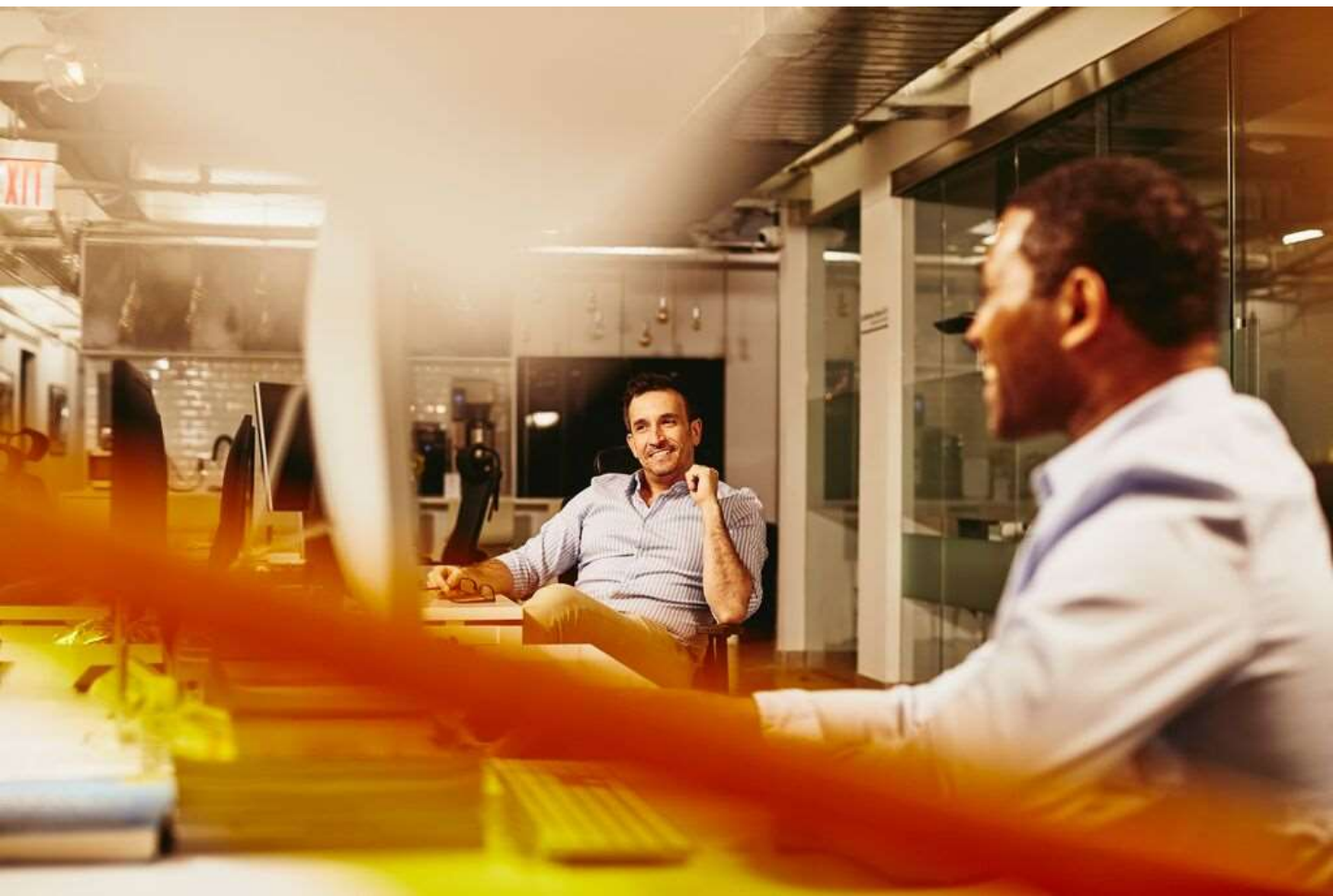
Managing finances and risk are not the only benefits that come from contracting. Hiring freelance workers allows companies to bring new and different perspectives into the workplace on a more regular basis. In addition, the flexibility of contracting allows managers to discover candidates with different skill sets that they might not have considered if the role were permanent.

Organisations have also become increasingly attracted to what can be referred to as a 'try before you buy' approach. Through this, organisations can 'test' the contractor's true capabilities and personality, and only convert them to a permanent position if the candidate suits the role and company culture.

## who are the talent in the gig workforce?

Job seekers, especially Millennials, are becoming more open to the idea of gig working. They tend to gravitate towards such contracting roles because they seek an environment that can provide them with greater work-life balance and better learning opportunities. As a gig worker, they can build their network quickly and learn from experienced professionals, as well as gain invaluable exposure across different companies, industries and projects.

However, there is also interest from experienced workers who are open to the idea of gig work, especially those who are seeking better work-life balance and autonomy after having a hectic career. These professionals typically have prior experience working in global firms and are able to consult and share best practices.



## contracting outlook in Singapore

The gig economy was initially made popular by technology firms, which hired contracting specialists with the niche expertise to design, develop and implement proprietary software. However, as more companies across key industries embark on their own digital transformation journey, the talent demand for contractors began to rise in recent years.

In Singapore, we see an increasing demand for contract workers in the Life Sciences, Human Resource (HR), and Construction, Property and Engineering (CPE) industries.



## contracting trends in the life sciences industry

Pharmaceutical and medical technology companies based in Singapore are mostly regional offices that are responsible for making healthcare solutions available to our neighbouring ASEAN markets. However, to do so, companies need to set up small offices in these countries and hire contractors to facilitate and support the drug approval process, as well as launch product and educational campaigns to engage with healthcare professionals and improve overall patient care.

There is an equally high demand for contractors in the regulatory affairs space and sales and marketing. These gig workers need to have a wide network of healthcare professionals, as well as a thorough understanding of the local healthcare legislations and patient population.

Healthcare companies are also constantly improving their healthcare products and solutions to ensure that patients can receive high quality integrated care from them. Medical companies hire experienced contractors to tap on their specialised expertise and in-depth knowledge as well as to gain different perspectives for innovation. For instance, the growing interest in medical devices has resulted in an increasing demand for specialists who can innovate and integrate new health technology in new markets.



### Johari Masód

Associate Director, Life Sciences, Randstad Singapore  
+65 6510 3651 | [johari.masod@randstad.com.sg](mailto:johari.masod@randstad.com.sg) | [LinkedIn](#)

Johari started his career in pharmaceuticals as a qualitative researcher and entered the recruitment industry and specialise in life sciences & pharmaceutical companies. With more than a decade of experience, he advises healthcare companies across six verticals - pharmaceuticals, medical technology, biotechnology, life sciences, petrochemical and food ingredients - on talent recruitment and workforce management.

## contracting trends in the human resources industry

Smart technology tools provide human resource teams with real-time insights of their staff and help save them time by automating routine activities such as generating timesheets and payroll. These innovative solutions empower human resource professionals to make informed decisions about the workforce, and free up their time to focus on more impactful work such as enhancing the employee and candidate experience and building a stronger employer brand.

Data analytics is a great way to show results and identify trends. As data becomes more easily available, HR practitioners with strong data-analytics and consultative skills are highly sought after in particular. These data-driven HR practitioners have the skills to look at data to identify any red flags or new opportunities to effectively communicate them to the business to develop and implement new HR initiatives.

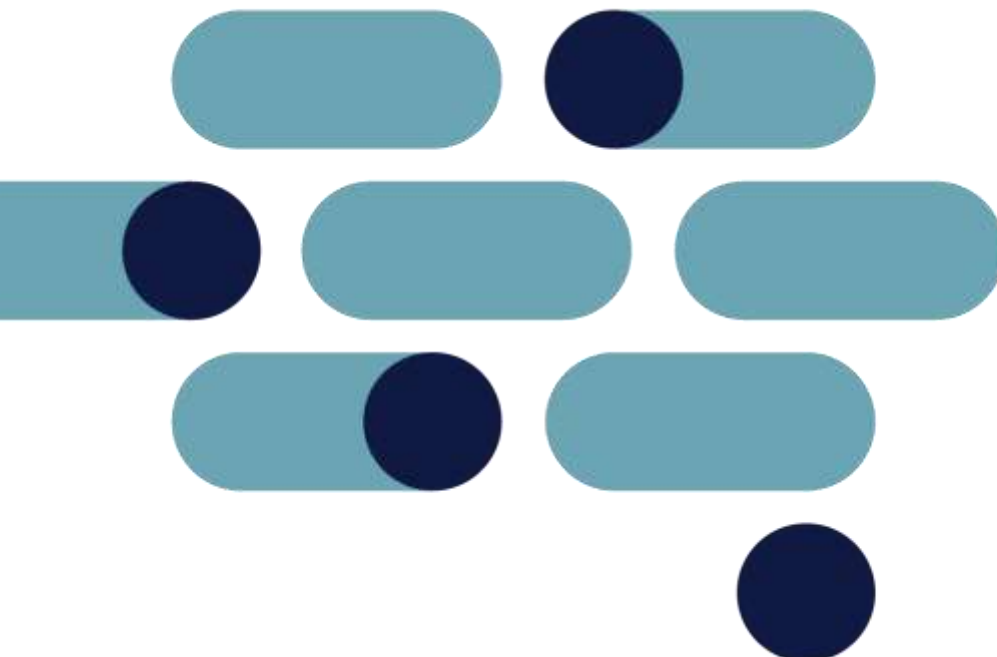
The process of adapting and using these smart technology tools requires the assistance from digital-first HR experts. These professionals are usually contracted for their expertise and to ensure a smooth transition. However, instead of engaging a third-party consultation agency which can be very costly in the long-run, companies contract senior-level executives to provide consultation on transformation projects. Other reasons why human resource teams hire gig workers are to manage temporary assignments such as a merger and acquisition or to fill interim roles.

---



**Martin Hill**  
Associate Director  
Human Resources  
+65 6510 3641  
[martin.hill@randstad.com.sg](mailto:martin.hill@randstad.com.sg)  
[LinkedIn](#)

Martin has a wide network of experienced HR professionals from around the world that he has established in his career in the UK, Australia and Singapore. Armed with close to 15 years of experience, Martin leads a team of specialist recruiters to match employers with talent from Compensation & Benefits, Talent Management and Talent Acquisition.





## contracting trends in engineering and manufacturing industries

Companies in engineering and manufacturing industries have a blended workforce as the level of their operation activities is highly dependent on local consumption and global demands. Companies typically hire contractors to complete short-term projects or when there is an increasing demand for niche skills. Contracting also gives companies access to a flexible and mobile talent pool, helping them to better manage the size of their blended workforce and reduce risk.

For instance, manufacturing companies are facing uncertainties in the market caused by events such as the US-Sino trade wars, Brexit, increasing interest rates and the general slowdown in global demand. As a result, companies are turning to contracting as an alternative recruitment option, as it allows them to adjust their talent needs to meet market demand and trends.

The rise of Industry 4.0 has also fuelled the popularity of contracting. Industry 4.0 refers to the trend of automation and data exchange in manufacturing technologies, such as the IoT (Internet of Things) and cloud computing. This fourth industrial revolution requires companies to hire specialised experts who can evaluate current processes and identify areas where change and automation can be implemented. For example, they may need an expert to evaluate the existing systems and consult on the improvements that should be made, and another to design and build the new system that is powered by innovation and new technologies.

As the skills needed for different stages of the industrial revolution are largely temporary and require different skill sets, companies prefer to hire contractors since they do not need a permanent staff for the particular phase of the project.



### Chris Pace

Director  
Engineering & Industrial  
+65 6510 3640  
[chris.pace@randstad.com.sg](mailto:chris.pace@randstad.com.sg)  
[LinkedIn](#)

Chris has more than 18 years of recruitment experience in the construction and engineering industry and has worked extensively in the UK and Dubai before calling Singapore his home. He takes pride in building an extensive and talented team that provides valuable talent advisory and recruitment services for property, facilities management, manufacturing, supply chain and industrial sales.

## a blended workforce encourages competition

It is clear that knowledge-based gig workers can add a lot of value to the company. When an organisation hires contractors, they can save on third-party agency engagement costs and still benefit from having an experienced professional work in their company. As contractors bring with them new perspectives, knowledge and ways of working, it helps create an environment where learning is encouraged and shared.

In previous years, candidates have normally preferred to look at permanent roles, but this is gradually changing as more people are starting to understand the benefits of contracting. The increased flexibility is one that contrasts the most with a permanent role, as these candidates get the opportunity to work on personal projects or spend quality time with their families in-between contract jobs.

Contracting also allows candidates to work on a wide range of different projects requiring different skill sets. This wide exposure is something that permanent roles can rarely offer. With the freedom to work on different types of projects for different companies, contracting candidates are able to try out various jobs and immerse themselves in the different organisations' cultures that appeal to them. Contractors who exceed expectations during their appointment period could be offered a permanent role when their contract ends, so taking on temporary work will allow them to better evaluate the job, boss and company fit before they make the switch.

As the gig economy becomes more popular in Singapore and more job seekers being open to new and exciting career opportunities, companies that want to remain competitive should take advantage of the benefits that a blended workforce can bring.

# our contracting services.



Our payrolling and contract staffing services offer a unique workforce management solution to help our clients manage their temporary headcount (both long and short-term) as well as the associated end-to-end HR administration tasks, such as on-boarding, insurance, annual leave, contracts, claims and tax clearance.

### payrolling services

When it comes to a contingent workforce, payroll management can be a strain on resource. Under our payrolling services, contractors are sourced by clients, while Randstad take on the role as the candidate's legal employer. As Randstad place the candidate on our payroll, our clients will manage the candidate's day-to-day responsibilities.

### contract staffing services

We understand that every business is as unique as the candidates we place. Under our contract staffing services, Randstad provides an end-to-end solution based on the client's requirements such as candidate sourcing, interviewing and even assuming the role as the candidate's legal employer. We have a team of dedicated specialists who will ensure that your contractors are well taken care of - so that you can focus on other critical business activities.

### value-added personalised services

In addition to providing the right candidates to your business, we are able to customised onboarding services by providing value-added personalised services which includes update and feedback, regular monitoring of performance, e-time management and overseas travel facilitation services based on your business needs.

## contact us.

You need a business partner who has a strong understanding of the contracting function, and who could anticipate your hiring needs - even before they arise.