

INTERIM MANAGER PULSE

BESTBEST
TALENT
PLATFORM
BBTP.PRO

2.2025

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ABOUT THE SURVEY

Interim Manager Pulse is an annual initiative, hosted by [Best Best Talent Platform](#) and its [partners](#). Through the annual survey, BBTP measures the status of the interim management community in Europe. This iteration of the Interim Manager Pulse survey was open from the 30th of October to the 1st of December, 2024. In total, it received 75 responses— an increase from the previous year.

As in previous iterations, the Interim Manager Pulse survey was divided into 3 sections: “Background of respondents”, “Current or latest assignment”, and “Successful interim assignments”. The first two sections are recurring, while the third section changes each year to give space to a new or increasingly relevant topic.

In this report, we dig into the survey results. You will find a summary of key findings at the beginning and a reflection from BBTP’s Founder & Managing Director at the end. Throughout the survey, we share survey responses in their complete form wherever space allows. However, for some open-ended questions (where answers are quite long) we highlight a variety of responses or summarise the responses by breaking them into themes, then provide select responses as examples for the themes.

This report has been prepared by BBTP Community Manager, Leah Martin. The interpretation of qualitative data has also been conducted by Leah, with the use of ChatGPT for validation of key themes.

In the weeks following the launch of this report, BBTP will share even more results, including direct quotes from respondents. We hope professionals in the broader interim management ecosystem will jump in to continue the discussion with us on our [LinkedIn page](#).

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

In 2024, respondents to the Interim Manager Pulse survey were once again primarily from Finland (49.33%). However, participation from outside Finland continues to grow yearly. Germany ranked second, accounting for 16% of respondents (7.53% increase from 2023) followed by Sweden with 10.67% (5.59% increase from 2023).

Most participants were experienced professionals, with 85.33% having over 15 years in their fields before transitioning to freelancing. Only a small percentage are new to interim management; 10.7% met the minimum survey requirement, having completed just one assignment. However, most respondents are seasoned interim managers, with 29.3% having completed 10 or more assignments.

By describing their latest assignments, respondents gave insight into the types of projects interim managers handled in 2024. Assignments varied widely in duration, from three months to over two years, and workload, from one day per week to full-time. These assignments also took place in companies of all sizes, ranging from fewer than 10 employees to over 10,000. One common thread was that 97.33% of respondents followed a hybrid model in their assignment, with time split fairly evenly between on-site and remote work.

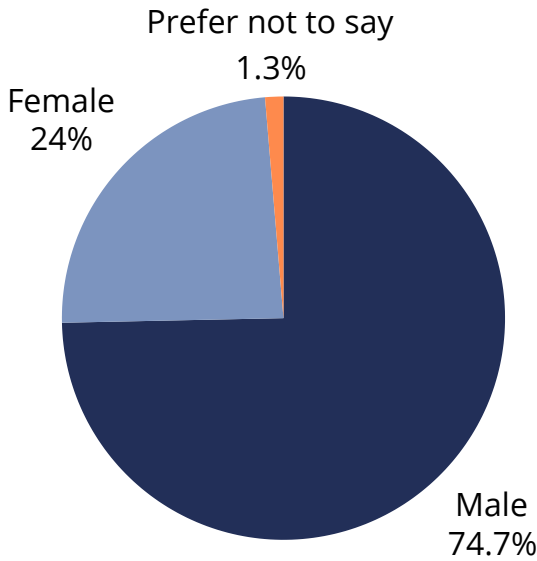
While assignments differ in industry, duration, and objectives, responses revealed several common success factors. Clear expectations, strong communication, and decision-making authority emerged as critical elements. Many respondents also emphasized early planning, thorough documentation, and structured knowledge transfer to ensure success continues after an assignment is finished.

The survey also indicated that challenges can arise when expectations or scope shift. However, experienced interim managers have developed strategies to mitigate these issues by setting clear expectations at the beginning, adapting to changes, and maintaining alignment with client needs. Furthermore, respondents indicated that Interim Service Providers (agents/middlemen) play a significant role in preventing problems and setting interim managers up for success in their assignments. .

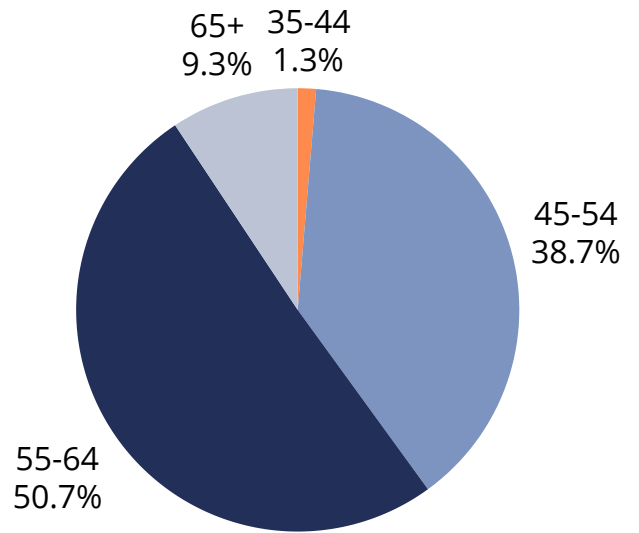
SECTION 1

BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

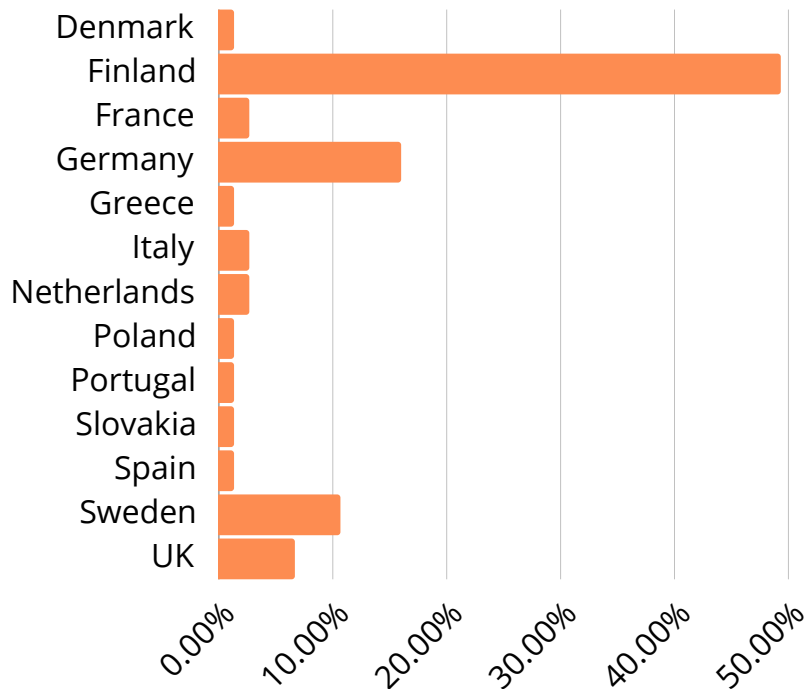
Q 1: What is your gender?



Q 2: What is your age range?

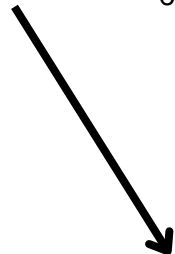
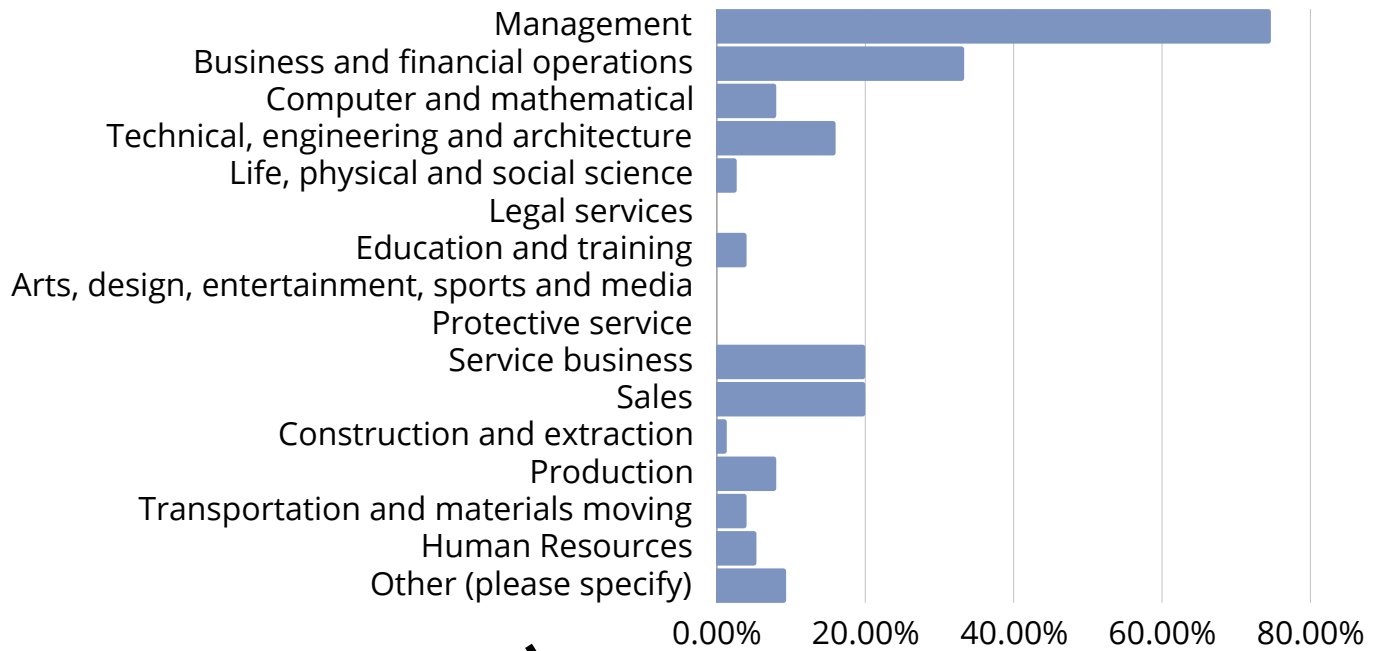


Q 3: Where is your home base?
(where do you live)



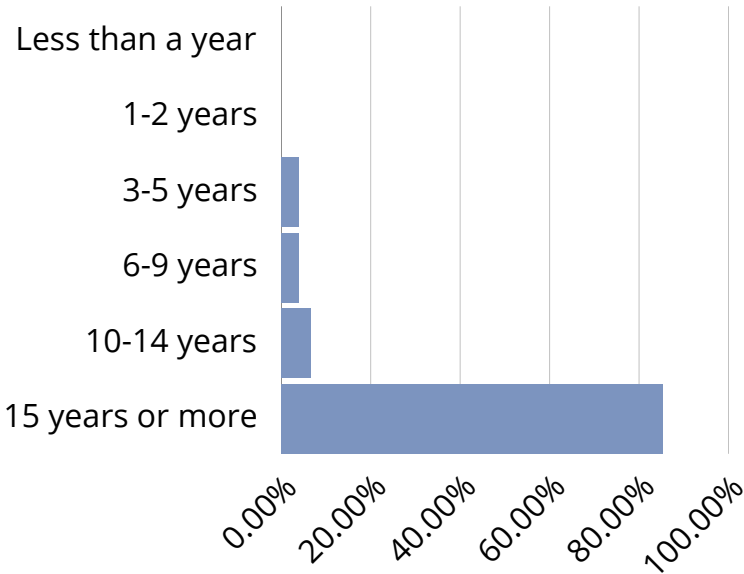
Q 4: What is your field of work?

*Can select multiple

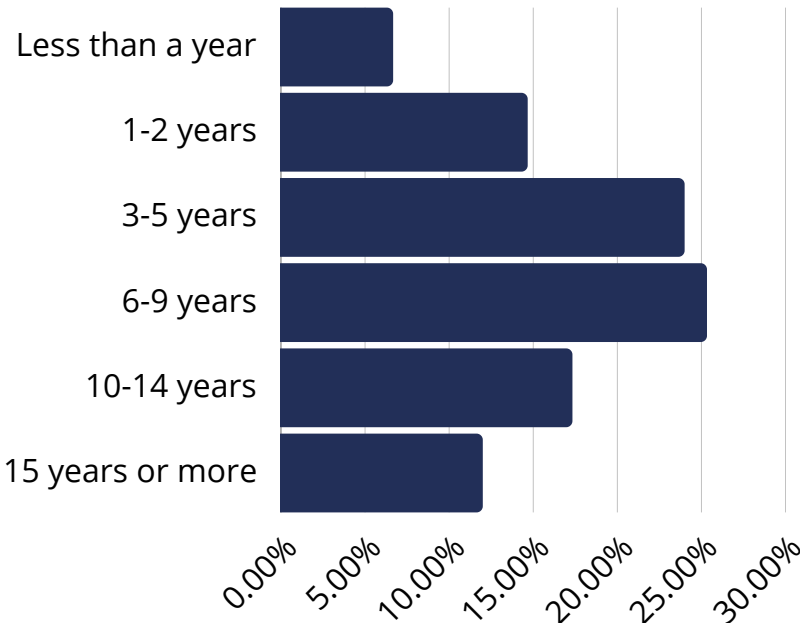


- AI applications, event / Ticketing, Revenue Management
- Digital Business Innovation
- Human Resources
- Health
- Digitalization
- Tax Compliance
- Consulting and advisory
- Human Resources
- HR projects: Talent, Performance and Development
- Human Resources
- Procurement

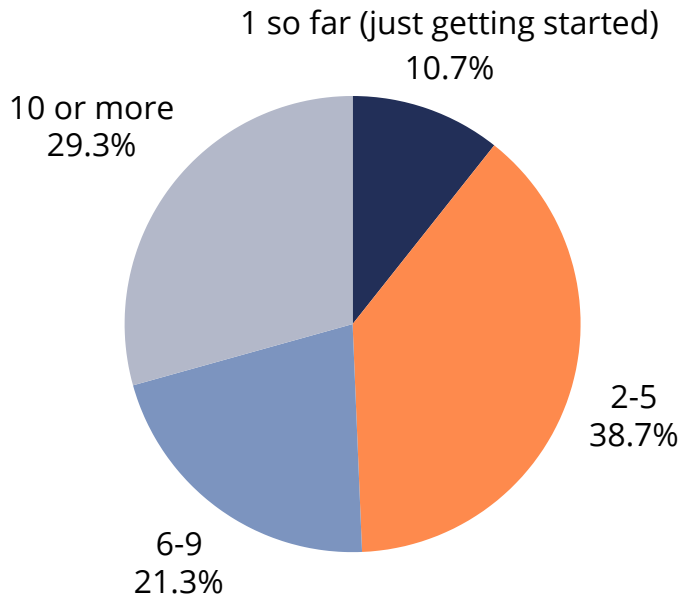
Q 5: Before freelancing, how long had you been working in your field?



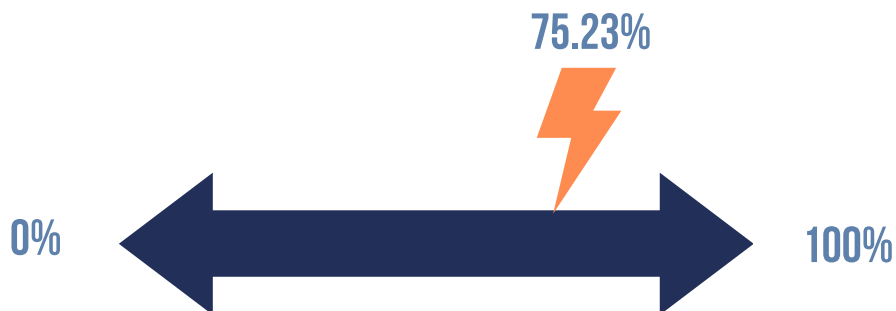
Q 6: How long have you freelanced?



Q 7: Throughout your career, how many freelance (independent) assignments have you held?



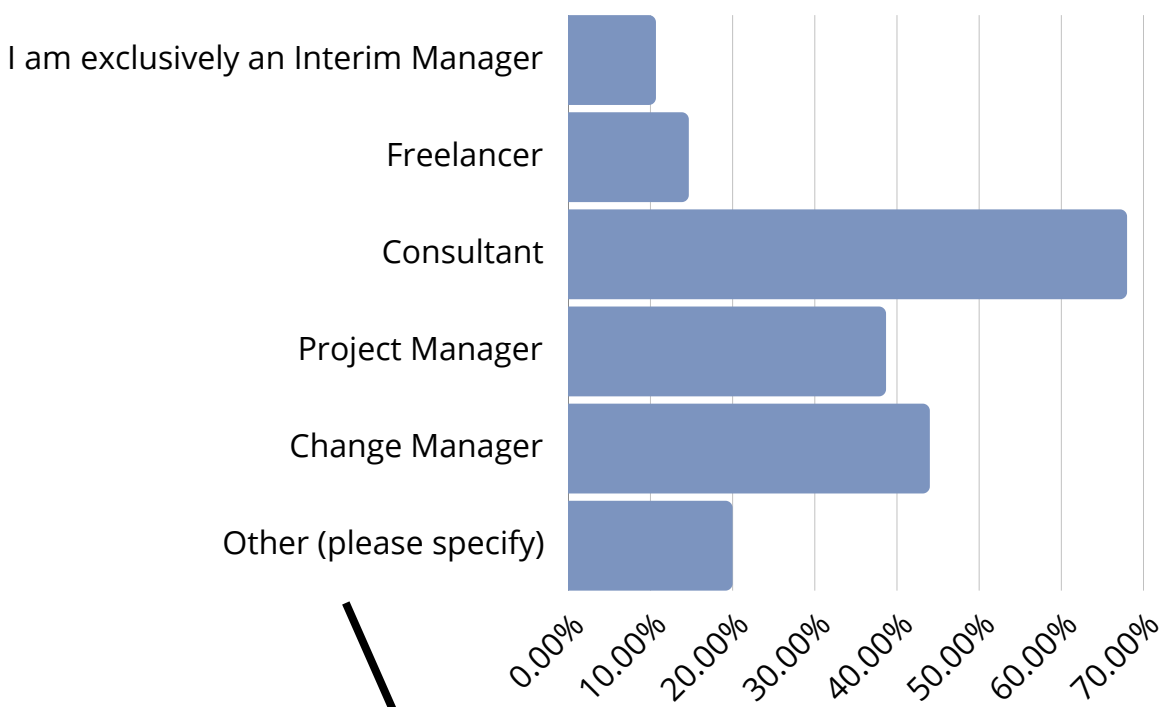
Q 8: Now that you freelance, what percentage of your work do you consider to be interim management?



- Mean: 75.23%
- Median: 90%
- Standard Deviation: 30.95%
- Mode: 23 responses of 100%
- 16 responses below 50%

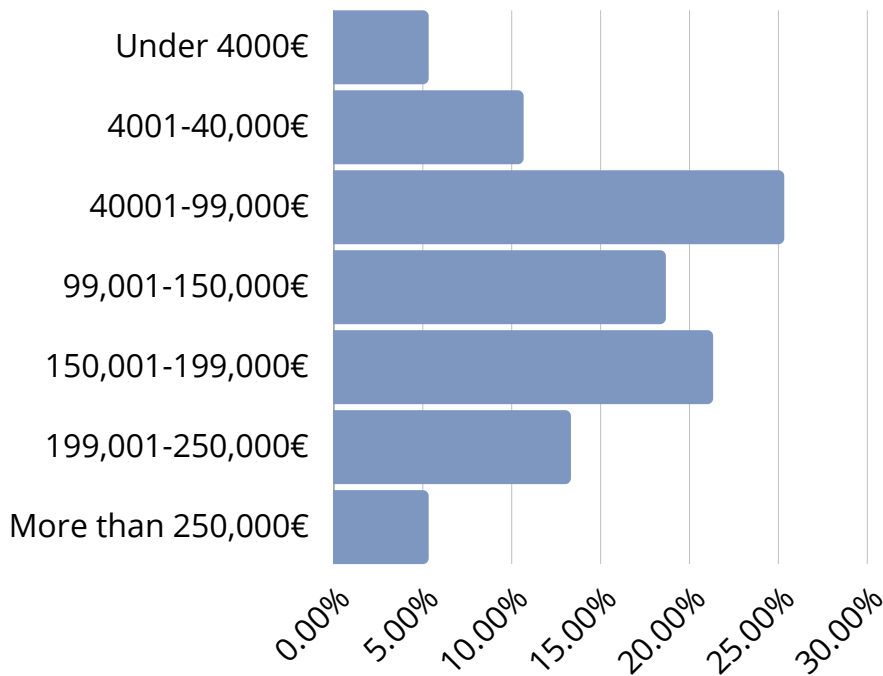
Q 9: Besides interim manager, what other titles describe you? (How do you promote yourself and the assignments you are looking for)

*Can select multiple.

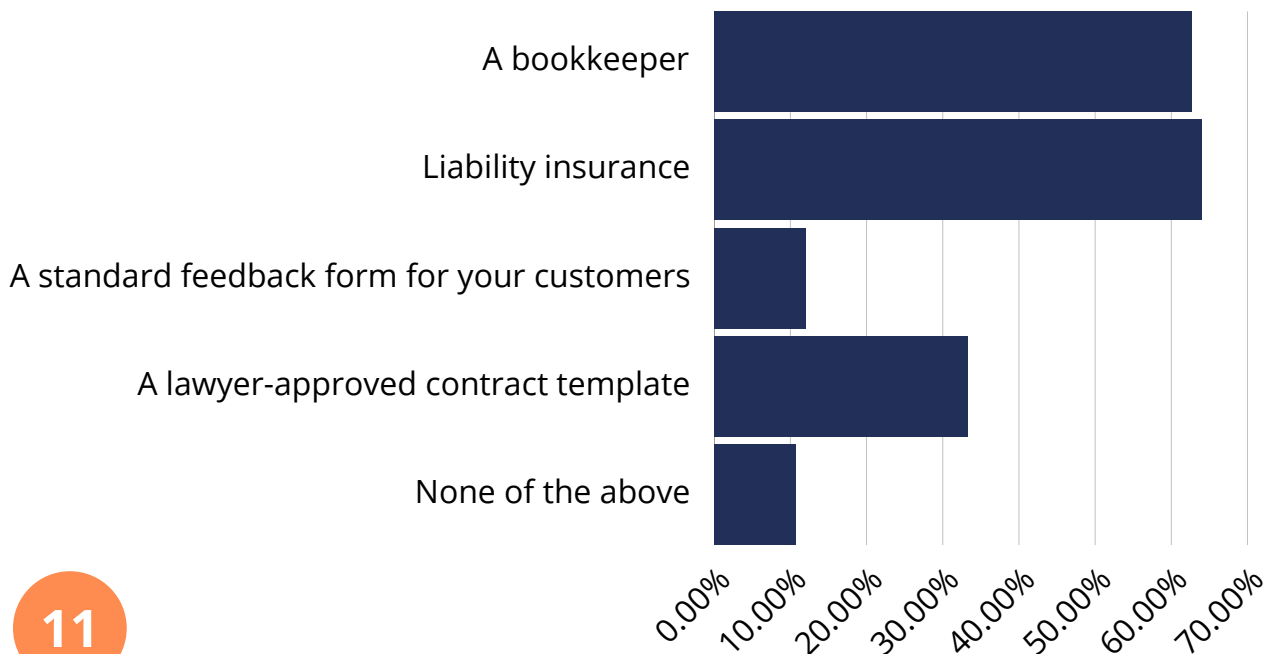


- Interim executive, interim practitioner, ned/c, advisory, coach/mentor.
- CMO
- Founder
- Interim CEO
- Transformation Manager
- Logistics Consultant
- interim CFO, intrerim manager
- Leader
- Analyst
- Board member
- Lecturer
- Contractor
- Coach
- Business Coach

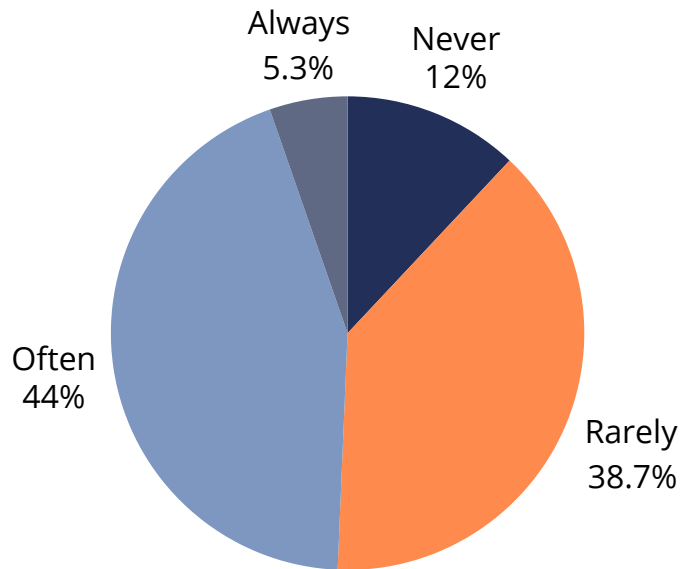
Q 10: Approximately, how much have you invoiced in the last 12 months?



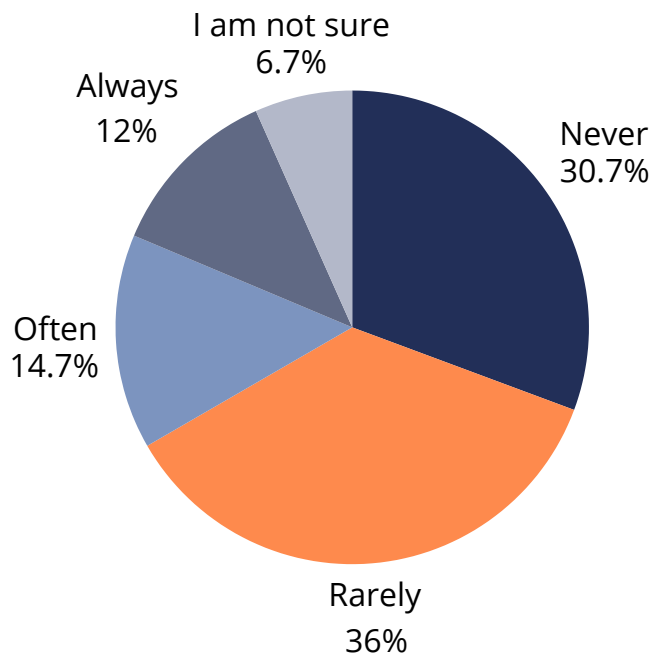
Q 11: Do you have any of the following? *Can select multiple



Q 12: How often do you find assignments through an agent (middleman)?



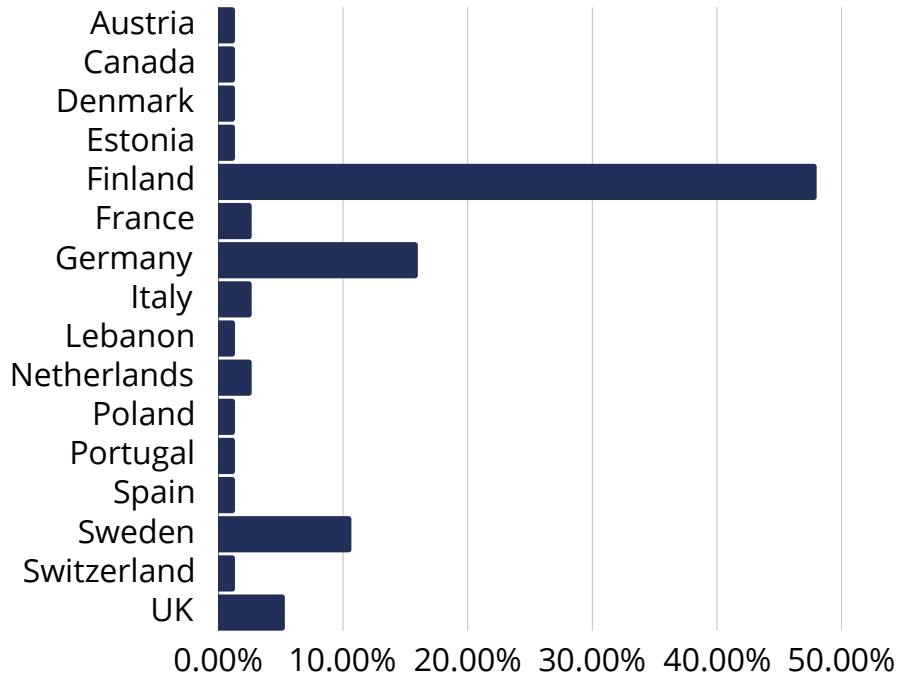
Q 13: Do your customers or an agent (middleman) require company documentation when starting contract (such as tax documents and others required by EU/local legislation)?



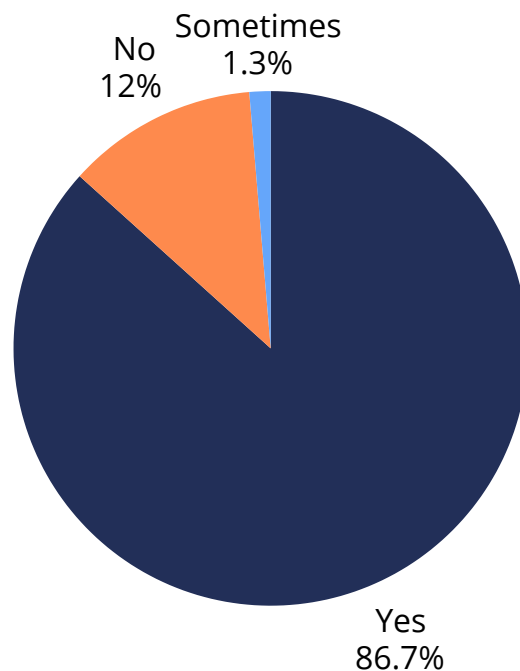
SECTION 2

CURRENT OR LATEST ASSIGNMENT

Q 14: In your current/latest assignment, where is/was your customer located?



Q 15: Is/was your customer located in the same country that you live in?



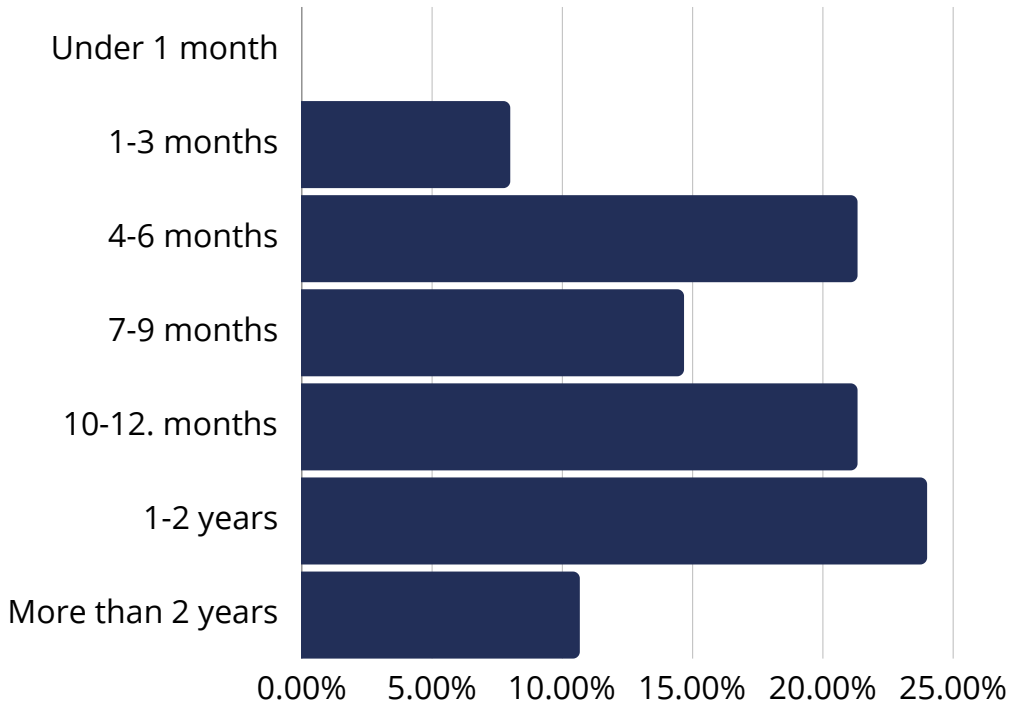
RESULTS — SECTION 2 LATEST ASSIGNMENT

Q 16: In your current/latest assignment, what is/was your job title?

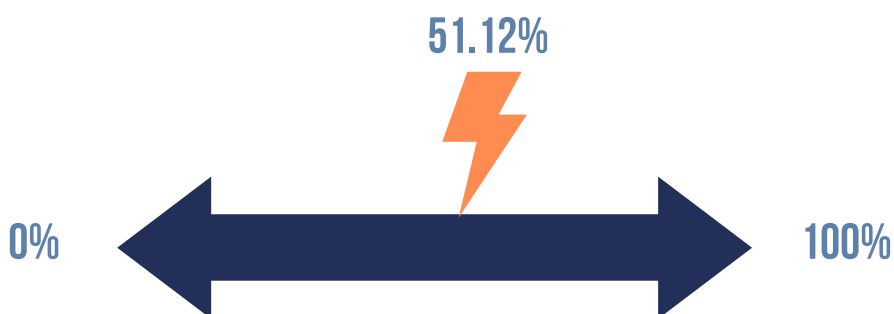
The word cloud makes repeated words bigger. For reference, “consultant” was stated 4 times.



Q 17 How long is/was your current/latest assignment (including all extensions)?

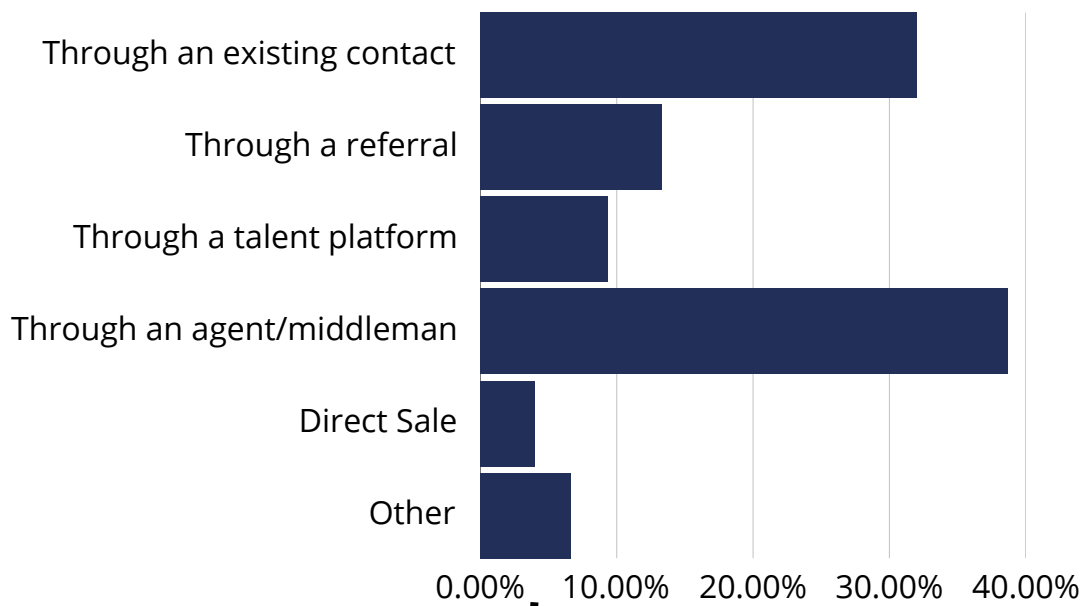


Q 18: In your current/latest assignment, what percentage of your work is/was conducted remotely?



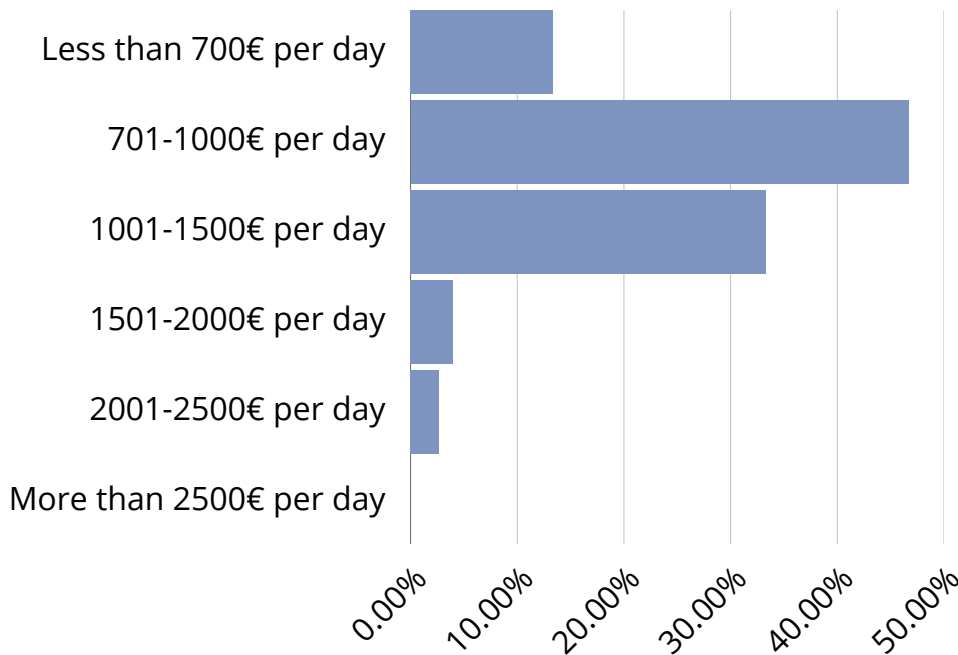
- Mean: 51.12%
- Median: 49%
- Standard Deviation: 28.47%
- Mode: 6 responses of 49%
- 2 respondents worked fully in-person
- 4 respondents worked fully remote

Q 19: How did you find your current/latest assignment?

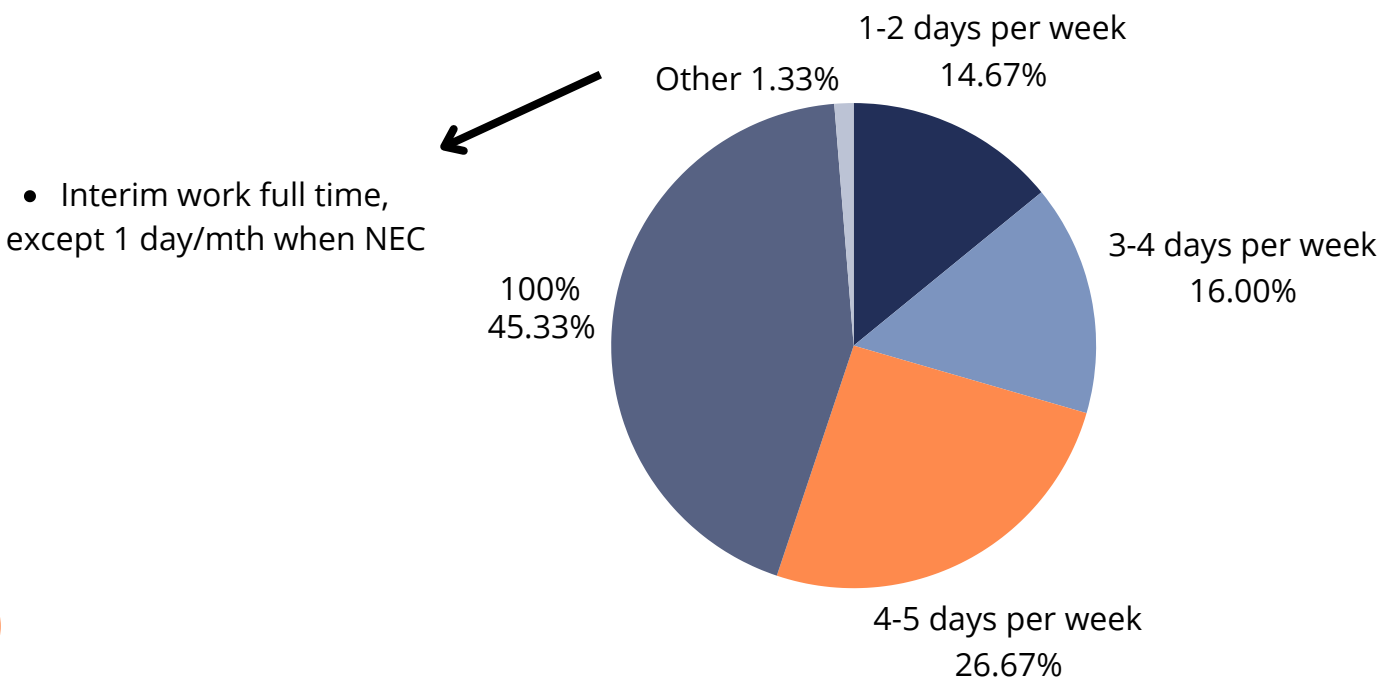


- Old contact reached out to me
- Through INIMA
- When the previous contract with the client was ending, another team from the same company decided to hire me.
- Via headhunting advertisement

Q 20: In your current/latest assignment, what was is/was the rate you invoiced for?

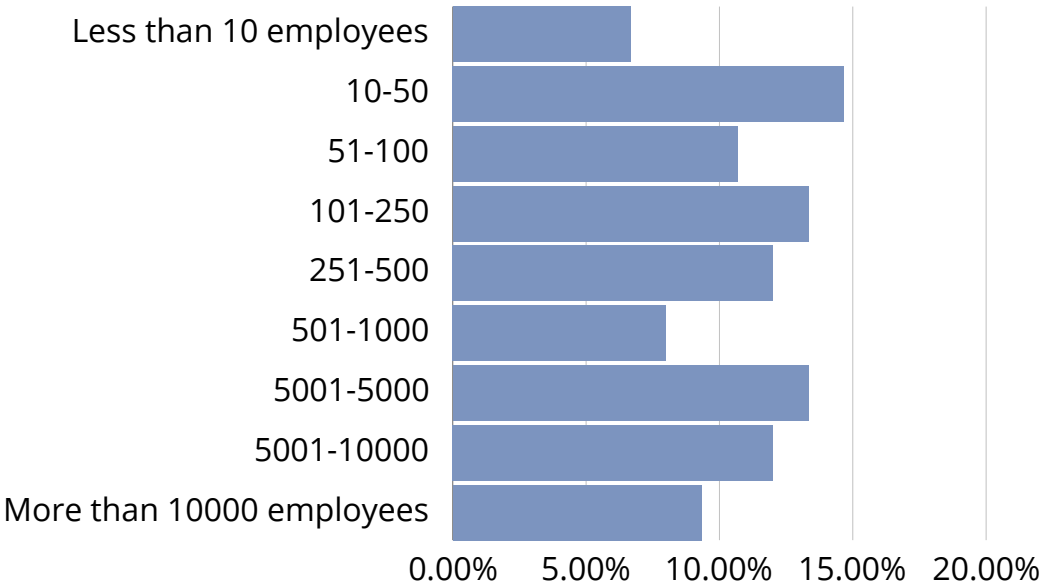


Q 21: On average, how many days per week was your current/latest assignment?

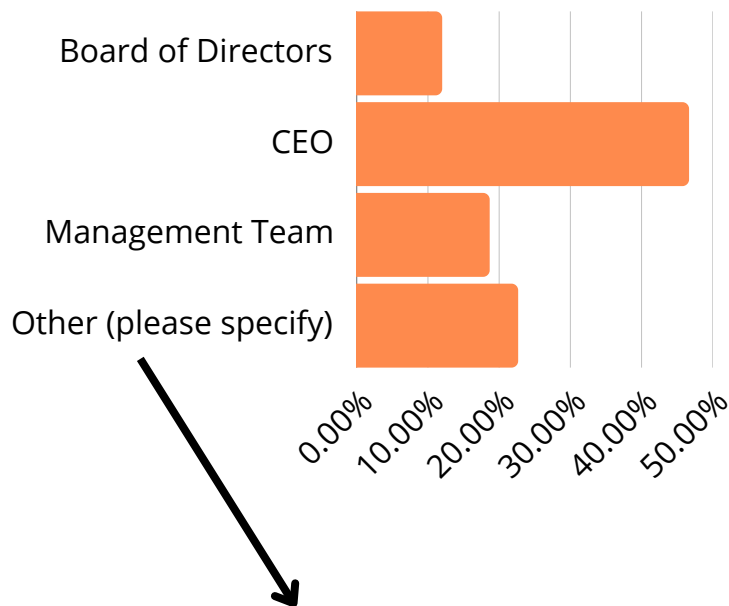




Q 22: In your current/latest assignment, how big is/was the company? (How many employees are in the company)



Q 23: In your current/latest assignment, who did you report to?

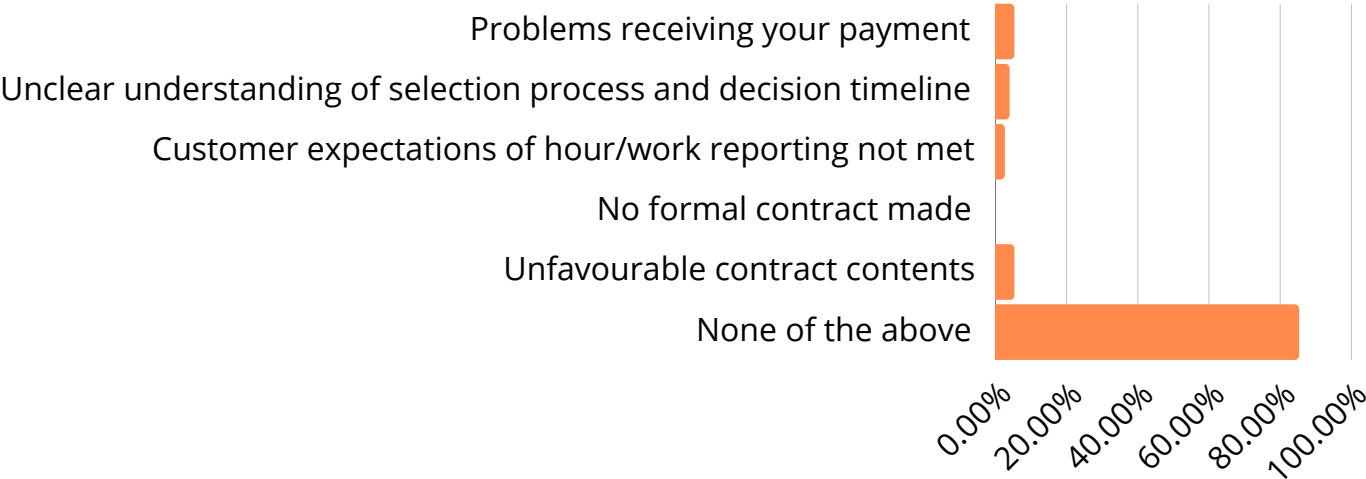


- Head of HR
- Group CEO (who was also interim)
- CFO
- CFO
- VP of Business in question
- Management team and new project manager
- extended management team
- Team Manager
- Head of Tax
- GVP Business Area
- CIO
- Cio
- CIO
- CFO
- CFO
- No one. Not allowed to report to anyone acc. Dutch Law
- CPO



Q 24: In your current/latest assignment, have you experienced any of the following problems?

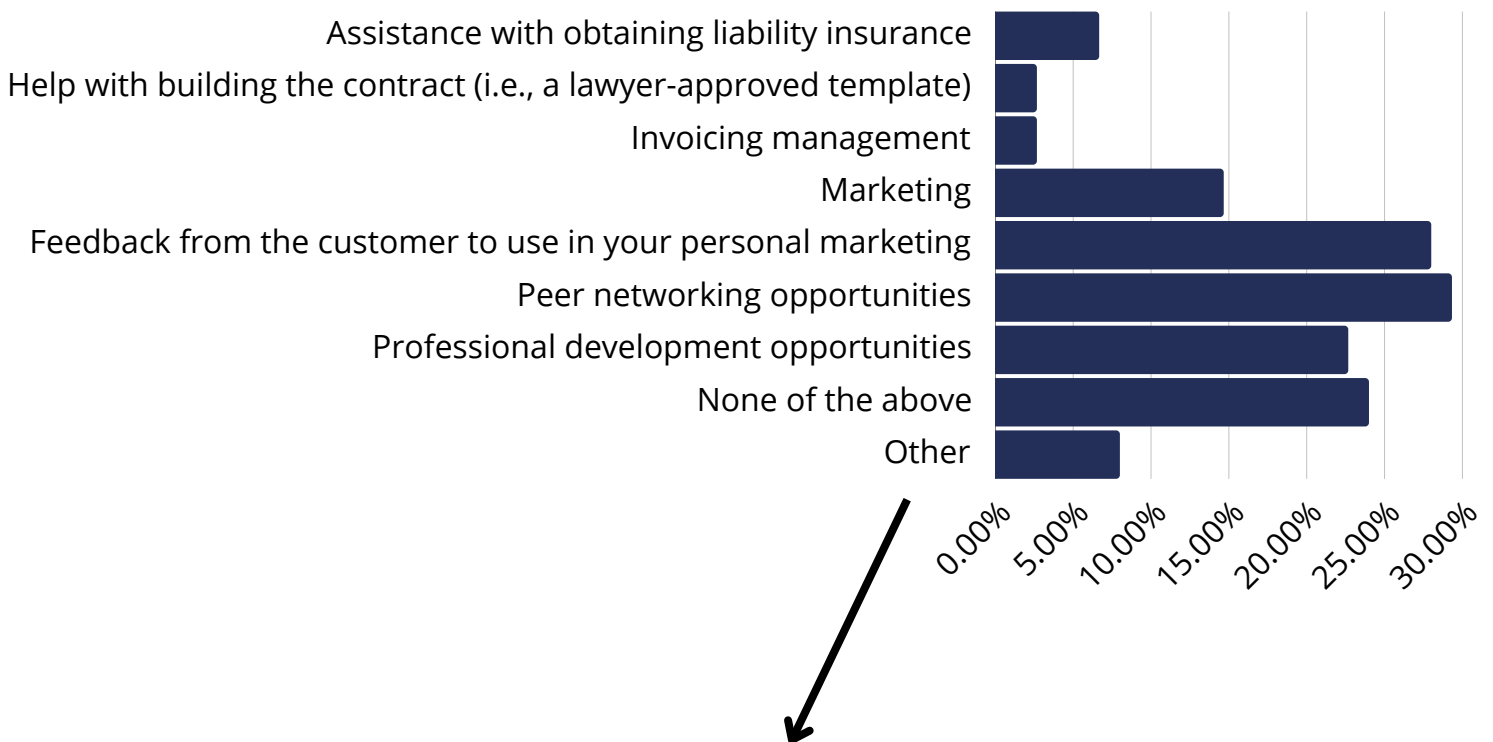
*Can select multiple



Q 25: Are there any other problems regarding the customer - freelancer relationship that you would like to share?

- Undefined expectations
- The communication of goals as they change throughout the project is always a challenge
- Client relationship was complex as the Italian parent was under the protection of the Italian court which made working at the required rate very difficult.
- As always, the real sector of work has developed within the first 2 weeks on the job and led in a re-negotiation of the contract
- Requirement almost 24/7 availability and ability to work whenever needed - even agreed days off due private reasons.
- Project scope's are often moving from what they were at the negotiating phase. Usually the reason why an interims is hired is the reason that the management does not have a clear view of the situation
- Maybe I should have been more in the office in order to be aware and involved in the problems. I was allowed to work remote, but maybe my service would have been better. They never said so. This is my own opinion.
- Rarely have problems now. Older and wiser and also very clear in contracting with them even if they are unclear about their needs sometimes, this helps manage expectations
- Clients and freelancers have to agree upfront on a) what the problem is that needs solving, b) deliverables and timelines, c) what is considered a job well done, d) what role the freelancer will hold inside the team, e) who the freelancer will report to, f) ways of working and payment terms. There are so many misunderstandings that can happen during the course of the project if things have not been clarified and agreed upon. To achieve a great working relationship with the freelancer, the client needs a bit of educating: a) they have to start thinking in terms of deliverables, not in terms of time spent, and b) they have to match the tasks to be done to the seniority of the freelancer to be hired.
- Scope and objectives not always clear
- Assignment was cancelled before the agreed date in the Contract
- Renegotiate the agreed payment after 4 month
- Understanding of the far experienced skills and capabilities. To take guidance seriously. Underestimate.
- The client wanted to manage the project, without proper expertise
- Lack of understanding of IR35 in the UK

Q 26: In your current/latest assignment, which of the following would you like/have liked more of? *Can select multiple



- Better communication with the management
- Legal advice as i had problems getting paid
- Time
- Visuality drives the project too much

Q 27: In your current/latest assignment, what is/was your greatest success?

Below are just a handful of respondents' successes. We will share more of these successes in the weeks to follow this report launch on the [BBTP LinkedIn page](#).

"Stabilizing the Organization, Building a professional HR function"

"Implementing new ERP system"

"Building an efficient new team"

"Positive Feedback from the customers of the customer"

"Holding department together in an environment of great changes"

"Increased turnover, new finance team in place, OWC and cash increase"

"plus 40% in sales and 10% better ebitda"

"Visible team expertise improvement"

"Increasing Ebitda 200k (50%) yearly on flat revenue by creating new strategy and implementing it"

"Exceed expectations and get the organization structured and the team motivated"

"Great relations with all stakeholders"

"Delivering the project on schedule and budget"

"Increasing understanding in the organization"

"Customer segmentation, sales pipeline, get those in use"

"Great Modernization Program approved & Transformation Roadmap designed and delivered"

SECTION 3

SUCCESSFUL INTERIM ASSIGNMENTS

Q 28: How do you know when you have completed an interim assignment successfully? (How do you define success in an interim assignment?)

Delivering Results (52 mentions)

"Define success metrics and clear scope at the beginning and measure against those"

"The goals agreed in the beginning were met."

"When all agreed scope was delivered in high quality and on time."

Customer Feedback (46 mentions)

"Customer formal and informal feedback"

"Feedback from stakeholders, achievement of KPI."

"Client is willing to give me a very good reference letter."

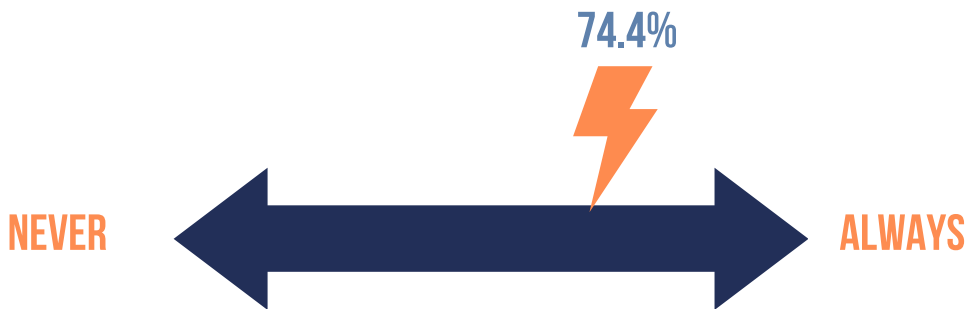
Handover and Continuity (21 mentions)

"The foundation is in place and the way forward is paved for the successor on the permanent role."

"Along with the assignment, it is crucial to be clear about the later handover."

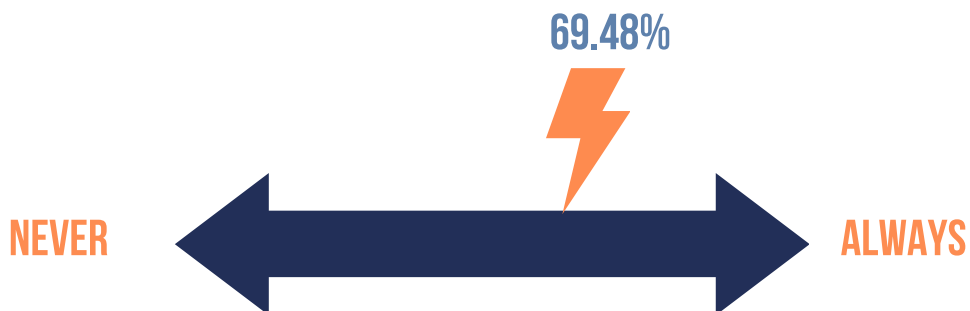
"Closing meeting with CEO, depends on target setting."

Q 29: How often do you exceed the original objectives set at the beginning of an assignment?



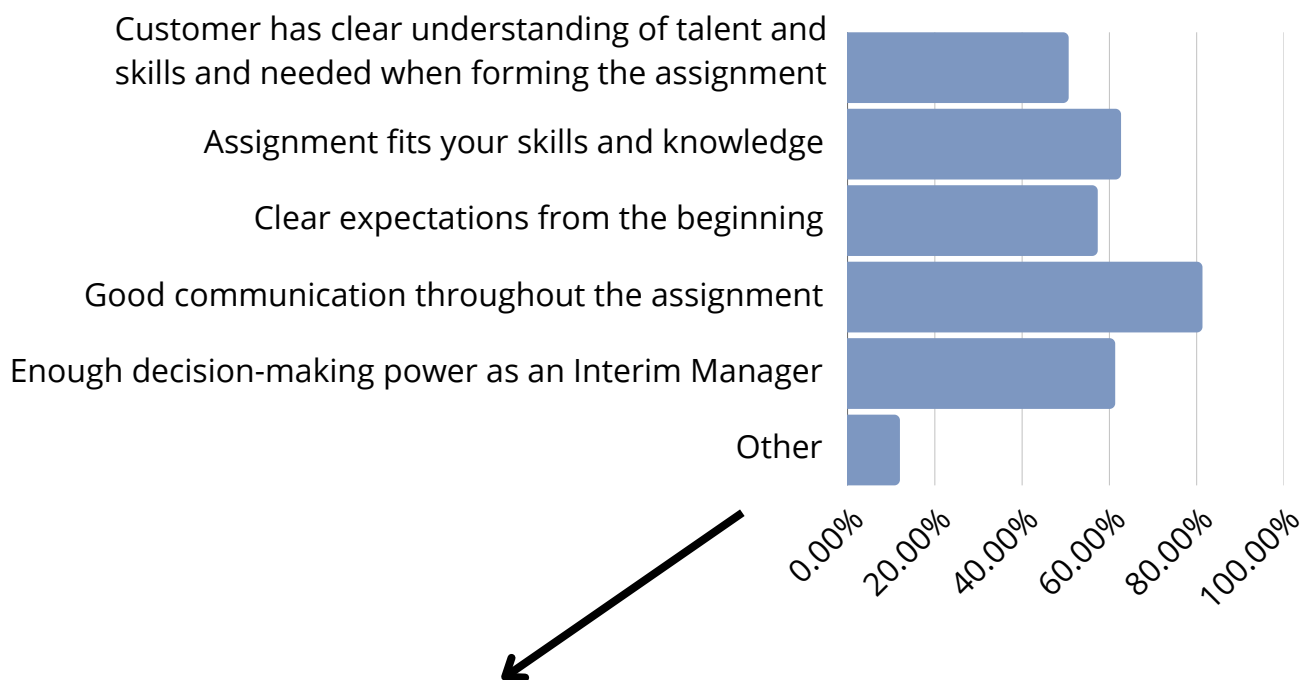
- Mean: 74.4%
- Median: 74%
- Standard Deviation: 18.65%
- Mode: 12 responses of 100%
- Only 5 responses under 50%

Q 30: Do you typically get sufficient feedback from the customer during the assignment?



- Mean: 69.48%
- Median: 73%
- Standard Deviation: 20.41%
- Mode: 7 responses of 100%

Q 31: What are the key factors that contribute to the success of an interim assignment? (What helps you to succeed in an assignment?)



- Constant check ups of the proceedings
- Good start and ending of assignment.
- Having the client as a resource, not a manager
- Customer is realistic about the cost of using interim staff
- Growth customers understanding what they need
- Total trust
- Personal features: fast, efficient, competent
- Defining, in consultation with the client, the needs, timelines and baseline expectations and spending time clarifying those.

Q 32: How do you ensure a smooth handover at the end of an interim assignment to achieve lasting success?

Early Planning & Integration (32 mentions)

“By agreeing the way-out plan already in the beginning.”

“Exit strategy during whole assignment, involve the organization, give necessary time for handover (it differs).”

“Starting with the end in mind, so bring the customer with you so it's less an abrupt end.”

Comprehensive Documentation (28 mentions)

“Ensuring the assignment has proper handover documentation within the three typical dimensions of people, processes, and technology.”

“Documentation created during the assignment. Handover process.”

“Weekly progress reports that tell the assignment story, organization chart, job descriptions of new key roles, responsibility matrices, flow charts.”

Successor Involvement & Training (25 mentions)

“Working in parallel with a successor, set up a 1-year action plan.”

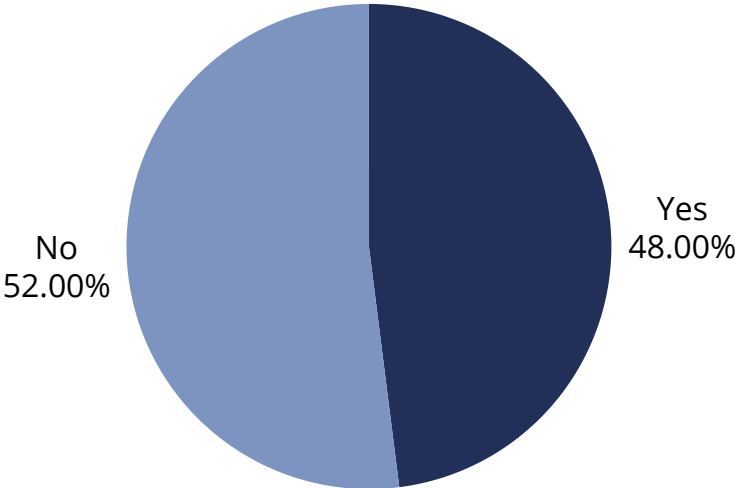
“Mentoring to person recruited to position / active cooperation with CEO and TMT.”

“Knowledge transfer for a period of 2-6 weeks working together with the successor.”

Stakeholder Communication & Follow-Up (22 mentions)

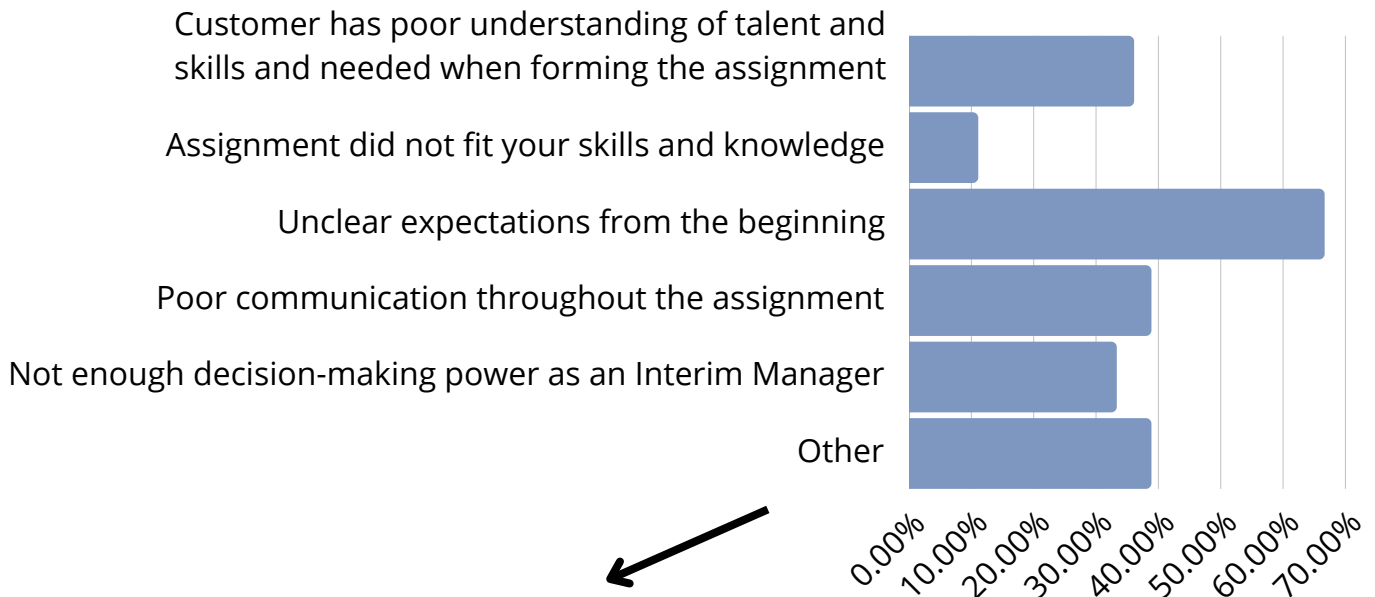
“Clear handover notes, signposting to all files and information collected during the assignment, sitting down with them to go through the handover and having an open door post-assignment for any follow-up questions.”

Q 33: Have you ever faced a situation where an interim assignment was not a great success?



Q 34: What were the main contributing factors that led to this less-than successful assignment?

*Can select multiple



- Internal power struggles
- Usually poor behaviour and a lack of chemistry. The assignments that have gone wrong for me were ones where I ignored the warning signs from the client or was persuaded by an agent to take it despite my reservations. If someone seems unreasonable in a pitch meeting, they are likely to be unreasonable on the job. It was a valuable lesson to me. I'd rather reject them and risk the wrath of the agent than have an assignment that I consider a preventable failure.
- Did not get paid (in time / in full) which naturally affects the client relationship
- Politics and bullying culture leading to mental health issues
- Role to strengthen organisation without closest managers real interest.
- Assignment started "too late"
- Changed expectation in Board
- Different views of the expectations within the management team
- Customer needs and situation changed dramatically
- Co-operation with the CEO was not smooth
- It was more like we chose the wrong vendor for a crucial project
- Client said 'yes' to operating mode prior to the engagement then quickly changed approach post engagement to one of micromanagement. Completely inappropriate approach, mixed with some cultural misalignment
- The clients financial understanding of costs between outsourcing and having own FTE

Q 35: What practices do you follow to ensure your impact as an interim manager is measurable and recognized by the client?

Clear Goal Setting & KPIs (52 mentions)

"Early stage agreement with all stakeholders on KPIs. If possible: create own dashboard. On top: weekly reportings."

"Agree the goals together with the customer at the beginning, in writing. Try to keep them measurable."

Regular Communication & Reporting (47 mentions)

"On-going communication. I do a brief, weekly comms on what I've achieved, what's outstanding, what's next to focus on, and that helps align expectations and make adjustments as we go along."

"Bi-weekly/monthly review sessions with a hiring manager. Continuous feedback collection from stakeholders."

"Regularly meetings project/roadmap, prioritization, results with CEO/TMT."

Documentation & Tracking Progress (36 mentions)

"Basic project management. Documentation, minutes, agendas, sign-offs."

"Quarterly planning in writing (current + next) supported with weekly reports and daily time-keeping (shared when asked)."

Financial & Business Impact Measurement (18 mentions)

"I work so closely with CEO that they always see my deliveries. Also, P&L and BS items are clear measurements."

"Calculate a return of € investment for assignment = (savings and growth) / (my total invoices). My current assignment is x18.7 ROI."

Q 36: For assignments through an interim management provider (agent/middleman), what should the provider's role be in ensuring a successful assignment? (What should providers do to help interim assignments be successful?)

Clear Expectation Setting & Role Definition (42 mentions)

"Helping in assuring the assignment is clear for all parties."

"Clearly understand the client's expectations and transfer them to me, which in my opinion is crucial for the success of the project."

"First of all, provider should, already before choosing the interim, check that customer's expectations are somehow realistic."

Effective Matching & Selection (38 mentions)

"Matching the capabilities and the requirements."

"The provider should be well prepared knowing the needs of the client and the skills of the consultant, to make sure they are a good match on paper."

"Understand the real need of the customer to avoid waste of time."

Ongoing Communication & Support (35 mentions)

"Regular communication with both consultant and client to ensure all is well with both parties."

"Follow up with me on the evolution of the assignment performance."

Acting as a Mediator & Problem Solver (22 mentions)

"Be a support in difficult circumstances. Care not to overstep their competence. Be ready to help the interim as exit time approaches."

Q 37: Is there anything else you would like to share about successful interim assignments?

- Interim Manager needs to be very determined and skilled to achieve the desired results.
- Key is to clarify scope and expectations right in the beginning and then to deliver.
- Make sure that the assignment is communicated effectively prior to start, in the organisation by the client and that the interim has client support.
- Nothing more than the obvious, as a consultant, apart for being great in your profession, you need to be flexible, adaptable, quick, strong and have high integrity.
- internal teams are in a can do frame having been shown the benefits of change
- Successful interim assignments require providers to look beyond their usual pool of candidates and focus on diverse profiles that bring fresh perspectives and unique value. It's crucial to assess potential beyond traditional credentials—by understanding a candidate's lived experiences, leadership style, and ability to deliver transformative results. Providers should prioritize creating opportunities for talent that may not fit the conventional mold but can bring exceptional impact when given the chance.
- It requires huge amount of dedication and learnability.
- have fun
- Please sell your talents 😊
- Bring enthusiasm, energy and humble leadership to customer. Demonstrate Value every day.
- If the client needs to be sure about challenges and the current situation. Let the Interim work for 2-3 weeks and after that, you decide about the plan, scope, deliverables, targets, etc
- I don't share the idea of being a part time interim manager...you just don't get good enough results by being a part time player
- Take care of clear and transparent communication with ALL stakeholders
- Clear understanding of Interims' role, self Management
- Ability to adjust to every task given or company culture.
- Important with good start (easy visible wins) and ending (handover), both equally important.
- Communication Active listening Requesting feedback to align on next steps
- Too short ones are too challenging-
- Sell me into the assignments. The nature of this business requires that a middle man sells a freelancer/contractor/interim in! You can make client confident to take this applicant. Applicant herself/himself is not getting opportunity to ensure a client, (because clients aren't listening. And applicant self is jäävi doing that).
- be kind to the people you work with - this is a substantial part of success
- Successful interim assignments are a partnership - the agent, the client and the interim all play their part. I concentrate on what I can control in that which is my approach.



STATEMENT FROM OUR FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR

Elina Liehu ”

Best Best Talent Platform enters 2025 with strong momentum.

Despite economic challenges across various industries, we have seen a notable rise in interim assignments on our platform at the end of 2024— an encouraging sign of the growing demand for flexible, high-impact talent.

The Interim Manager Pulse survey results further energize me for the year ahead. Interim managers reported great successes in 2024, with minimal practical challenges and outstanding measurable results. This speaks to the strength of professionals in this field and the value they bring to companies of all sizes, industries, and growth stages.

Once again, this survey offers insights for more than just interim managers. Customers gain a clearer understanding of the interim talent available and learn how to ensure the interim manager they hire is successful. Meanwhile, Interim Service Providers learn what interim managers value most about their role.

As an Interim Service Provider ourselves, BBTP is continuously learning from this survey. One key takeaway from this year's results is that newer interim managers often need support with the practical parts of setting up their business and they also need strategies for managing client expectations or project changes. In 2025, BBTP will be happy to address both needs by offering new practical services for independent professionals and by facilitating knowledge transfer between seasoned and emerging interim managers.

BBTP is looking forward to another year of learning and growth. I can't wait to see all the success in store for interim managers and the companies they serve in 2025.

GET IN TOUCH

Do you have further questions about the results of this survey? Would you like to know more about Best Best Talent Platform?

A member of our team would be happy to speak with you!



Leah Martin

Community Manager

leah.martin@bestbesttalentplatform.com



Elina Liehu

Founder & Managing Director

elina.liehu@bestbesttalentplatform.com

+358 40 564 7441