



# Project Management Confidence Index

Issued July 2014

*arras* PEOPLE

# Introduction

## Welcome to the Confidence Index for UK Project Management Practitioners

As we approached the half-way point of 2014 it seemed an opportune time to check in with the UK's Programme and Project Management (PPM) community to see how the economic recovery is impacting them and to check how this compares to the views expressed during the collection of data for the 2014 Arras People Project Management Benchmark Report (2014 PMBR).

Why? Well, when we were putting together the 2014 PMBR we were being bombarded by the media and politicians with 'good news' about the UK economy and there have been lots of people talking it up ever since. However, our experiences when talking to practitioners was on the whole not quite as positive, full of mixed messages and plenty of practitioners still having a hard time. The 2014 PMBR had suggested that practitioners were on the whole anticipating another challenging year so it seemed like an ideal point to test the waters!

The checkpoint seems to have further relevance as data issued by the ONS (Office for National Statistics) on the 16/7/14 showed that pay in the UK in the three months to May 2014 increased at the slowest rate on record. Data shows that wages excluding bonuses rose by 0.7% over the year, which is less than half the current rate of inflation, not to mention the weakest annual growth since the Office for National Statistics started compiling the data in 2001. At the same time it was reported that in the last quarter unemployment fell by 121,000, leaving the unemployment figure at 6.5% with a new UK record of 30.6 million in work. Unemployment as reported by the ONS is now at its lowest since December 2008.

The following report has been drawn from the results of a short survey which allowed us to take a snapshot of UK based programme and project management practitioner feelings about the market and their outlook for the remainder of 2014. As ever, we would like to thank those practitioners who took part in the survey as we would not be able to create such work without their ongoing support.

If you have any questions, comments or feedback please do get back to us [pmb@arraspeople.co.uk](mailto:pmb@arraspeople.co.uk)

**John Thorpe, Managing Director  
Arras People, 18th July 2014**

## About Arras People

The Project Management Recruitment and Career Specialists

Arras People are the UK's No.1 Specialists in Project & Programme Management Recruitment.

Established in 2002 we have remained 100% focused on the field of Programme and Project Management (PPM).

### For Clients:

Arras People provide PPM recruitment services for client organisations across the UK and beyond and across all industry sectors;

- Permanent roles
- Contract roles
- Interim roles
- Temporary roles

Our USP? Project and Programme Management recruitment services are carried out by our team who are experienced in programme and project delivery. We add real value to the process by understanding your needs and identifying practitioners who have the capability to deliver; something key word matching cannot achieve.

### For Candidates:

Arras People provide PPM Career services for PPM practitioners from self-help advice on our web site through to one-to-one sessions and dedicated workshops.

### For the PPM Sector:

Arras People provide PPM Market Data through the highly respected Project Management Benchmark Report which has been reporting on the UK market since 2005. The report is the only set of consistent PPM market data publicly available and is widely referenced by professional bodies and other organisations globally.

## Key Findings

Whilst some form of recovery is happening in the UK and the unemployment figures continue to fall; the picture painted by the Programme and Project Management (PPM) practitioners who responded to the latest Arras People survey suggest that the economy is still in neutral for the majority, with bands of winners and losers around the edges.

We are seeing some new opportunities, some increases in remuneration, but on the whole not enough to create the necessary confidence for practitioners to feel it is safe and rewarding to bring mobility back into their careers. There is not a shared view that UK PLC has bounced off the bottom. Unemployment may be falling but the squeeze on living standards is still apparent and exaggerated through low increases in earnings. Low unemployment may be here to stay, but are low pay increases the price that we will have to pay? Then again it may be a by-product of globalization over which we have no control.

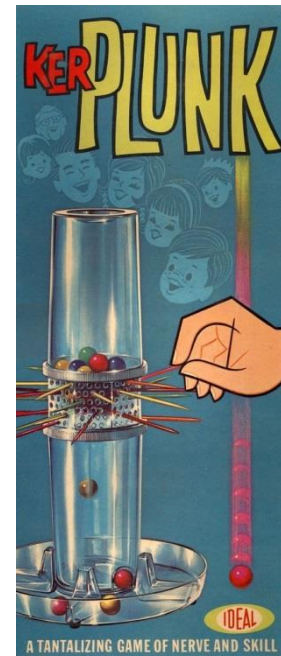
When analysing the data and looking for a suitable analogy to capture an essence of the results we thought long and hard before eventually coming up with “Ker Plunk”, that well known and loved game with straws and marbles. The economy and organisations being represented by the interweave of straws and the practitioners in turn being the marbles delicately balanced on top; a strange kind of capture of potential kinetic energy that at any point could be released as the constraints and opportunities are changed by the removal of straws.

We are already starting to see the odd few marbles accelerate through the current set of constraints and the data suggests that with the right conditions that could become an avalanche as practitioners seek to recover lost ground in their careers and living standards.

Real recovery may be just around the corner, at which point a new set of challenges will occur for both PPM Practitioners and those who purchase their services.

Some standout points include:

- 74% of Private sector respondents are anticipating some level of growth in their current organisation during 2014.
- 55% of respondents involved in recruiting programme and project management practitioners in 2014 reported that filling roles has been very difficult/difficult.
- 40% of practitioners who have started a new job in 2014 have seen wage increases of over 8% on their last salary.
- 28% of employees are happy in their current role.
- 46% of practitioners cannot find a new role that meets a desired level of remuneration.
- 48% of inactive contractors have been contracting for less than 3 years. Pseudo contractors?



## Respondent Demographic

The survey invitation was responded to by 350 PPM practitioners who were filtered to ensure that the data used for analysis contained only those who are UK based.

The practitioner spread (Fig 2) was consistent with that which is typically seen in the PMBR reports with the Project Managers making up the largest cohort.

By age, we have 45% in the 35 to 49 group, 33% in the 50+ group and 20% in the under 34's.

When sliced by gender we have 69% male with 30% females and the remainder not wishing to disclose.

Current status as shown in Fig 3 showed no significant deviation from the PMBR when viewed at the highest level; however a surprisingly high 33% of contractors indicated that they are currently inactive, surviving without a current contract.

When viewed by geography we see London, the Home Counties and South East accounting for just under 50% of respondents which is typical for a PMBR response.

The respondent group was spread across all sectors with the top eight being shown in Fig 5 accounting for 71%.

Across Private, Public and Charity/Not for Profit sectors the respondent group is split 72%, 20% and 8% respectively.

When reviewed by business function; 33% of the respondents indicated that their role is aligned to a Project Management Department (PMO) and 25% are aligned to Information Technology/Systems. The third highest grouping being Consulting which accounts for 10%.

Respondent Mix – UK Based	%
Yes - I am a UK National	82%
Yes - I am a EU National	10%
Yes - I am a Non-UK/EU National	4%

Fig 1

Respondent Role	%
Portfolio Manager	4%
Programme Manager	16%
Project Manager	43%
Change Manager	3%
Programme/Project Office Manager	5%
Programme/Project Support	6%
Business/Systems Analyst	4%
Programme/Project Planner	2%
Programme/Project Management Consultant	10%
Recruiter/Manager	1%

Fig 2

Current Status	%
Employee - Full-time or Part-time	63%
Currently Unemployed	10%
Contractor – Active/Inactive	27%

Fig 3

UK Geographic Distribution	%
London	27%
South East	15%
North West	13%
Midlands	12%
No fixed place of work	8%
South West	7%
Home Counties	5%
Scotland	4%
Anglia	3%
Yorkshire	3%
Wales	2%
Tyne Tees	1%
Northern Ireland	0%
North East	0%

Fig 4

Top Sectors	%
IT and information services	14%
Engineering and manufacturing	12%
Banking and Finance and Accountancy	12%
Public sector	10%
Consulting and Business and Mgt.	6%
Telecommunications	6%
Energy and utilities	6%
Construction and Property	5%

Fig 5

## Organisation Confidence

We have seen throughout the great recession that there is not a direct correlation between an individual’s confidence and their perception of confidence within the organisation they are working for. We have also noted a difference in the perception of an organisations confidence between practitioners actively involved in recruitment and those who are not. Perception is so important, sometimes some would say more than reality. So we first looked at how our respondents are viewing confidence in their current organisations.

Fig 6 shows three sets of responses; a baseline from the 2014 PMBR, those respondents who identified that they are actively involved in recruiting at their organisation and lastly respondents who are currently not involved in recruitment.

Surprisingly, given that we are six months into the recovery Respondents who are reporting Gloomy/Low shows consistently across all three groups with no significant change from the start of the year. Interrogating the

Confidence Levels	PMBR	Rec	No-Rec
Buoyant – Anticipating growth	15%	19%	22%
Steady – Anticipating normal levels of growth	47%	56%	44%
Neutral – Not anticipating growth or contraction	23%	8%	17%
Low – Anticipating contraction	10%	12%	9%
Gloomy – Anticipating hard times	6%	5%	6%

Fig 6

data by sector shows a significant shift to 31% for those working in the Public sector compared to 11% in the Private, supporting the notion that the Private sector is seeing some recovery of confidence.

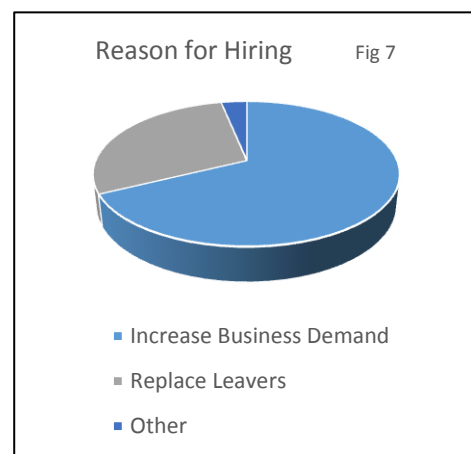
For those reporting their organisations as Buoyant we can see rises for both those currently recruiting and those who are not, which may suggest that there is residual slack to support such growth without the need to create new positions. Across sectors we again see significant differences with 11% in the Public sector and 25% Private sector.

## Hiring – The Return of Churn?

Hiring is taking place, that much is confirmed by the data. The next question is why are organisations hiring? As we can see in Figure 7 we asked respondents to identify the reasoning behind the hiring activity during 2014 and ‘to meet increased business demand’ came out on top at 68%. ‘Other’ came in at 3% including the desire to “replace contractors with permanent staff” which would be interpreted in some quarters as a sign of confidence.

Whilst increased business demand is great to see, the final segment, ‘To replace leaving staff’ is a very important element and at 29% a significant increase from 8% noted in the 2014 PMBR. This suggests that some ‘churn’ is returning to the market after a long period of absence as practitioners battened down the hatches and employees who left were not replaced. Practitioners starting to leave their existing organisations in order to seek their futures elsewhere is a definite sign that for some that confidence is returning.

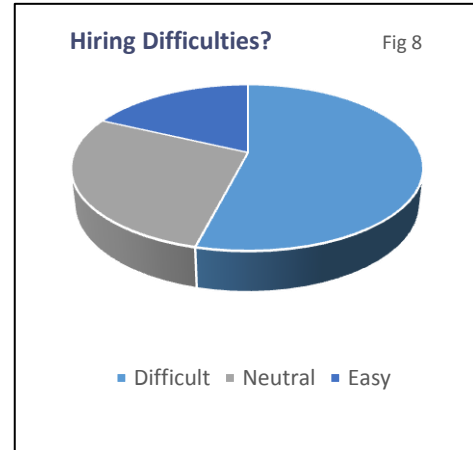
By sector, 70% of those indicating that hiring has been undertaken are working in the Private sector, 20% in the Public sector and just 10% in the Charity/NfP sector.



## Hiring – Is It Getting Harder?

When asked about how easy our respondents had found it to fill their open PPM roles, those reporting a degree of difficulty reached 54%. Of these 12% indicated that they had found it “very difficult” to fill open roles with the remaining 88% expressing a degree of difficulty.

Whilst the 54% figure is a worry, the exact reason behind this figure is hard to identify at this point in the recovery cycle. Lack of churn, as discussed above is certainly a contributor, which could easily be interpreted by some as ‘talent shortage’. On the other hand, those responsible for recruitment may still have a ‘buyers’ market’ mind-set with the bar set very high in terms of what the candidate must be able to bring to the table, not to mention ongoing restrictions on remuneration and package deals.

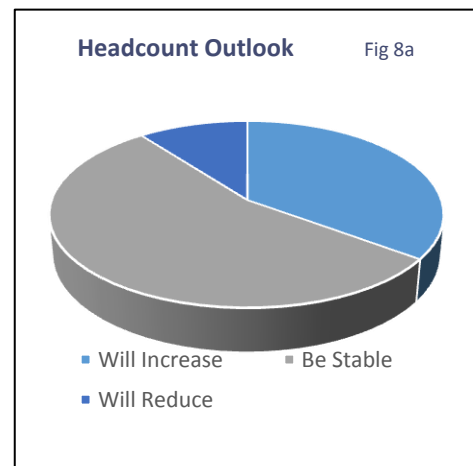


## Hiring Outlook

In the 2014 PMBR respondents were asked to look forward into 2014 and offer a view on PPM headcount in their organisations. At that time 59% anticipated that headcount would increase, a figure much more optimistic than the 35% recorded in the current review.

31% thought that headcount would remain stable which has now increased to 55%; with those anticipating a reduction increasing to 10%.

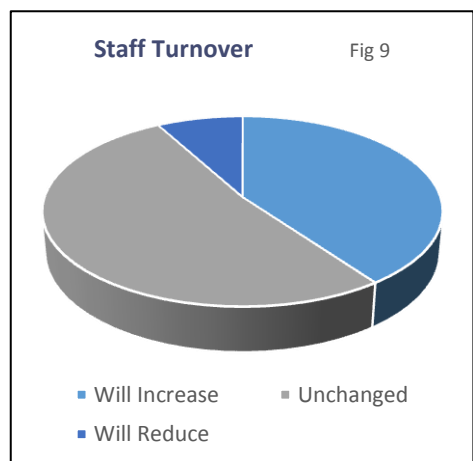
The hiring outlook is still better than we have seen for a number of years and even at 33% a significant number of opportunities should be created during 2014.



## Staff Turnover

We asked respondents who are involved in the recruitment of PPM practitioners how they see staff turnover changing during the remainder of 2014 as the recovery takes hold in the UK economy.

40% of the respondents with a view believe that staff turnover will increase in the remainder of 2014. A further 52% believe that staff turnover will remain unchanged. By sector these figures change to 44% / 46% in the Private sector and 37% / 57% in the Public sector suggesting that more churn is anticipated in the Private sector as opportunities continue to emerge and practitioners look to move on.





## What about the Money?

With the return of confidence to both organisations and individual practitioners the signs are that hiring will increase for PPM Practitioners through the remainder of 2014. This new opportunity will tempt some practitioners to change organisations as they will be in a position to achieve some career aspirations and also an increase in their remuneration.

These changes will in turn increase ‘churn’ which will then convert into more vacancies; however at some point the market will stagnate and ‘talent’ will have to be tempted by organisations out into the market. At that point we will see increases in the remuneration on offer and changes to overall packages as a *war for talent* commences to feed the resourcing requirement that will support organisations growth. The ‘sellers’ market’ will return for many practitioners.

Naturally many organisations will try to stall this inflationary step in the cycle for as long as possible as it is not only bad news for the bottom line, but also potentially disruptive as a balance is sought between the remuneration offered to ‘new talent’ versus that offered to ‘existing talent’.

With all this in mind we asked our respondents about their views on remuneration for the remainder of 2014.

Firstly we asked “What do you think will happen to **PPM salaries** offered by your organisation in the remainder of 2014?”

As we can see in the table (Fig 10) the respondents are not anticipating any raging salary inflation during 2014. Only 12% anticipate any real rise in salary against inflation which is very much in line with practitioner views captured for the 2014 PMBR.

Salaries will	Now	PMBR
Increase above inflation	12%	11%
Increase in line with inflation	30%	17%
Increase below inflation	16%	39%
Remain unchanged	37%	31%
Be reduced	1%	2%

Fig 10

By sector, 41% in the Private sector and just 13% in the Public sector anticipate that salaries will remain in line with inflation even at it new low rate. Confidence would appear to be in short supply on the salary front, with 37% of the respondent involved in hiring PPM practitioners anticipating that salaries will remain unchanged for the remainder of 2014. By sector this figure is 25% in the Private sector and 63% in the Public sector, confirming the ongoing gloom expressed by this group of practitioners.

We then asked “What do you think will happen to **PPM day rates** offered to contractors by your organisation in the remainder of 2014?”

The views of the 70% who work in organisations that use contractors can be seen in the table (Fig 11).

Day Rates will	Now	PMBR
Increase	24%	30%
Remain unchanged	64%	58%
Be reduced	12%	12%

Fig 11

Once again we can see a similar pattern to that expressed by contractors in the 2014 PMBR data, though the numbers expecting increases has softened slightly. The 64% anticipating no change feels representative of the market that we are currently seeing; there is definitely still a feel of a ‘buyers’ market’ and many contractors happy to take the work on offer rather than push back or hang out for a raise in their day rate. Rate reductions at 12% suggest that the contractor market is still yet to turn the corner and reap any of the benefits associated with increased confidence and recovery.

## Working Practitioner Feel Good

A regular feature of the PMBR is to ask PPM practitioners how they are feeling from a financial standpoint. For this snapshot we asked for current feeling compared to the start of this year.

As can be seen in the table (Fig 12) working practitioners feel that their financial position is currently better than it was at the start of 2014 (PMBR). Whilst the overall picture is still not overly rosy, 19% of practitioners feeling worse off is a massive improvement on the 49% recorded in the 2010 PMBR.

Personal Finance	All in Work	PMBR	Emp'ye	Active Cont'r
Much Better Off	8%	8%	9%	6%
Slightly Better Off	30%	25%	32%	23%
About the same	44%	35%	41%	52%
Slightly Worse Off	17%	25%	16%	19%
Much Worse Off	2%	7%	2%	0%

Fig 12

The employee figures however hide the two track economy which has been resident in the UK since the beginning of the 'great recession'. Whilst the figures are slightly better than the PMBR, we still see 36% of those working in the Public sector feeling worse off to some degree compared to 15% of their peers in the Private sector. This is a complete switch from the early days of the recession when the Private sector practitioners took the brunt of the economic pain.

We then asked "With all the 'good news' about the recovery of the UK economy, how are you feeling about what will happen during the remainder of 2014?" the results of which can be seen in the table (Fig 13).

From the results it would appear that personal confidence has slipped back in to neutral since the beginning of the year for the working practitioners. The bounce seems to have come out of the Buoyant with a -10% movement, the steadiness is slightly reduced with Neutral up 19% since the same question was posed for the 2014 PMBR.

Personal Confidence	All in Work	PMBR	Emp'ye	Active Cont'r
Buoyant	9%	19%	8%	10%
Steady	51%	55%	49%	55%
Neutral	32%	13%	32%	29%
Low	6%	11%	7%	4%
Gloomy	3%	1%	3%	2%

Fig 13

By region London once again shows the highest levels of personal confidence with 75% above neutral and 5% below; even here we see +9% in the neutral result compared to the start of year PMBR result.

Whilst it may be due to the sample size, the South East showed the greatest variance from the PMBR result at the start of the year, with 36% of the respondents moving from Buoyant/Steady into Neutral.

## Employee Salary Changes

As part of the PMBR we ask practitioners what they think will happen to their salary over the coming year, the forecast for 2014 can be seen in the table (Fig 14).

Salary Change in 2014	To-Date	PMBR
Reduced	6%	2%
None	38%	31%
Increased from 2013 by 1-2%	31%	39%
Increased from 2013 by 3-4%	13%	17%
Increased from 2013 by 5-7%	5%	5%
Increased from 2013 by more than 8%	8%	6%

Fig 14

In the table we also have the changes in salary which the practitioners who are employees have seen to-date this year, which do not paint a great picture even against the forecast.



Overall, taking inflation at the 2% level the respondent group indicates that 75% of practitioners have not seen their pay keep pace with inflation. For those working in the Public sector the news gets worse as that figure increases to 93% compared to 72% for Private sector practitioners.

Looking forward for the remainder of 2014, 65% of respondents are not expecting any further change to their salary; 21% are anticipating a rise of less than 2% with the remaining 14% anticipating a salary increase above 2%.

Looking for the winners in terms of the salary increases achieved during 2014, we are drawn to the length of time PPM practitioners have been with their current employers.

Time with Employer	Change >8%
New starter in 2014	40%
Less than 1 year	8%
1 to 3 Years	4%
4 to 5 Years	6%
More than 5 Years	3%

Fig 15

As we can see in the table (Fig 15) which breaks down the practitioners who have achieved an increase of 8% or more, the clear winners are those that have changed employer during 2014.

However, it is worth noting that all PPM practitioners changing employers during 2014 have not fared so well; 15% saw their salary reduced, 25% saw no change in their salary and 20% saw an increase of up to 2%. All of which suggests that there are still many practitioners for whom any job is better than no job in these tough economic times.

## Contractor Day Rate Changes

As part of the PMBR we ask contracting practitioners what they think will happen to their day rate over the coming year, the forecast for 2014 can be seen in the table (Fig 14).

Day Rate Change in 2014	To-Date	PMBR
Reduced	15%	12%
None	65%	58%
Increased from 2013 by 1-2%	7%	8%
Increased from 2013 by 3-4%	2%	7%
Increased from 2013 by 5-7%	4%	8%
Increased from 2013 by more than 8%	7%	7%

Fig 16

The table also shows the changes in day rate which the practitioners who are active in a contract have seen to-date; once again we see a position which is worse than forecasted.

There has been a lot of talk about “pseudo contractors” during the recession, where practitioners become contractors rather than unemployed whilst the market recovers. This phenomenon may be apparent in the rate data; amongst those who have been contracting for more than 5 years 20% have achieved a day rates increase of 3% or more, with 60% static. In comparison those who have been offering their services for less than one year come in with 14%, with 72% static.

Private sector contractors appear to be seeing the rough and the smooth with 17% having seen their rates reduced, whilst 10% have seen their rates increase by more than 8%, 67% having seen no change.

Once again Neutral seems to be the real order of the day for contracting PPM practitioners.

Forecast Change in 2014	Active	Inactive
Fall	4%	29%
Remain Static	76%	48%
Increase by 1-2%	7%	10%
Increase by 3-4%	2%	10%
Increase by 5-7%	4%	5%
Increase by more than 8%	7%	0%

Fig 17

When we looked at forecast changes to day rates for the remainder of 2014, a bullishness appears with active

practitioners who have been contractors for less than one year, with 29% expecting to see an increase greater than 8% during the remainder of 2014. The second most confident group are the practitioners who have been contracting for over five years; amongst this group 8% are anticipating increases over 4% during the remainder of 2014.

In terms of the contractors who are currently inactive there is not a great deal of optimism regarding their rates as we can see in the table (Fig 17) with 29% anticipating their rates to fall should they secure a new role and just 15% anticipating that they will be able to secure a new role that offers an increase over the current inflation rate.

## Employee Movement

From the data collected during our survey, it would appear that PPM practitioners who are currently employees in the UK market are not confident that the conditions are right to support their ambitions.

As we can see in the table 67% of the respondents indicated that they have been looking for a new role during 2014, a figure consistent with the last PMBR. Again like the PMBR just 28% of our respondents say they are happy in their current role, which for any employer or HR director must be a worrying thought.

It is good to see that 40% of the respondents are seeing higher levels of opportunity; though the current levels of recruitment activity would suggest that opportunity alone will not encourage the practitioners to take the leap in to a new role.

The challenges identified by the respondents offer a number of clues about the market;

<b>Looking for Change?</b>	<b>%</b>
Have been looking for new Role	67%
<b>I am currently:</b>	<b>%</b>
Happy in my current role	28%
Open to change but not pushing	24%
Looking to change employer	24%
Looking for a new role with my current employer	12%
Looking to move into a contracting role	8%
Under threat of redundancy	2%
Other	2%
<b>Opportunity Availability 2014</b>	<b>%</b>
Much Lower	1%
Slightly Lower	16%
About the Same	42%
Higher	34%
Much Higher	6%
<b>Challenges</b>	<b>%</b>
Finding roles which align to my skills and experiences.	55%
Finding roles that meet my desired level of remuneration.	46%
Finding suitable roles in my sector/domain	37%
Securing an interview for the roles to which I apply.	26%
Other	11%

Fig 18

*“Finding roles which align to my skills and experiences”* at 55% suggests that for many practitioners roles being advertised do not offer the prospect of advancement in their career; an alternate take could be that the roles being advertised do not reflect the skills and experiences that are really needed as those responsible for recruitment lack domain knowledge and clarity around their requirements!

*“Finding roles that meet my desired level of remuneration”* at 46% gives a very strong message to employers who are looking to recruit PPM practitioners. Wage inflation has been and remains in most sectors very low as organisations have swept up unemployed practitioners and made the most of the perceived “buyers’ market”. However, as the unemployment falls further and organisations look to expand they will need to start factoring in the opportunity cost associated with not offering better salaries and how they will react when their competitors start to do so.

“Securing an interview for the roles to which I apply” at 26% is primarily a challenge for the practitioner to take a hard look at themselves and their CV (marketing materials) to understand why they are not being seen as a suitable candidate. An alternate view will be that the recruiters don’t understand their skills and what they have to offer, but in an expanding market the responsibility to change these perceptions must remain with the practitioner.

Amongst the comments from practitioners “Specifications are becoming very specific - for subject matter experts not project managers” stood out as we hear this comment on a frequent basis. Hiring ‘dual role’ project managers where subject matter expertise is seen as more important can only end in tears and more project failure?

For employers the good news is that practitioners are not purely driven by remuneration. As we can see in Fig 19 package is important for those who are looking to move but ‘better prospects’ and ‘increased challenge’ are also important elements that need to be considered when selling an opening in your organisation.

Time with Current Employer	%
New starter in 2014	12%
Less than 1 year	7%
1 to 3 Years	31%
4 to 5 Years	9%
More than 5 Years	42%
New starter 2014 Because:	%
Better prospects	50%
Better package	45%
Increased challenge	35%
Lifestyle change	30%
Other	20%
Previously unemployed	15%

Fig 19

As we have seen in the PMBR over the years for many PPM practitioners will reach a stage where ‘lifestyle change’ becomes a major decision making factor when looking to change jobs and organisation.

Selling opportunities and having a good recruitment partner who can help do this will become more crucial as the recovery steps up and the talent wars begin.

## Contractor Insights

For the purposes of this snapshot we asked the PPM practitioners who operate as contractors to indicate their current status as active or inactive to see if this impacted confidence and views.

As we can see in the table (Fig 20) 35% of the respondents indicated that they are currently inactive and do not have a contract, an increase on the position reported at the start of 2014 in the PMBR. At the other end of the scale the numbers reporting more than six months has increased to 22% which may be a sign that confidence is growing in the hiring organisations. “Finding contracts that are longer than 3 months” has been an issue for many contractors during the recession.

Current Contract	Now	PMBR
Inactive - No Current contract	35%	30%
Less than 3 months	26%	29%
3 to 6 Months	17%	28%
More than 6 months	22%	13%

Fig 20

Fig 21 gives an interesting insight into the inactive contractors and may add to the discussion about the “pseudo contractor” given that 48% have been contracting for less than 3 years.

Contractor for	Active	Inactive
Less than 1 Year	15%	28%
1 to 3 Years	15%	20%
4 to 5 Years	17%	0%
More than 5 Years	53%	52%

Fig 21

Like the PPM practitioners who are employees, the contractors have been having a tough time during the recession as availability of work decreased for many and their rates came under significant pressure. We asked the contractors about finding new roles and the challenges they currently face, the results are shown in Fig 22.

As we can see the active contractors are ranking their challenges in the same order as those looking for permanent opportunities and the same comments made above can be applied.

The standout figure is the 71% of inactive contractors who are having trouble

Challenges	Active	In-Active
Finding roles which align to my skills and experiences.	38%	58%
Finding roles that meet my desired level of remuneration.	33%	46%
Finding suitable roles in my sector/domain	31%	38%
Securing an interview for the roles to which I apply.	21%	71%
Other	21%	8%
<b>Opportunity Availability 2014</b>	<b>%</b>	
Much Higher	0%	0%
Higher	38%	13%
About the Same	38%	54%
Slightly Lower	21%	4%
Much Lower	3%	29%

Fig 22

securing an interview when applying for a role, especially when compared to the 21% indicated by their active peers. Whilst *“Very high number of other contractors applying ie 150+ for the same role”* may be true in some instances can this be the only reason?

Higher opportunity availability is good news and whilst it is not yet at pre-recession levels any improvement is welcome. Once again we see in the data the difference in perception (reality?) between those who are active and inactive which add to the discussion above. Across sector those targeted on the Public sector report higher activity at 55% compared to 31% for Private sector, though this is coming from a low base.

31% of the Private sector contractors suggest lower levels of opportunity compared to 9% of the Public sector contractors which may be a knock on from higher levels of permanent recruitment as confidence returns. A new opportunity for contractors may be just around the corner if recruitment of permanent employees becomes difficult and business critical roles need to be filled.

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