



How to pick your dream team

but manage the programme internally? Or hire a big-brand consulting firm to manage and deliver the whole programme with their own people? How about looking for a contract programme manager? Or should you choose a specialist consulting firm with strong programme management credentials? The answer can only be: "It depends..."

All these models can be made to work. But the effort involved, the degree to which they are successful, and the time/cost range within which they deliver will all vary significantly, depending on the particular circumstances and suppliers involved.

Some of the choices are outlined on the next page, along with an illustration of when they might be a good fit, and the potential pitfalls to look out for.

Of the four choices shown in the table, the first three are generally well established and understood. 'Client Side Consulting' is an alternative that is becoming increasingly

popular, and involves the programme team being made up of a mixture of client staff, independent contractors and various 'best of breed' third parties. But it needs a consulting firm that specialises in programme management on the client side to take on the key programme management and leadership roles, and the responsibility for managing all the suppliers on the client's behalf. The aim of this approach is simply to achieve a balance in terms of **both** delivery capability **and** cost.

Whichever approach you choose, you'll need to stay on top of the programme management basics and invest the necessary time to make your supplier partnerships work effectively. This will greatly increase your chances of achieving the best possible result. And, after all, that's what really counts.

When deciding which programme management model to adopt, it's important to choose the one that suits your people and your circumstances. Here's a guide to the advantages – and potential pitfalls – of the four main models

This promises to be another great year for sport, with, among other things, the football World Cup in the summer. The build-up has already begun, and for the managers and players alike, the weight of expectation on them to deliver the results everyone wants is growing.

We're not professional sportsmen (far from it!), but our clients often ask for our help in putting together their very own 'dream team' to help them manage some of their toughest programmes. In the current climate, the desire to get such projects over the line, so that they can start delivering the benefits the business needs, is keener than ever. So choosing a management approach that suits your people and delivers on promise has never been more crucial.

Yet the range of programme management models available still serves to confuse. Should you pick a delivery supplier

Key questions when choosing your programme management approach

- What kind of internal resources do I have at my disposal?
- What kind of management approach do they respond to better: hands on or hands off?
- Is this programme single-site or a global operation covering many staff, nationalities and cultures?
- Will I need to consider outsourcing as part of the programme?
- Could a number of suppliers complete segments of the work well? Or does one firm stand out as capable of managing everything to a high standard?

MODEL	WHEN MIGHT IT BE A GOOD FIT?	POTENTIAL PITFALLS
Internal resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have sufficient internal resources, with suitable programme management experience, who are available to be seconded onto the programme full-time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Underestimating the level of specific programme management expertise required. Just because someone has business or IT experience in an area, it doesn't mean they can successfully pull together and deliver a major change programme. Project roles tend to be very different to line management roles, and the latter do not automatically equip people to do the former It's hard for people to be truly independent and bring fresh perspective to the programme
Independent contractor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have found someone with the right experience, who is willing to take full ownership and really understand and tackle the content issues, not just tick the project management boxes You just need a single programme manager – ie you are prepared to source everything else, including the other team lead/management roles, from elsewhere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You're dependent on one individual, with no organisation behind them to hold accountable or offer extra support. Also, they don't have a vested interest in the outcome It can be hard to assess the real capability of a contractor without trying them out – which could prove to be a costly mistake Will your contractor really try to understand your business, and enough of the specific business or IT content, or will they just try to turn the handle on the management processes?
Big-brand consulting firm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You need/want additional skilled resource in many countries You want a single point of accountability, with a wide range of services delivered by the same firm (not just the programme management) The programme has an outsourcing component, where you want the supplier to both deliver the programme and take on the operation of some services afterwards (with one set of commercial arrangements covering both) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programme will still need lots of business engagement – it can't be run in a 'black box'. You need to watch out for the work being done 'to the business, not with the business' You still need to carefully govern and manage the programme (and the supplier). The programme won't run itself just because there is a big firm at the helm! Is the firm really expert in all the services you require, or just some of them? There's the potential that you could lose control It can be a battle ensuring that you consistently have senior/quality people deployed on your programme. Ask what will happen if the 'A team' gets pulled off? A large consulting team could potentially be very expensive
'Client Side Consulting' approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are a range of suppliers (eg particular IT vendors, consultancies, strategic offshore partners, internal people) who are all a good fit in certain areas, but none are suitable to take on the overall programme management and leadership of the programme You want to retain transparency and control of the programme and maintain high levels of business buy-in You want an approach that maximises the chances of success, but in a cost-conscious way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making this model work relies on top-calibre programme management skills to bring it all together; you'll need to pick a firm with an excellent track record, credentials and references Getting the 'best of breed' mixture right can be a challenge; you need to plan and mobilise the programme carefully Programme management needs to exercise careful control over the scope and responsibilities of each supplier involved, to avoid any gaps or overlap