

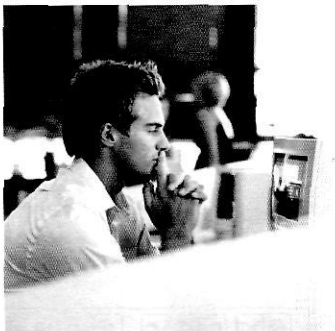
4 Employment and employability

A Outsourcing

Nigel, a 30-year-old information technology (IT) specialist, talks about his career so far:

'I used to work in the IT department of a bank. All the IT work was done *in-house*. I thought I had a *job for life*. But then one day the bank decided to cut costs by *outsourcing* the work to a specialist IT company called IT Services (ITS).

Luckily, the bank didn't make me *redundant* so I didn't lose my job, and after a while I decided to work for ITS instead. At first, I didn't know what to expect, but now I'm very happy. We work with a lot of different clients – I'm a *consultant* and I give them advice.'



B Employability

'ITS put a lot of emphasis on *professional development* and we often go on training courses so we can keep up with *current trends* in the industry.

ITS tell us that although we may not have a *job for life* with the company, our up-to-date skills will mean that we will always be *employable*. Companies and governments talk about the importance of *lifelong learning* – continuing to develop our knowledge by going on courses and reading journals, for example.

I really enjoy my work but in the next year or two, I may make a *career move* and join another company.'

C Freelancers and portfolio workers

'When I'm about 40, I want to *set up on my own* as a *freelancer* offering *consultancy services* to different companies. The idea of working *freelance* on different projects for different clients attracts me.'

The *management thinker* Charles Handy¹ calls *freelancers* *portfolio workers* because they have a *portfolio* or range of different clients. Some experts say that increasing numbers of people will work this way in the future, as companies *outsource* more and more of their work because they want to concentrate on their *core functions*.

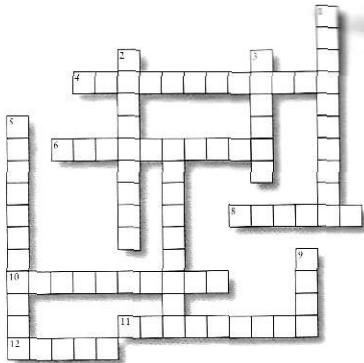
Note: People are called *freelancers* or *freelances*. The corresponding adjective is *freelance*, as in 'freelance work'.

¹ *The Age of Unreason* (Random House 2001)

4.1 Complete the crossword with appropriate forms of expressions from A, B and C opposite.

Across

- 4 Training courses etc. related to work; development. (12)
- 6 What many companies no longer offer. (3,3,4)
- 8 and 9 down When you get a better job you make a (6,4)
- 10 Someone who offers professional advice etc. to companies. (10)
- 11 Companies that buy in services from outside suppliers these services. (9)
- 12 If you start work as a freelancer, you on your own. (3,2)



Down

- 1 Having the skills needed to get a job. (10)
- 2 and 3 Someone who does work for a number of different companies. (9,6)
- 5 The people in 2 and 3 down are also called (11)
- 7 If you lose your job, for example because it has been outsourced, you are made (9)
- 9 See 8 across.

4.2 Complete the sentences with appropriate forms of expressions from A, B and C opposite. (There are two possibilities for one of the gaps.)

- 1 There's a lot to be said for I would encourage more working men and women to refresh their skills on university short courses tailored to their needs. That way they can keep up with and make sure they are always aware of the latest thinking in their area.
- 2 I love my new job. This is definitely the best I could have made.
- 3 The company fired 11,000 employees and sold several business units. Non-core were outsourced.
- 4 Some former advertising executives offer to ad agencies, bringing expertise the agencies do not have themselves.
- 5 Some 'creative' businesses, like design services, have hardly any permanent staff and rely on work done by
- 6 Of course, there are advantages to doing some things: you don't have to explain to outsiders what you want them to do.

Over to you



Would it be possible to do your job or one you would like as a freelancer? Why / Why not?
What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a freelancer?