

The interim reward manager's view

It's the paperwork that gets to interim reward manager Aidan Crossey. "Getting everything done for Companies House and your accountant is boring and it's something that you have to do on your own time," he says. "There's more work than people might realise in keeping your accounts up to date."

That aside, Crossey, who has been a freelance professional for two years, enjoys the variety, pressure and flexibility of project-based working. "I am interested in change and innovation, not simply turning the handle and keeping things ticking over," he says. "And I enjoy the satisfaction of seeing things through from beginning to end. It's always easy to gauge whether you've done well or not."

While so far he's found new contracts relatively easily, interims

need to prepare for gaps between contracts. "I am earning about the same [as I did when I worked in-house] because I'm careful to budget for lean times," he says. "The salary I pay myself is not overly generous, but it allows me to continue to pay myself if I'm not working."

Crossey believes that one of the things that makes him attractive as a consultant is his mix of public-sector and commercial experience. Most of his contracts have been in the public sector, but managers there value his background in the private sector because it allows him to bring a different perspective.

"I have also found that, to be credible in this work, you need a degree of strategic exposure. But quite often when working as an interim you won't actually have the ability to use it," he says.

'Reward is an in-demand area and pays an average of 10 per cent more than other equivalent HR positions'

Reward's higher profile has also prompted people from other disciplines to consider moving into HR – Brooks reports that tax specialists at consultancies are looking to do so as a potential stepping stone to a board role.

That said, it's also possible for reward managers to become too specialised to move into more general roles, according to