



Type and the gig economy

A research study from
The Myers-Briggs Company

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Executive summary

Purpose of the research

Gig workers (individuals employed on a freelance basis, carrying out short-term jobs or contracts, not necessarily fixed to a single employer) form a significant part of the workforce, and are essential to the functioning of many organizations. However there has been little research into how the personality of the individual gig worker relates to their motivations, the stresses that they face, or other aspects of their jobs.

This study was designed to investigate how personality and other factors relate to the differences between gig and 'regular' jobs, the reasons why someone becomes a gig worker, types of gig work done, and views on gig jobs. For gig workers, this information could be very useful in making them aware of their likely strengths and possible blind spots, and in deciding whether gig or other freelance work was right for them. For organizations, this could be the key to managing their gig workers and contractors more efficiently and effectively. The aim of this study was to develop straightforward guidelines that could be used by both.

Summary of findings

A large number of detailed findings are presented in the body of the report. However, some of the more important results include the following:

- For organizations, it is important to understand the reasons why people have become gig workers. The most common were: to have freedom and flexibility; to work in an area he/she is passionate about; to be his/her own boss; because freelancing or gig work is the career he/she wants to have.
- These reasons cluster into three categories or factors: positive reasons, temporary or contingent reasons, and other reasons around *needing* to work. Those who become a gig worker for positive reasons will tend to enjoy their job more.
- Different jobs have different characteristics, and six scales or job characteristics relevant to work in the gig economy were developed. These were: *Enjoyable, motivating work; Flexibility; Degree of empowerment; Level of job demands; Financial rewards; Additional benefits and support*. A separate scale of *Job-related stress* was also developed. Compared with regular workers, those with a gig job saw their work as more enjoyable, more flexible, and more financially rewarding, but as less empowered and with less additional benefits.
- Almost 70% of gig workers thought that having autonomy and flexibility was the best thing about working in the gig economy, and these reasons were some distance ahead of other reasons (having meaningful, interesting or creative work 19%, work-life balance and fit with lifestyle 15%, variety, new experiences and change 14%). This contrasts with those in regular jobs, who see the best things about their types of job as being a regular or guaranteed salary, consistency and stability, job security, having colleagues and being part of a team, and benefits.
- The worst thing about gig jobs was felt to be insecurity and uncertainty about the next job (mentioned by 29%), followed by always having to hustle for the next job (15%), irregular or inconsistent income (13%), lack of benefits (13%) and inconsistency of work (11%). Again, this is very different to the views of people in regular jobs.

- There were several relationships between the reasons why individuals joined the gig economy and what they saw as the best aspects. Those who mentioned having additional income or having at least some income were less likely to have positive reasons for having a gig job; those who mentioned autonomy were more likely to have positive reasons.
- There were also relationships with job characteristics. These results show that those for whom the best thing about the job is some extra income, or ensuring at least some work or income, may not see their job in the most positive way. It is also interesting that those who see the best thing about their job as having meaningful or creative work do not feel as financially rewarded as other gig workers.
- Those gig workers who have the greatest level of job-related stress are those who feel that having an irregular income, or having few benefits, are the worst thing about their role.
- In terms of personality, those with MBTI type preferences for Intuition were more likely than those with a preference for Sensing to have a gig job, whether as their main employment or in addition to their regular job. Individuals with preferences for ISTJ and ISFJ were the least likely to have a gig job of any sort.
- Positive reasons for joining were rated more highly by those with an Intuition and/or Perceiving preference. Contingent and other reasons show no consistent pattern. There is a great deal of communality between the top reasons chosen by people from each MBTI dominant function.
- Those with a Perceiving preference tended to see their jobs as more enjoyable and motivating than those with a Judging preference; those with a Thinking preference tended to be in more financially rewarding jobs than those with a Feeling preference.
- There are many relationships between personality type and personal characteristics, in the directions that would be predicted by personality type theory.
- People with different personality type preferences mentioned particular themes as the best and worst thing about working in the gig economy. For example, autonomy and flexibility were most likely to be mentioned as the best thing by those with preferences for ENTP, and least likely to be mentioned by those with preferences for INFJ or INTJ. This data has been used to develop guidelines for people of each type preference.
- Men were more likely than women to combine both regular and gig jobs; women were more likely than men to have only a gig job or only a regular job.
- Men saw themselves as significantly more confident, more risk-taking, and having more energy than did women. Women saw themselves as significantly more likely to take too much on.
- Men were more likely than women to mention a good work-life balance as the best thing about being a gig worker. Women were more likely than men to mention avoiding office politics. Women were more likely than men to mention being lonely and isolated as among the worst things about being a gig worker.
- Gig workers tended to be slightly older; the average age of gig-only workers was 46 years, of those with both gig and regular jobs 41 and of regular only 40.
- Not surprisingly, older people are more likely to give a higher rating to retirement as a reason for taking up gig work.

Conclusions

Although people with personality preferences for Intuition are more likely than others to have gig jobs, there are workers of every personality type within the gig economy. As many gig workers are employed in highly skilled or professional roles, and are difficult to replace, it makes sense for organizations to try to understand the motivations of gig workers and keep them on board. Advice for organizations includes:

- Treating gig workers as people. Remember, especially, that many will enjoy the autonomy of gig work but dislike the insecurity, uncertainty, irregular income and lack of benefits. Organizations that can do something about the latter while keeping the former will gain more from using gig workers.
- Acknowledge their contributions and listen to what they have to say.
- Take the personality and other individual differences outlined in this report into account in managing gig workers.
- Review how attractive the organization is to gig workers.
- Streamline recruitment and contracting, adopt onboarding, offer learning and development, and integrate gig workers into the workforce.

For gig workers, understanding their own personality preferences can help them to appreciate why they enjoy certain aspects of gig work and dislike others. The results of the research have been used to produce personality type-based advice for them. This can be found in the body of the report.

Introduction and methodology

Introduction

What is a gig worker and why is the gig economy important?

Today, many people work in the 'gig economy'. Just as a musician goes from gig to gig, workers in the gig economy go from job to job, completing one job at a time before moving on to the next. The rise of the gig economy has been fuelled by the development of apps and websites, such as Uber, Deliveroo or Task Rabbit, that allow the gig worker to connect with available jobs. Typically, these platforms consider those who work for them to be self-employed, though many authorities disagree. For example, the UK government has suggested that gig workers should be seen as 'workers' by default, rather than as self-employed (House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee, 2017), a position that now has legal precedent (Boycott, 2018). It has been argued that the gig economy shifts the burden of economic risk onto workers while at the same time removing employee benefits from them (Friedman, 2014) and even that a 'new serfdom' is being created (Nnajifor, 2017).

Those employed in the gig economy form a significant part of the workforce. Estimates of the number of people working in the gig economy vary and are often based on the proportion of the workforce who are self-employed. In the United Kingdom, the number of self-employed increased from 3.3 million people (12.0% of the labour force) in 2001 to 4.8 million (15.1% of the labour force) in 2017 (Office for National Statistics, 2018). In the United States in 2015, fifteen million people (10.1% of the workforce) were self-employed (Hipple & Hammond, 2016). Other research suggests that the gig economy is larger still, in part because full-time workers doing gig work as secondary employment may not report this as an additional job (Uhler, 2015). US government figures suggest that over 30% of families receive some income from self-employment or gig work (Larrimore, Durante, Kreiss, Park, & Sahm, 2018). A 2017 survey by Upwork and Freelancers Union states that 57.3 million Americans, 36% of the US workforce, were working as freelancers, contributing approximately 1.4 trillion dollars to the US economy every year (Upwork and Freelancers Union, 2017). On their projections, the majority of US workers will be freelance by 2027.

One reason why estimates vary is that different reports define gig work in slightly different ways, and gig workers themselves may prefer to call themselves 'freelancers' or 'on demand workers', or see themselves as part of the 'sharing economy' (Upwork and Freelancers Union, 2017). Questions as to how to classify gig workers have been raised by the United States Congress (Donovan, Bradley, & Shimabukuro, 2016). In our research, we have defined a gig worker as someone employed on a freelance basis, carrying out short-term jobs or contracts, not necessarily fixed to a single employer. Some may use a website or app to help them find or organize their gig work, but others may not.

Purpose of this research

There has been only a limited amount of research into the reasons why people become gig workers, and what motivates them, though there is some agreement that a degree of freedom and control over one's work is one element. Gandia (2012), in an analysis of freelancers working principally in creative and media roles, found that having freedom and flexibility, and the ability to do work that they are passionate about, were the main reasons why people took up freelance work. In a study of TaskRabbit and Gigwalk workers, Teodoro et al (2014) found that the two main drivers for doing this type of work were monetary compensation and personal control over one's schedule and actions. Similarly, a UK government study (Broughton, et al., 2018) identified

work flexibility and need for income as the principal reasons for entering the gig economy. These two motivations may act against each other; Van Den Born & Van Witteloostuijn (2013) found that autonomy, flexibility and work-life balance were positively related to job satisfaction of freelance workers but negatively related to revenue.

Some studies have looked at the gender, age and other personal characteristics of gig workers (for example Lapanjuuri, Wishart, & Cornick, 2018). There has, however, been very little systematic research into how the personality of the individual gig worker relates to their motivations, the stresses they face, or other aspects of their jobs. Our study was designed to investigate how personality relates to the differences between gig and 'regular' jobs, the reasons why someone becomes a gig worker, types of gig work done and views on gig jobs. For gig workers, this information could be very useful in making them aware of their likely strengths and possible blind spots, and in deciding whether gig or other freelance work was right for them. For organizations, this could be the key to managing their gig workers and contractors more efficiently and effectively. Our aim was to develop straightforward guidelines that could be used by both.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI) model of personality (Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer, 1998) was used in this research. The MBTI® assessment is already widely used by organizations and individuals (Furnham, 2017) and as such provides a useful starting point for personality-based guidelines. The MBTI model is described in Appendix 1.

Methodology

To carry out the study, we created an online survey. Participants were asked for their age, gender, and what country they principally worked in, and rated themselves on several personal characteristics that previous research suggested may relate to aspects of gig work. They were then asked to give their MBTI best-fit (validated) type. Most (93%) of the group were able to identify their type, but those who answered “I don’t know my MBTI type” or “I don’t know what you mean by this question” were asked to complete a short form of the assessment online.

Following this, participants were asked the following question:

Which of the following options best describes your job arrangements?

- I have a ‘regular’ job, and also one or more ‘gig economy’ or freelancing jobs
- I only have a ‘regular’ job, I do not have any ‘gig economy’ or freelancing jobs
- I have one or more ‘gig economy’ or freelancing jobs, but no ‘regular’ job
- I do not have paid employment
- Other (please specify)

Those choosing the first option were directed to a set of questions about both their gig jobs and their regular job. Those who chose the second or third option were directed to questions covering either their regular job, or their gig jobs, respectively. Those who chose the fourth or fifth option were directed to a ‘thank you’ page and left the survey.

These questions covered:

- Employment status
- If applicable, number of gig jobs and time working in the gig economy
- If applicable, the type(s) of gig economy jobs they had
- If applicable, the extent to which a number of reasons for taking a gig job applied to them
- If applicable, their use of websites or apps to help them find or organize their gig work
- Views on a wide range of aspects of their gig and/or regular job(s)
- Best and worst thing about working in the gig economy and in a regular job.

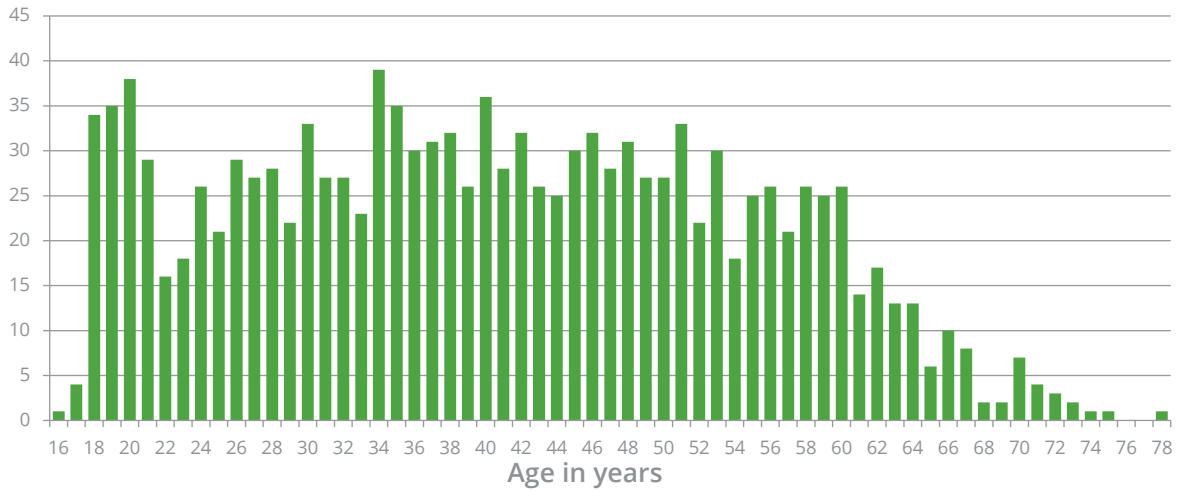
The survey was publicised via LinkedIn, Facebook, Google+ communities, our website, online gig and freelance forums and by direct communication to individuals who had completed the MBTI assessment on the CPP SkillsOne platform. The analysis is based on data from 1,308 people who completed the survey.

Results

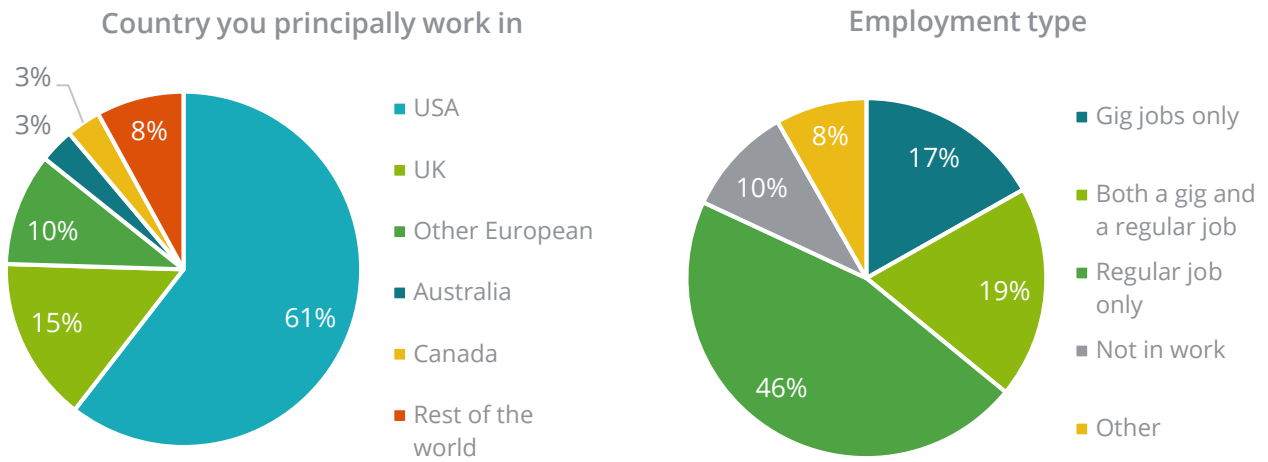
The sample

Group demographics

76% of the group were female, and 23% male, with less than 1% choosing “other” or “I’d rather not say”. Age ranged from 16 to 78 years, with an average (mean) age of 41 years:



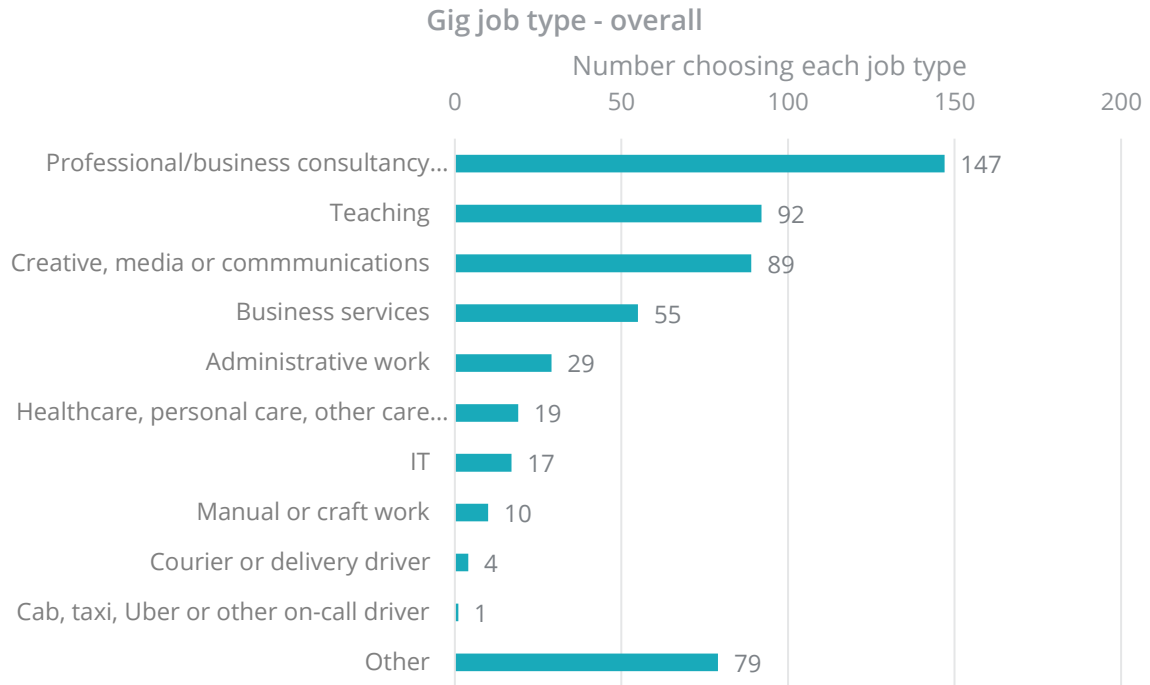
The majority worked principally in the United States, though in total 56 different countries were represented.



215 people (17% of the group) worked only in gig jobs, with a further 244 (19%) having both gig and regular jobs, meaning that 36% of the group had a gig job of some sort.

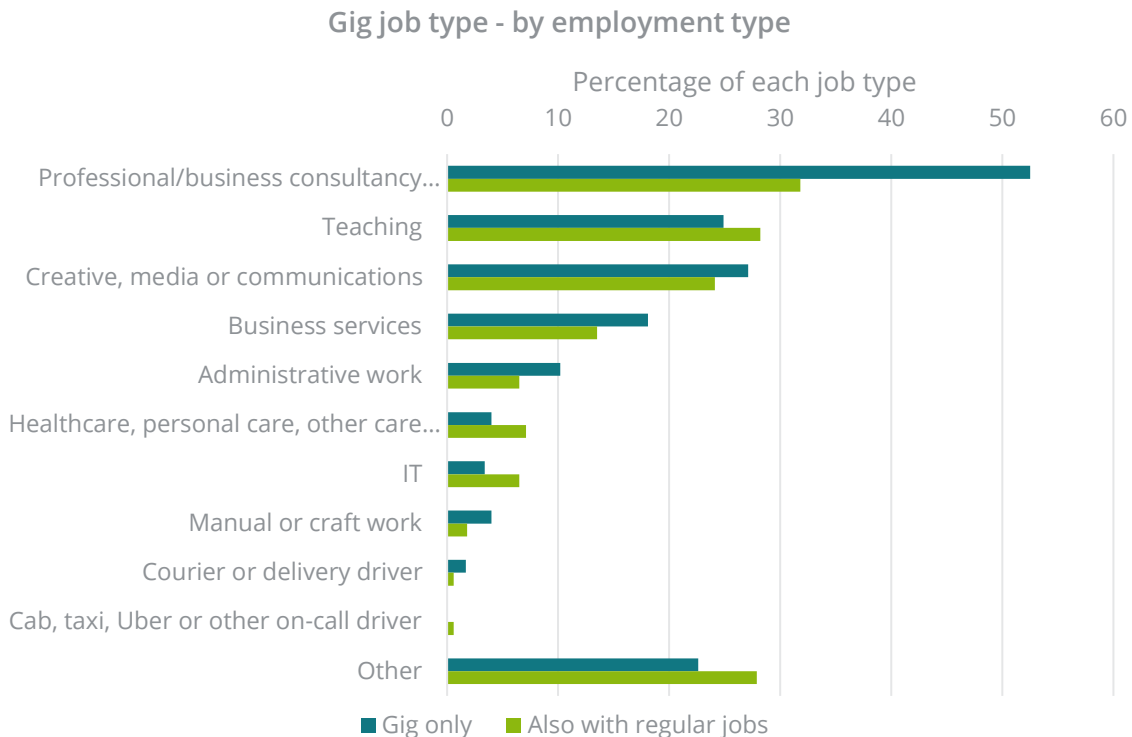
Those who had gig jobs were asked what type of role they had. The largest single group was ‘Professional/business consultancy services’; there were very few respondents in roles such as driving or manual work.

Therefore, this survey should be seen as focusing on gig workers in professional and other ‘white collar’ roles. It should be noted that although much of the debate around gig work has been concerned with less skilled roles, the evidence suggests that skilled workers actually make up a larger proportion of the gig economy (Burke & Cowling, 2015).



Note: respondents were able to choose more than one job type.

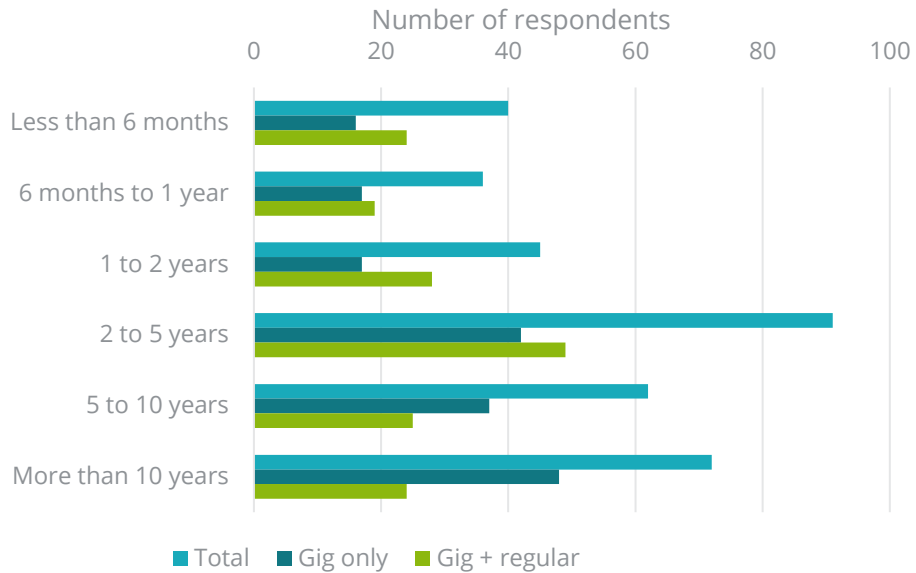
Comparing those who only have gig jobs with those who have both gig and regular jobs, a higher percentage of the gig-only workers had professional/business consultancy roles.



Note: respondents were able to choose more than one job type.

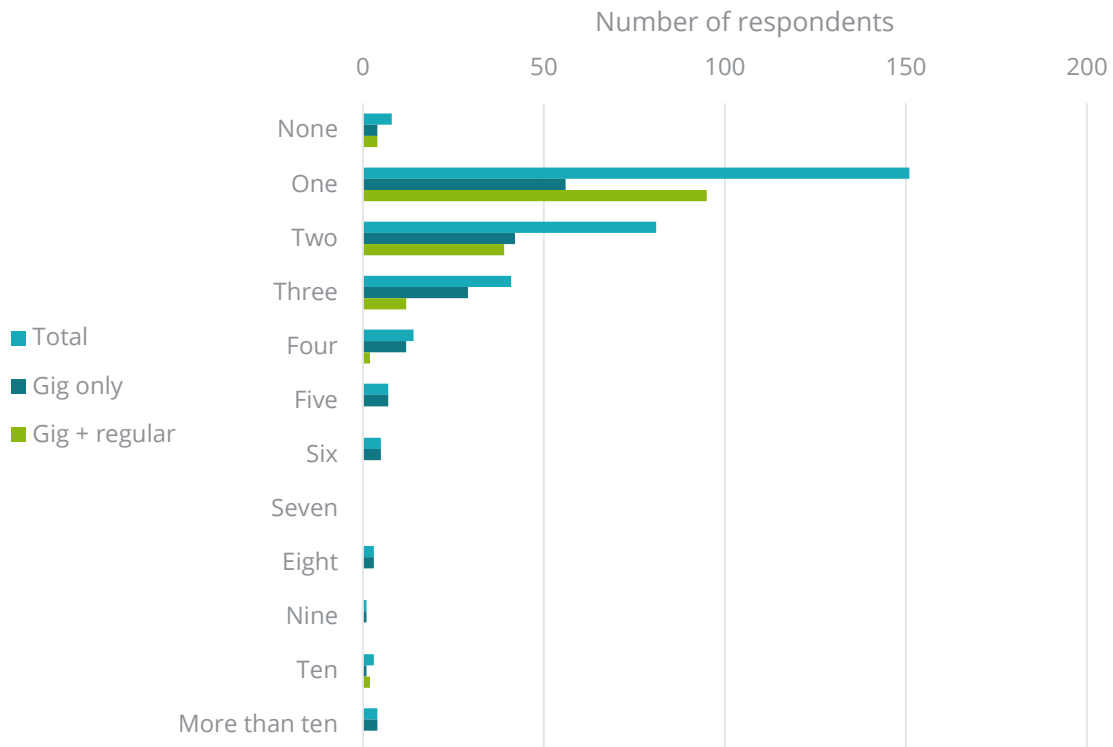
On average, those working only as gig workers had been employed in the gig economy for slightly longer than those doing both gig and regular work:

How long have you been doing gig economy jobs for?



Most respondents had only one or two gig jobs at the time when they took the survey. For gig-only workers, the average (median) was two jobs; for those who also had a regular job, the average (median) was one gig job.

How many gig economy jobs do you currently have?



Most of those with only gig jobs saw themselves as self-employed. Most of those with regular jobs, or both gig and regular jobs, saw themselves as employed full-time.

Employment status	Gig jobs only	Both gig and regular	Regular job only
Employed full-time	9%	67%	81%
Employed part-time	11%	21%	16%
Self-employed	77%	9%	2%
Other	3%	3%	1%

Type distribution

Type data was available for 1,274 individuals. A type table for this group is shown below:

Type	N	%
E	484	38.0%
	790	62.0%
S	365	27.9%
	909	71.4%
T	576	42.5%
	698	54.8%
J	770	56.5%
	554	43.5%

Type	N	%	SSR
ISTJ	N=96	7.5%	SSR=0.65
ISFJ	N=81	6.4%	SSR=0.46
INFJ	N=176	13.8%	SSR=9.20
INTJ	N=146	11.5%	SSR=5.48
ISTP	N=30	2.4%	SSR=0.44
ISFP	N=18	1.4%	SSR=0.16
INFP	N=159	12.5%	SSR=2.84
INTP	N=84	6.6%	SSR=2.00
ESTP	N=22	1.7%	SSR=0.40
ESFP	N=17	1.3%	SSR=0.15
ENFP	N=145	11.4%	SSR=1.41
ENTP	N=79	6.2%	SSR=1.94
ESTJ	N=54	4.2%	SSR=0.48
ESFJ	N=47	3.7%	SSR=0.30
ENFJ	N=55	4.3%	SSR=1.72
ENTJ	N=65	5.1%	SSR=2.83

The SSR (Self-Selection Ratio) compares the sample to the general population. Types with an SSR greater than 1 are over-represented in this group compared with the general population.¹ All Intuition types are therefore over-represented, and all Sensing types under-represented. This is not uncommon in a group of people interested in personality type. However, there are sufficient numbers of each type in the sample to carry out meaningful analyses.

¹ The US national representative sample (Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer, 1998) was used as a reference group

Overall personality, gender and age differences

Personality differences

When looking at preference pairs, 'gig only' workers are the most likely to have preferences for Intuition (N) and Perceiving (P), and regular only workers the least likely. There are no significant differences between Extraversion and Introversion or between Thinking and Feeling.

Work type	S	N	J	P
Gig work only	20%	80%	49%	51%
Gig and regular	23%	77%	58%	42%
Regular work only	34%	66%	60%	40%
Total	28%	72%	57%	43%

These differences are reflected in the whole types over- or under-represented in each group:

Work type	Over-represented	Under-represented
Gig work only	INFP, ENFP, ENTP	ISTJ, ISFJ
Gig and regular	INTJ, ENFJ, ENTJ	ISTJ, ISFJ
Regular only	ISTJ, ISFJ, INFJ, ISTP	INTJ, INFP, ESFP, ENFP, ENFJ

In summary, those with preferences for Intuition are more likely than those with a preference for Sensing to have a gig job, whether as their main employment or in addition to their regular job. Individuals with preferences for ISTJ and ISFJ are the least likely to have a gig job of any sort.

Gender and age

Men were more likely than women to combine both regular and gig jobs. Women were more likely than men to have only a gig job or only a regular job.

Gender	Gig only	Gig + Reg	Reg	None	Other	Total
Male	14%	24%	44%	11%	7%	100%
Female	18%	18%	47%	9%	8%	100%

Gig workers tended to be slightly older. The average (mean) age of gig-only workers was 46.40 years. The average age of those with both gig and regular jobs was 41.49, and for those with regular-only jobs it was 39.78.

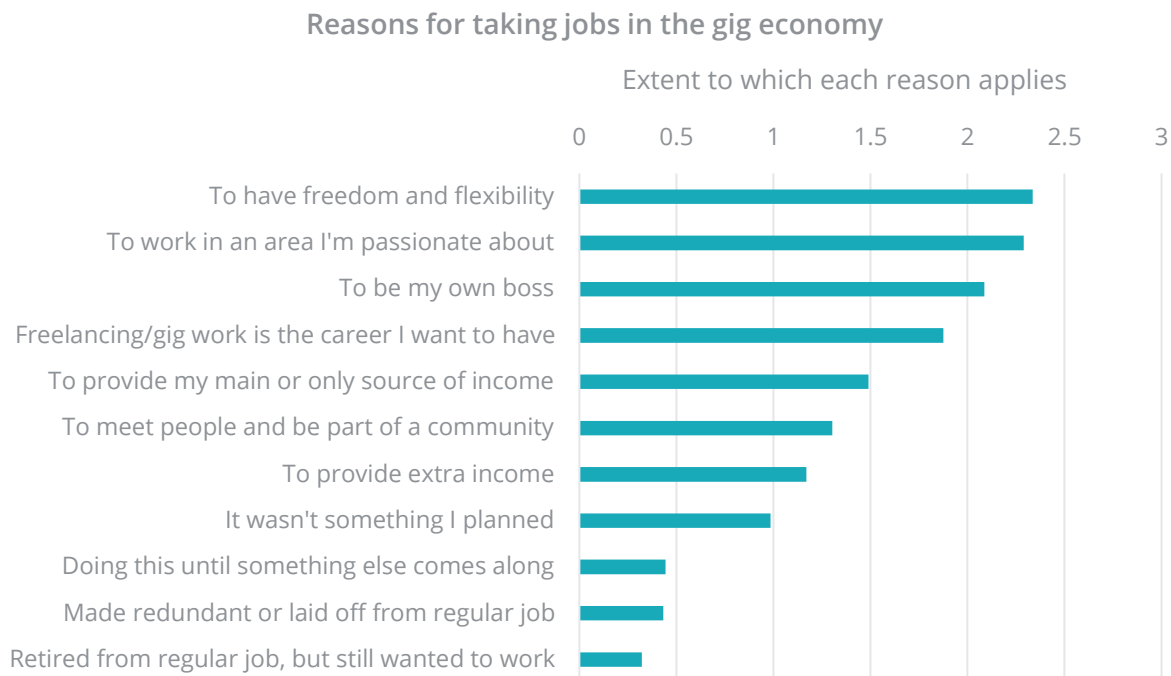
Why become a gig worker?

Overall results

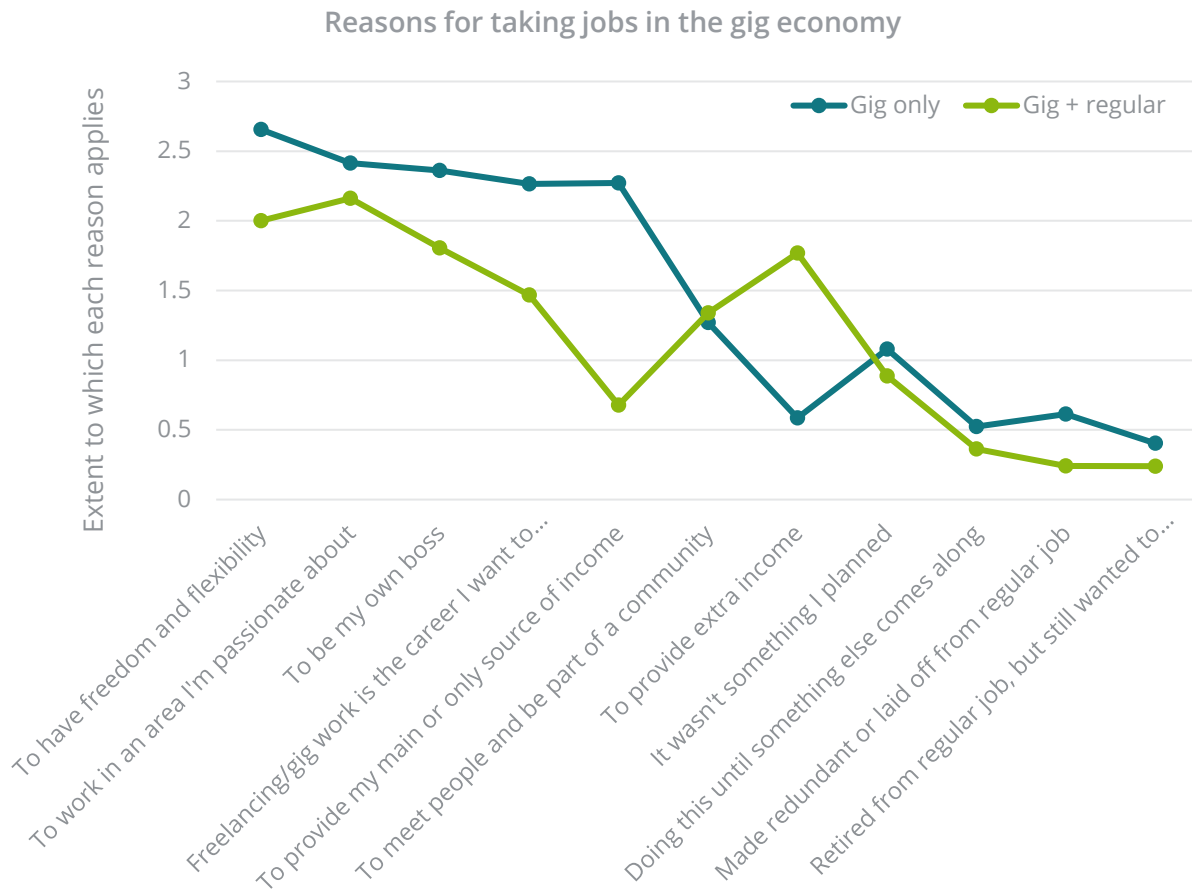
Participants were asked why they had become gig workers by rating each of eleven different reasons on the following scale:

0. Does not apply at all
1. Applies to a minor extent
2. Applies to some extent
3. Applies to a great extent

Across all gig workers, including gig-only workers and those with both regular and gig jobs, the most endorsed reasons for people to become gig workers were to have freedom and flexibility, and to work in an area they were passionate about.



These results are consistent with those of Gandia (2012), who found that having freedom and flexibility, and the ability to do work that one is passionate about, were the main reasons why people took up freelance work, and with a survey of the US independent workforce (MBO Partners, 2017) which found that 75% of independent workers said that they had always wanted to be their own boss, and 74% placed a higher priority on flexibility over making money (compared to 45% and 44% for those with traditional jobs). Monetary compensation, found by Broughton et al (2018) and Teodoro et al (2014) to be another major driver, did not rate quite so highly, but this may reflect differences between 'gig only' workers and those with both gig and regular jobs. The latter were more likely to endorse "To provide extra income", but otherwise gig workers gave a higher score to every reason, with the greatest differences on "To provide my main or only source of income", "Freelancing/gig work is the sort of career I want to have", "To have freedom and flexibility" and "To be my own boss".

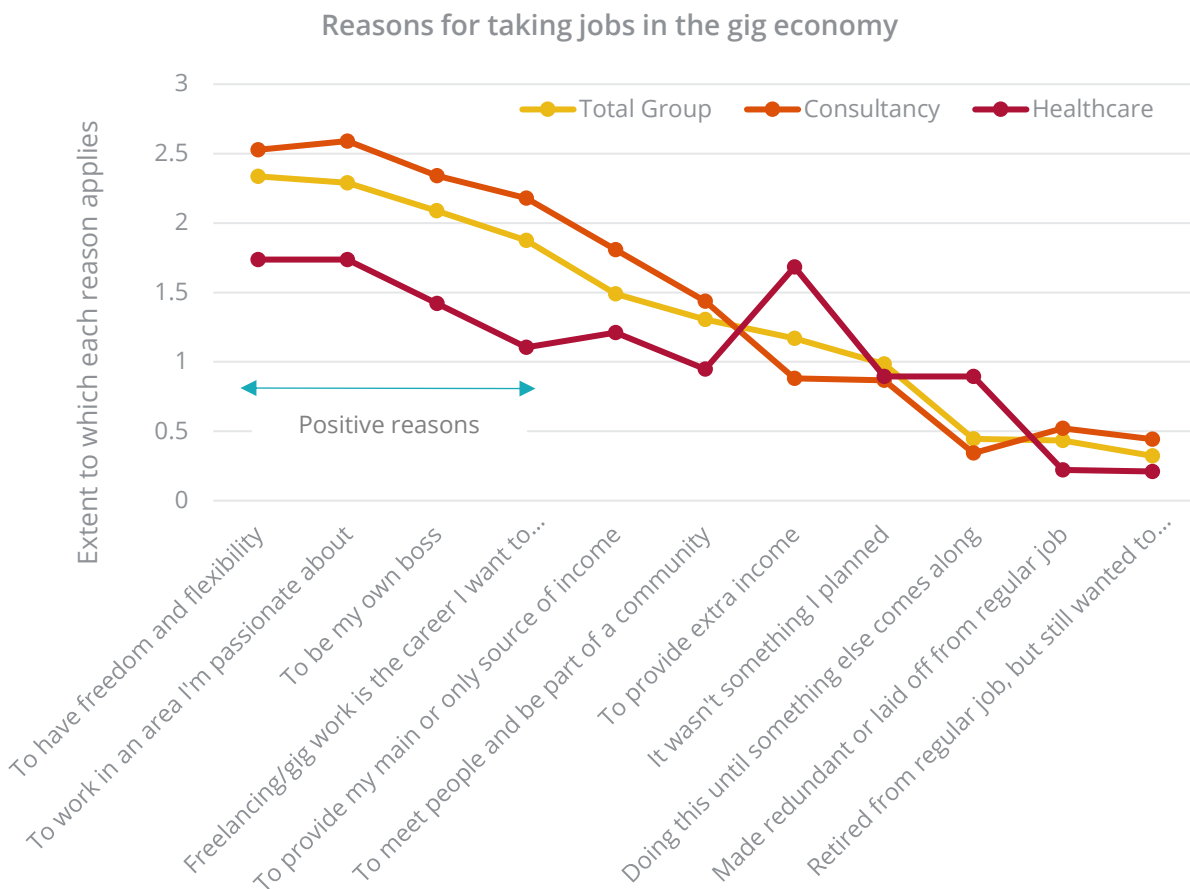


Factor analysis suggests that these reasons cluster roughly into three categories or factors:

- Positive reasons for gig work; this aligns with the motivations seen by Gandia and the need for control found by Teodoro et al:
 - Freelancing or working in the gig economy is the sort of career I want to have
 - So that I can work in an area that I'm passionate about
 - To be my own boss
 - To have freedom and flexibility

- Temporary or contingent reasons for gig work:
 - I was made redundant or laid off from my regular job
 - It wasn't something I planned, I just fell into it
 - I'm doing this temporarily until something else comes along
- Other reasons for gig work (this may be about *needing* to work and may align with the need for monetary compensation seen by Teodoro et al):
 - To provide extra money on top of other income
 - To provide my main or only source of income – correlating negatively for gig only workers, and positively for those with both gig and regular jobs
 - As a way of meeting people (for 'gig only' workers, this correlates to the first factor)

Across all gig workers, positive reasons are more highly rated than are other reasons. There were, however, differences in how people in different types of gig jobs rated each reason. Those in professional/business consultancy services were more likely to rate positive reasons highly, and those in healthcare or other care roles were less likely.



The table below shows the average (mean) rating for each reason for each type of gig job where it is significantly different from the average for all other groups.² Scores that are significantly higher are shown in **green**. Those that are significantly lower are shown in **red**.

	Total group	Admin work	Business services	Creative media, comms	Healthcare	IT	Professional	Teaching
Freedom, flexibility	2.34				1.74		2.58	
Work in area I'm passionate about	2.29				1.74		2.59	2.51
To be my own boss	2.09		2.42		1.42		2.34	
Freelancing/gig is career I want	1.88				1.11		2.18	
Main or only income	1.49	1.83	1.83				1.81	
Meet people, part of community	1.30						1.44	1.51
Provide extra income	1.17				1.68	2.00	0.88	1.42
Not something I planned	0.99	1.44		1.18				
Until something else comes along	0.44				0.89			
Made redundant or laid off	0.43		1.09	0.28				
Retired but still wanted to work	0.32						0.44	

This again illustrates the differences between professional/business consultancy services and healthcare and other care roles, but also shows that while those in administrative work, business services and consultancy tended to view gig work as their main or only source of income. Those in healthcare, IT and teaching tended to see it as an additional source of income.

² Based on independent-samples t-tests.

Relationship with personality

There were personality differences in the reasons why people became gig workers. The table below shows where people with one type preference (E, for example) gave a significantly higher endorsement to a reason than did the opposite preference (I, for example).

	All gig workers	Gig only	Gig and regular
Positive reasons:			
Freedom and flexibility	P	-	-
Work in an area I'm passionate about	N P	-	N
Be my own boss	N P	N P	-
Freelancing/gig is the career I want	N P	E N P	P
Meet people, be part of a community	E P	E	E P
Contingent reasons:			
Made redundant or laid off	-	T	-
Not something I planned	-	-	S
Doing this temporarily	-	-	-
Other reasons:			
Provide main or only income	N P	-	N
Provide extra income	J	I N	-
Retired, but still wanted to work	-	-	S

As might be expected, positive reasons for joining the gig economy relate to personality, but contingent reasons do not.

Looking at the top reasons for each dominant function, there is a great deal of communality, with "Freedom and flexibility" and "work in an area I'm passionate about" always in the top five and usually in the top two.

Nevertheless, there are some differences. "Freelancing/gig is the career I want" is more likely to be chosen by gig-only workers, and particularly less likely to be chosen by Extraverts with both gig and regular jobs. "Provide main or only income" only appears in the top five for gig-only workers. "Meet people, be part of the community" is more likely to appear for Extraverts and for those with both gig and regular jobs. These results are shown in detail on the next page.

Top reasons for each favourite process – gig-only workers.

S ⁱ	N ⁱ	T ⁱ	F ⁱ
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Freedom and flexibility 2. Work in area I'm passionate about 3. Be my own boss 4. Freelancing/gig is the career I want 5. Provide extra income 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Freedom and flexibility 2. Work in area I'm passionate about 3. Freelancing/gig is the career I want 4. Provide extra income 5. Provide main or only income 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work in area I'm passionate about 2. Freedom and flexibility 3. Be my own boss 4. Freelancing/gig is the career I want 5. Provide main or only income 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work in area I'm passionate about 2. Freedom and flexibility 3. Be my own boss 4. Freelancing/gig is the career I want 5. Provide main or only income
S ^e	N ^e	T ^e	F ^e
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Freedom and flexibility 2. Work in area I'm passionate about 3. Meet people, be part of community 4. Be my own boss 5. Freelancing/gig is the career I want 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Freedom and flexibility 2. Work in area I'm passionate about 3. Be my own boss 4. Freelancing/gig is the career I want 5. Provide main or only income 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work in area I'm passionate about 2. Freedom and flexibility 3. Be my own boss 4. Freelancing/gig is the career I want 5. Meet people, be part of community 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work in area I'm passionate about 2. Freedom and flexibility 3. Be my own boss 4. Freelancing/gig is the career I want 5. Meet people, be part of community

Top reasons for each favourite process – workers with both gig and regular jobs.

S ⁱ	N ⁱ	T ⁱ	F ⁱ
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide extra income 2. Freedom and flexibility 3. Work in area I'm passionate about 4. Be my own boss 5. Meet people, be part of community 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work in area I'm passionate about 2. Freedom and flexibility 3. Be my own boss 4. Provide extra income 5. Freelancing/gig is the career I want 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Freedom and flexibility 2. Work in area I'm passionate about 3. Be my own boss 4. Freelancing/gig is the career I want 5. Provide extra income 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work in area I'm passionate about 2. Freedom and flexibility 3. Be my own boss 4. Freelancing/gig is the career I want 5. Meet people, be part of community
S ^e	N ^e	T ^e	F ^e
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide extra income 2. Freedom and flexibility 3. Work in area I'm passionate about 4. Meet people, be part of community 5. Not something I planned 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work in area I'm passionate about 2. Freedom and flexibility 3. Provide extra income 4. Meet people, be part of community 5. Be my own boss 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work in area I'm passionate about 2. Freedom and flexibility 3. Be my own boss 4. Provide extra income 5. Meet people, be part of community 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide extra income 2. Work in area I'm passionate about 3. Meet people, be part of community 4. Freedom and flexibility 5. Not something I planned

Relationship with gender and age

Across the whole group, women gave a higher score to “It wasn’t something I planned” as a reason for joining the gig economy. Within the gig-only group, they gave a significantly higher score to “I am doing this temporarily until something else comes along”.

There were also a number of statistically significant correlations with age. Not surprisingly, older people are more likely to give a higher rating to retirement as a reason for taking up gig work. With this exception, however, there are differences between gig-only workers and those with both gig and regular jobs. For the latter group, older workers rate “provides main or only income” more highly. For gig-only workers, younger people are much more likely than older workers to rate “Doing this temporarily” as a reason. Older people are more likely to rate “career I want”, “to be my own boss” and “made redundant or laid off”.

These results are shown in the following table.

Reason	All gig workers (N=342 to 347)	Gig only workers (N=171 to 177)	Gig plus regular (N=166 to 170)
Freelancing/gig is the career I want	0.184**	0.201**	(NS)
To be my own boss	0.148**	0.195**	(NS)
Made redundant or laid off	0.175**	0.152*	(NS)
Doing this temporarily	-0.259**	-0.434**	(NS)
Provides main or only income	0.135*	(NS)	0.159*
Retired but still wanted to work	0.284**	0.251**	0.305**

** - significant at the 0.01 level; * - significant at the 0.05 level

Summary

- The most common reasons for becoming a gig worker were:
 - To have freedom and flexibility
 - To work in an area I’m passionate about
 - To be my own boss
 - Freelancing/gig work is the career I want to have
- The reasons cluster into three categories or factors: positive reasons, temporary or contingent reasons, and other reasons, around needing to work. Positive reasons are in general rated higher. Those in professional/business consultancy roles are particularly likely to rate positive reasons highly; those in healthcare or other care roles were less likely.
- Those in administrative work, business services and professional/business consultancy tended to view gig work as their main or only source of income. Those in healthcare or other care roles, IT and teaching tended to see it as an additional source of income.
- Positive reasons for joining the gig economy relate to personality and are rated more highly by those with an Intuition and/or Perceiving preference. Contingent and other

reasons show no consistent pattern. There is a great deal of communality between the top reasons chosen by people from each favourite process.

- Across the group as a whole, women gave a higher score to “It wasn’t something I planned” as a reason for joining the gig economy. Within the gig-only group, they gave a significantly higher score to “I am doing this temporarily until something else comes along”.
- Older people are more likely to give a higher rating to retirement as a reason for taking up gig work.

Job characteristics

Overall results

All participants in the research who said that they had paid employment were asked a series of questions about their job(s). Gig-only workers were asked 43 questions, and regular-only workers were asked 34. Those with both gig and regular jobs were asked both sets. The first 34 questions in the gig job set corresponded to the 34 questions in the regular job set.

The answers to these questions were used to develop scales of job characteristics relevant to work in the gig economy. The scales were suggested by previous research (Posch, Bleier, & Strohmaier, 2017; Teodoro, Ozturk, Naaman, Mason, & Lindqvist, 2014; Van Den Born & Van Witteloostuijn, 2013), but refined on the basis of the data collected. The final scales, with their constituent questions, are below. Internal consistency reliability (coefficient alpha) for each scale is also quoted.

Scale	Alpha
<p>Enjoyable, motivating work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I enjoy the work that I do - I am very happy with my job - I'm optimistic about my future in this job - The work I do should help me to achieve my career goals - I'd do this work even if I didn't need to - (-) I'm only doing this job until something better comes along - (-) I'd much prefer to have a regular job 	0.834
<p>Flexibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I can choose when I work - I can choose the way in which I work - The job fits in with my lifestyle - Gig work allows me to have freedom and autonomy - I enjoy the flexibility that I get from gig work 	0.837
<p>Degree of empowerment (note: all items are scored negatively)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It would be good to have a little more structure and certainty in my job - I sometimes feel exploited by the organization(s) I work for - I worry that the work will dry up - The organization(s) I work for don't really care about me - I have to do this job to afford to live - The work I do often seems like a waste of time - I don't have any influence over how the organization(s) I work for are run 	0.791

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My job means that I spend too much time alone - I don't think that this job is secure - As a gig worker, I can feel quite isolated - The organization(s) behind any apps or websites I use don't really care about me 	
<p>Level of job demands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My job interferes with my private life - I find this job stressful - I have to be available 24/7 - In this job I need to work in the evenings or at weekends - I have to be flexible in this job - My job is sometimes too demanding - Being a gig worker can be difficult 	0.715
<p>Financial rewards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My job pays well - The money I earn helps me to live well - I am paid more than if I was a regular employee in the same job 	0.757
<p>Additional benefits and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I have good access to benefits such as bonuses, healthcare or a retirement pension - In this job, I am able to join a trade union - The organization(s) I work for give me plenty of support with admin, IT, finance and so on 	0.448

In addition, a separate scale of job-related stress was developed. This included a mix of items from three other scales:

Scale	Alpha
<p>Job-related stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I find this job stressful - I sometimes feel exploited by the organization(s) I work for - I worry that the work will dry up - The organization(s) I work for don't really care about me - The work I do often seems like a waste of time - My job is sometimes too demanding - I don't think that this job is secure - (-) I am very happy with my job - (-) I'm optimistic about my future in this job 	<p>0.773</p>

With the exception of 'Additional benefits and support', all scales have good internal consistency reliability.

Previous research (Van Den Born & Van Witteloostuijn, 2013) had found that autonomy, flexibility and work-life balance were negatively related to revenue. We did not find this in our study. There were statistically significant positive correlations between financial reward and 'enjoyable, motivating work' ($r=0.288$) and 'flexibility' ($r=0.273$).

Employment type

On average, those doing gig work see their work as more enjoyable and flexible, but with fewer additional benefits, than those doing a regular job. Comparing gig-job only with regular-job only, the former see their work as more enjoyable, more flexible, and more financially rewarding, but as less empowered and with fewer additional benefits. Previous research has also found that freelance workers are better paid (Kunda, Barley, & Evans, 2002; MBO Partners, 2017) and that their work has greater intrinsic job satisfaction (Meager, 2015).

The table below shows the average (mean) score, on a 1-5 scale, for each scale for each group.

	Gig (only)	Gig (from gig & regular)	Gig total	Regular (only)	Regular (from gig & regular)	Regular total
Enjoyable work	3.98	3.88	3.93	3.57	3.61	3.58
Flexibility	4.20	4.02	4.11	3.23	3.20	3.22
Empowerment	3.17	3.57	3.37	3.40	3.40	3.40
Job demands	3.07	2.99	3.03	2.95	2.99	2.96
Financial rewards	3.31	3.09	3.20	3.21	3.43	3.26
Benefits	1.84	2.04	1.94	3.03	3.08	3.04
Stress	2.60	2.32	2.46	2.57	2.54	2.57

Gig job type

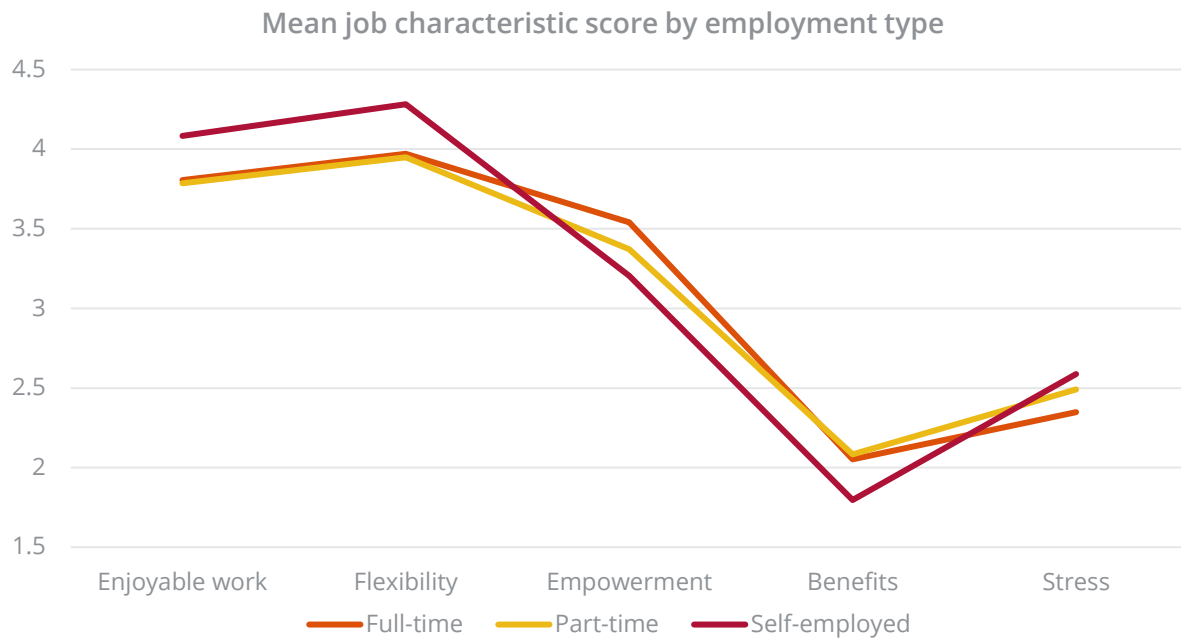
There were a number of statistically significant differences³ between how participants in different types of work saw their jobs:

- Those doing administrative work saw their jobs as giving them fewer additional benefits
- Business services workers saw their jobs as more stressful than did other gig workers
- Individuals working in creative, media or communications saw their work as less enjoyable, felt less empowered, felt less financially rewarded and had fewer benefits. They saw their jobs as more demanding and more stressful than did other gig workers
- Healthcare workers saw their job as more demanding than did other gig workers
- Those in professional or business consultancy roles saw their jobs as more enjoyable, more flexible, more financially rewarding and less stressful than did other workers.

³ Based on independent-groups t-tests

Employment status

Amongst gig workers, those who identified as self-employed saw their jobs as more enjoyable and more flexible than those who were full-time or part-time employees; however, they saw their jobs as more stressful than those in full-time employment did. The self-employed group saw themselves as lower on benefits than did either of the other two groups, and as less empowered than the full-time workers. However, the general pattern of results was the same for all three groups, with enjoyability and flexibility rated highly, and benefits and stress given a low rating.



Reasons for joining the gig economy

Ratings of the reasons for joining the gig economy were correlated with job characteristics. Statistically significant correlations are shown in the table below.

Reasons for joining the gig economy	Job characteristics						
	Enjoyable work	Flexibility	Empowerment	Job demands	Financial reward	Benefits	Stress
Freedom, flexibility	.255**	.462**			.146**		
Passionate about area	.549**	.382**	.130*				-.194**
To be own boss	.434**	.447**			.148**		
Wants a gig career	.533**	.471**			.171**		
Main income	.180**	.115*	-.294**	.120	.254**	-.128*	.139*
Extra income	-.119*						
Meet people	.246**	.155**				.109*	
Not planned	-.170**	-.159**	-.118*	.126			.117*
Doing temporarily	-.487**	-.341**	-.330**	.134	-.108*		.269**
Made redundant		-.190**	-.202**	.120			.148**
Retired	.127*	.109*		-.150			-.121*

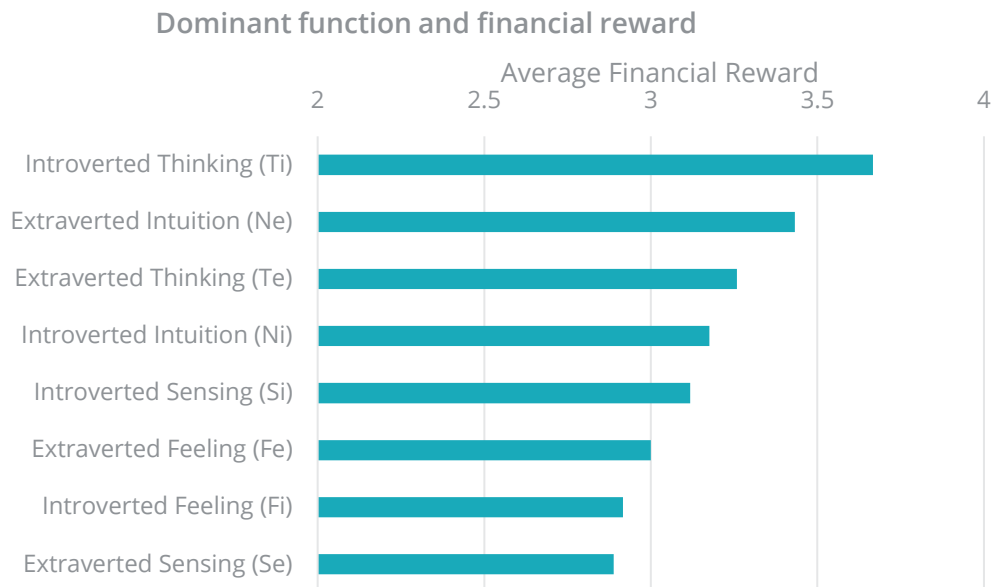
** - significant at the 0.01 level; * - significant at the 0.05 level

Positive reasons for becoming a gig worker correlate positively with finding the job enjoyable, motivating and flexible, and to some extent with financial reward. Contingent reasons (not something that was planned, doing it until something better comes along, having been made redundant) correlate negatively with finding the job enjoyable, flexibility, and degree of empowerment. Contingent reasons correlate positively with higher job demands and stress.

In short, those who become a gig worker for positive reasons will tend to enjoy the role. Those who are forced into it or who otherwise did not make a positive choice typically will not.

Personality

As might be expected, there are few personality differences in job characteristics. At the preference pair level, those with a Perceiving preference tended to see their jobs as more enjoyable and motivating than those with a Judging preference. Those with a Thinking preference tended to be in more financially rewarding jobs than those with a Feeling preference⁴. The differences in financial reward can also be seen at whole type level, with Introverted Thinking the most highly rewarded of the favourite processes⁵:



- Gig workers with a preference for Introverted Thinking (Ti) saw their job as significantly more financially rewarding than did those with a preference for Ni, Si, Fe, Fi or Se.
- Gig workers with a preference for Extraverted Intuition (Ne) saw their job as significantly more financially rewarding than did those with a preference for Fe or Fi⁶.

⁴ Based on independent-samples t-tests

⁵ For a description of dominant functions, see appendix 1.

⁶ Oneway ANOVA, LSD post-hoc tests

Gender and age

There were no significant differences between male and female gig workers in how they saw the characteristics of their jobs⁷.

Older gig workers tended to see their jobs as more enjoyable and motivating, and to a lesser extent as more financially rewarding, less demanding, more flexible, less stressful and more empowering⁸. Other research has suggested that older gig workers do tend to earn more on average (MBO Partners, 2017).

Summary

- Six scales of job characteristics relevant to work in the gig economy were developed: Enjoyable, motivating work; Flexibility; Degree of empowerment; Level of job demands; Financial rewards; Additional benefits and support. A separate scale of *Job-related stress* was also developed.
- Comparing gig-only workers with regular-only workers, the former saw their work as more enjoyable, more flexible, and more financially rewarding, but as less empowered and with fewer additional benefits. There were several differences between how participants in different types of gig work saw their jobs.
- Ratings of the reasons for joining the gig economy were correlated with job characteristics. The results show that those who become a gig worker for positive reasons will tend to enjoy the role. Those who are forced into it or who otherwise did not make a positive choice typically will not.
- Those with a Perceiving preference tended to see their jobs as more enjoyable and motivating than those with a Judging preference; those with a Thinking preference tended to be in more financially rewarding jobs than those with a Feeling preference. The differences in financial reward can also be seen at whole type level, with Introverted Thinking the highest dominant function.
- There were no significant differences between male and female gig workers in how they saw the characteristics of their jobs. Older gig workers tended to see their jobs as more enjoyable and motivating, and to a lesser extent as more financially rewarding, less demanding, more flexible, less stressful and more empowering.

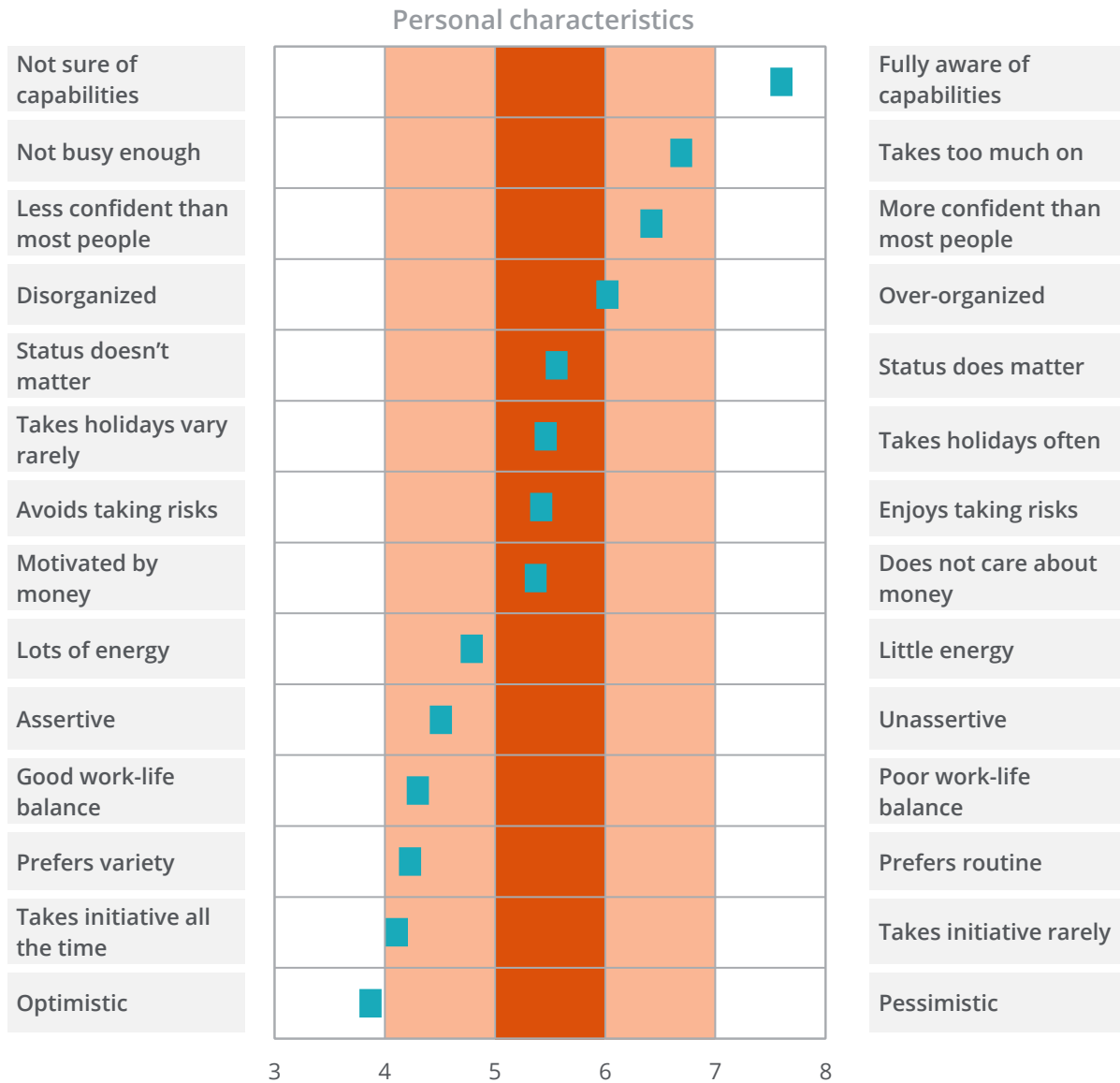
⁷ Based on an independent-samples t-test

⁸ Correlations with age of 0.266, 0.184, -0.175, 0.145, -0.140 and 0.110 respectively.

Personal characteristics

Overall results

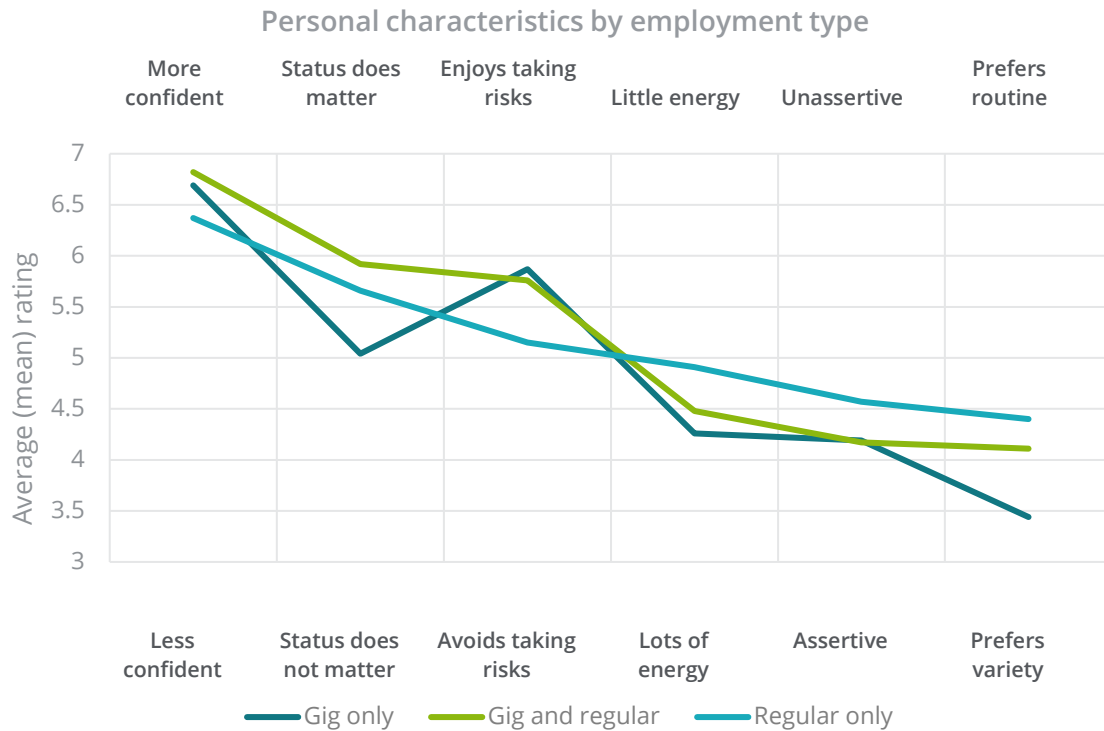
Survey respondents were asked to put themselves on a 1-10 scale between two alternatives. The overall results were as follows:



As a group, respondents tended to say that they were fully aware of their capabilities, took too much on, were more confident than most, had lots of energy, were assertive, had a good work-life balance, preferred variety, took the initiative and were optimistic.

Employment type

Six personal characteristics showed a significant difference⁹ between different employment types:



Those with only a regular job were more likely to avoid risks, have less energy, and be less assertive than those in either of the other two groups. They were less confident than those with both gig and regular work.

Those in gig-only jobs were less concerned with status and had a greater preference for variety than those in either of the other two groups.

⁹ Oneway ANOVA, LSD post-hoc tests

Gig job type

There were a number of statistically significant differences¹⁰ between how participants in different types of work saw themselves. Compared with other gig workers:

- Those in administrative roles saw themselves as being more organized and with a greater preference for routine, but as having less energy.
- Those in business services saw themselves as being more confident and assertive, taking the initiative more often, being more motivated by money, having a greater concern for status, and having a preference for variety.
- Those in creative, media or communications roles saw themselves as less confident, less likely to take risks, and more pessimistic. They took holidays less often.
- Those in healthcare or other care roles felt that they had a poorer work-life balance than did others, and saw themselves as less assertive.
- Those in IT jobs saw themselves as more organized – indeed, somewhat over-organized on average.
- Those in professional and business consulting roles saw themselves as having more energy and as being more confident, more assertive, more optimistic, and more aware of their capabilities. They saw themselves as taking more risks and as taking the initiative more often, with a greater preference for variety. They believe they take holidays more often.
- Those in teaching jobs saw themselves as having more energy and as taking the initiative more often.

Employment status

Among gig workers, those considering themselves to be in full-time work were more concerned by status than those in part-time work or the self-employed. The self-employed had a greater preference for variety than others did¹¹.

¹⁰ Based on independent-groups t-tests

¹¹ Oneway ANOVA, LSD post-hoc tests

Reasons for joining the gig economy

Ratings of the reasons for joining the gig economy were correlated with personal characteristics. Statistically significant correlations are shown in the table below.

Reasons for joining the gig economy	Personal characteristics						
	Aware of capabilities	Takes too much on	More confident	Over-organized	Status matters	Holidays often	Enjoys taking risks
Freedom, flexibility					-.180**		.197**
Passionate about area							.163**
To be own boss			.112*				.223**
Wants a gig career					-.123*		.225**
Main income					-.126*		.216**
Extra income					.165**		-.112*
Meet people			.118*		.126*		.232**
Not planned	-.178**						
Doing temporary	-.210**						
Made redundant							
Retired		-.161**				.136*	
	Doesn't care about money	Little energy	Unassertive	Poor work-life balance	Prefers routine	Take initiative rarely	Pessimistic
Freedom, flexibility		-.130*			-.230**	-.153**	
Passionate about area	.115*	-.171**			-.230**		
To be own boss					-.224**		-.165**
Wants a gig career					-.260**		-.127*
Main income		-.119*			-.228**		
Extra income	-.151**				.153**		
Meet people		-.224**	-.133*		-.201**	-.125*	-.135*
Not planned							
Doing temporary	-.120*	.114*		.194**			
Made redundant							
Retired							-.132*

** - significant at the 0.01 level; * - significant at the 0.05 level

Those with more positive reasons for having a gig job (freedom and flexibility, passion about the area, wanting to be their own boss, wanting a gig career, meeting people, having gig work as main income) were more likely than others to enjoy taking risks and prefer variety. To some extent, they also saw themselves as having more energy, optimism, and confidence, and having less concern for status. Those doing gig work as something temporary were less aware of their capabilities, had less energy and a poorer work-life balance, and were more concerned about money. Those who had retired but still wanted to work saw themselves as less busy, more optimistic and able to take more holiday.

Job characteristics

Scores on the job characteristic scales were correlated with personal characteristics. Statistically significant correlations are shown in the table below.

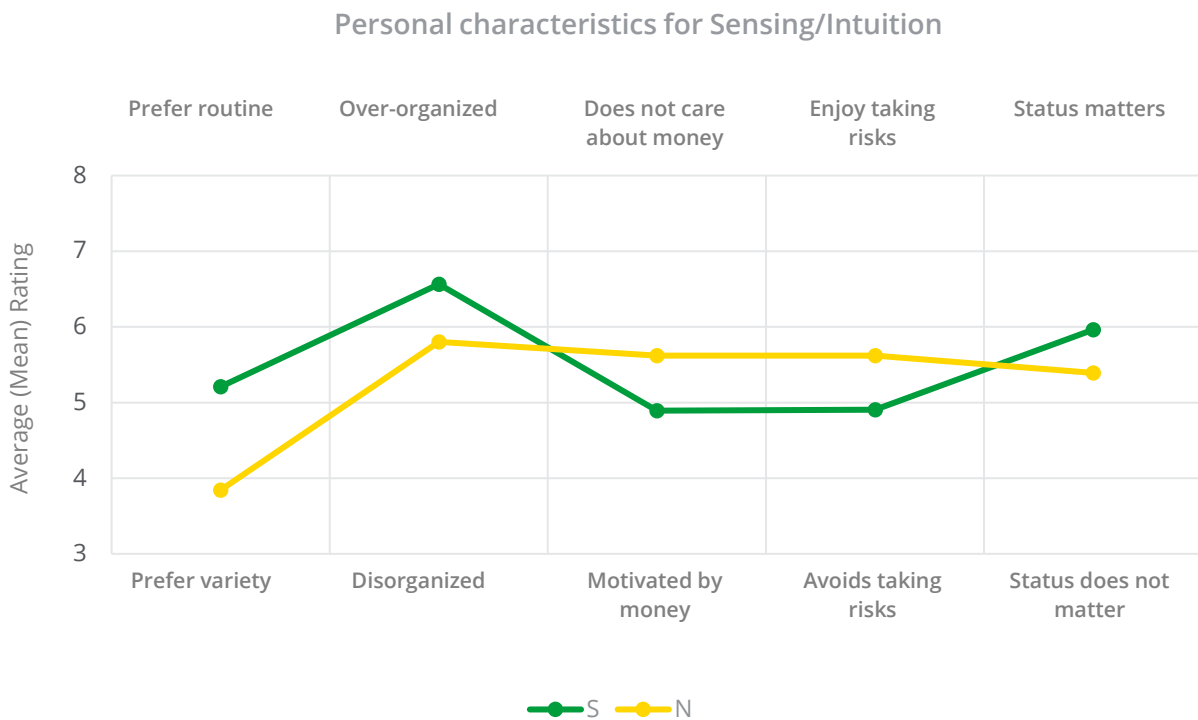
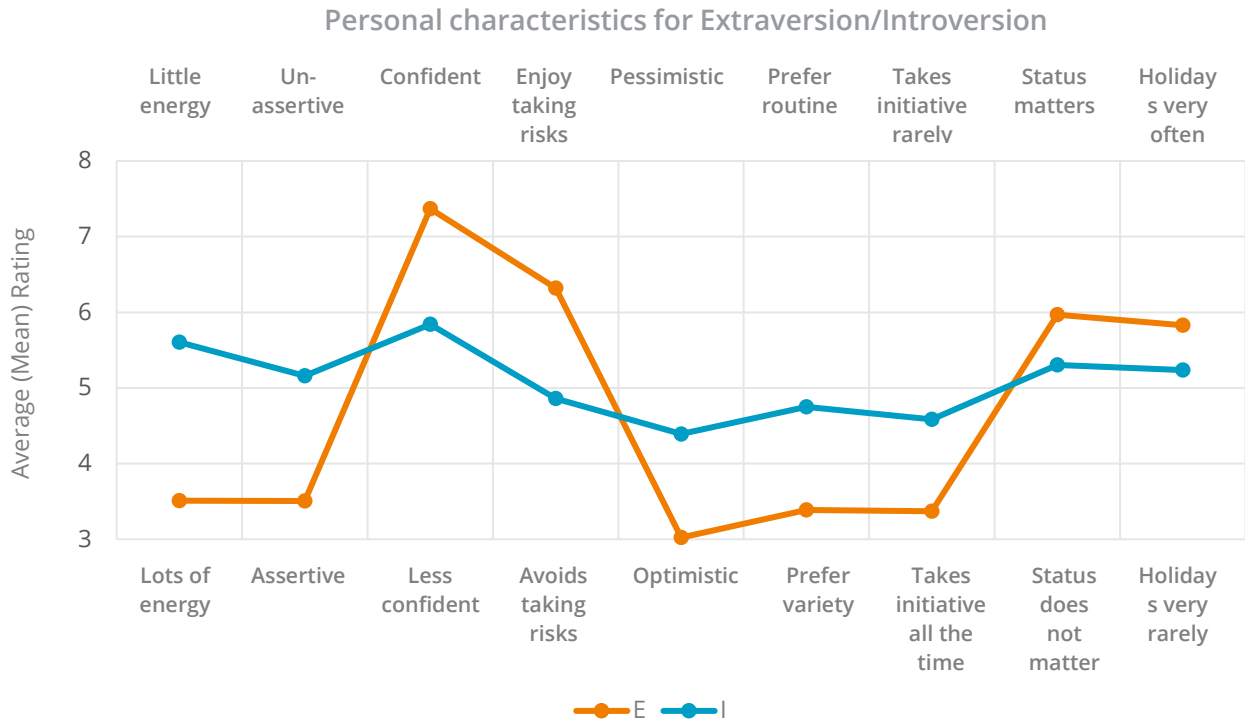
Job characteristics scales	Personal characteristics						
	Aware of capabilities	Takes too much on	More confident	Over-organized	Status matters	Holidays often	Enjoys taking risks
Enjoyable work	.248**		.151**			.137*	.186**
Flexibility	.200**		.194**			.133*	.173**
Empowerment	.156**		.223**			.283**	
Job demands	-.189**	.257**	-.242**			-.256**	
Financial reward			.224**			.180**	.150**
Benefits		-.131*	.116*				
Stress	-.203**		-.273**			-.248**	-.142*
	Doesn't care about money	Little energy	Unassertive	Poor work-life balance	Prefers routine	Take initiative rarely	Pessimistic
Enjoyable work		-.183**	-.139*	-.171**	-.156**	-.172**	-.317**
Flexibility		-.130*		-.196**	-.141*		-.286**
Empowerment			-.165**	-.216**			-.255**
Job demands			.109*	.320**			.182**
Financial reward	-.179**	-.159**		-.174**	-.123*		-.141*
Benefits						-.123*	
Stress		.201**	.164**	.280**		.114*	.312**

** - significant at the 0.01 level; * - significant at the 0.05 level

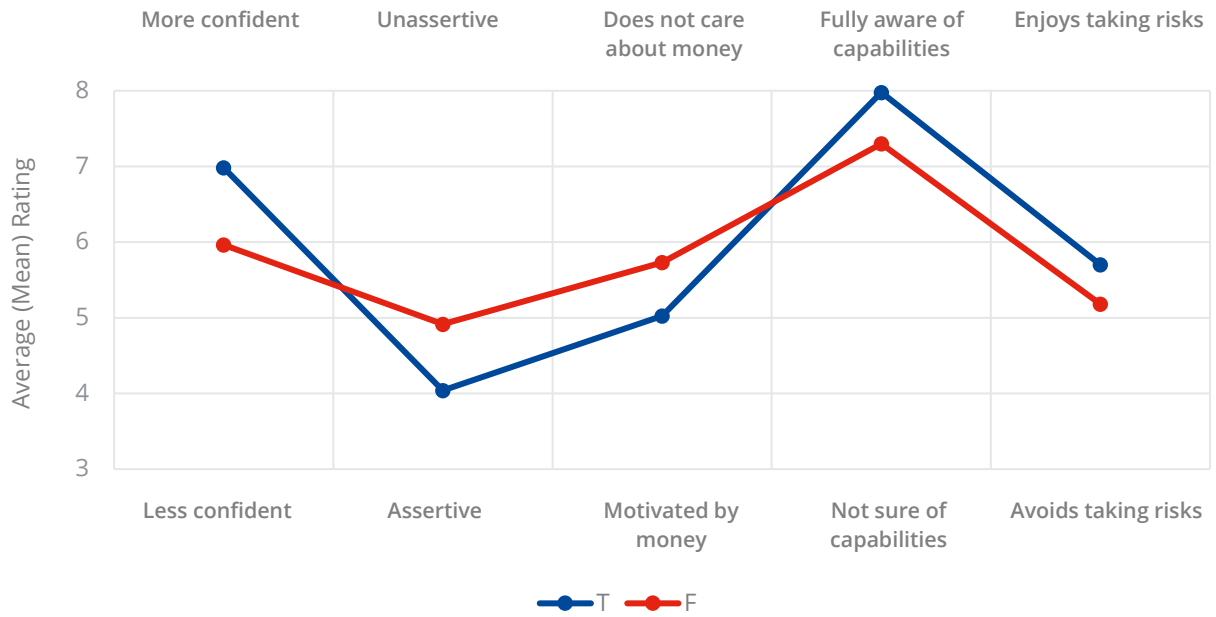
There are clear relationships between the personal characteristics of gig workers and the characteristics of their jobs. It is of course not always clear which the causal factor is. For example, those who are less confident experience greater job demands ($r = -.242$), but we cannot say from our data whether they find the job more demanding because they are less confident, or whether they have become less confident because they are in a demanding job.

Personality

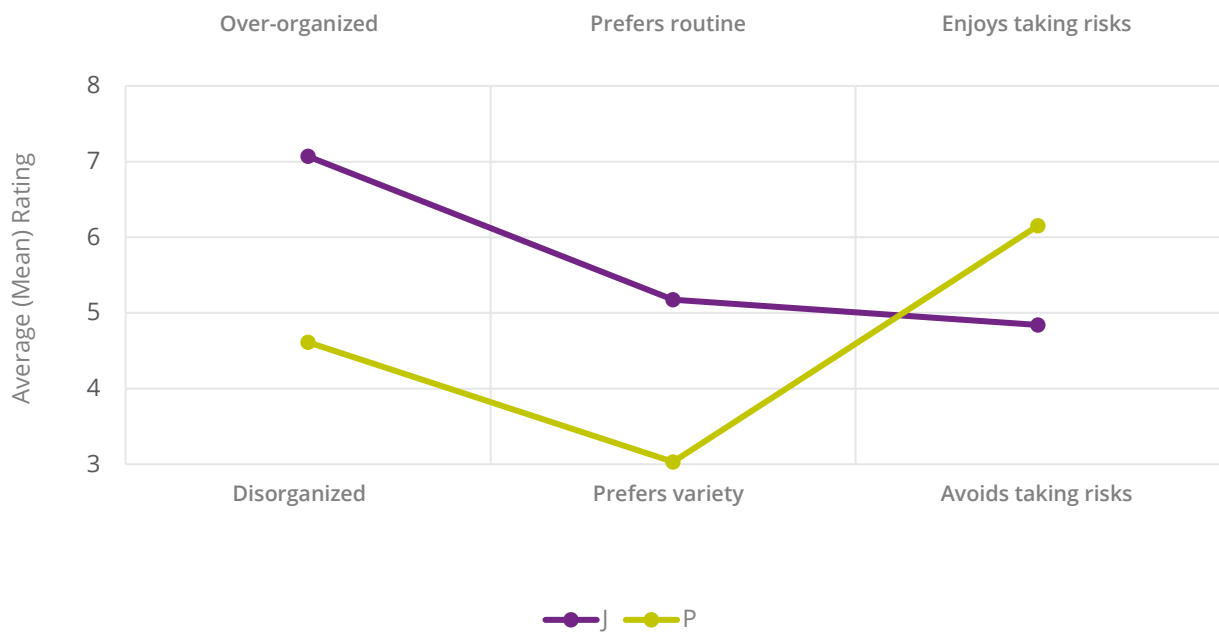
As might be expected, there are many relationships between personality and personal characteristics. The charts below show all statistically significant differences of 0.5 points or greater for each type pair.



Personal characteristics for Thinking/Feeling



Personal characteristics for Judging/Perceiving



In general, these differences follow the patterns that would be predicted by personality type theory. Extraverts see themselves as more energetic, assertive, optimistic, confident and status conscious than do Introverts; they are less risk-averse, have a greater preference for variety, and more frequently take the initiative. Those with a Sensing preference are more concerned for routine, organization and status than those with an Intuition preference, are more motivated by money but also more risk-averse. Those with a Thinking preference see themselves as more confident, assertive and motivated by money than those with a Feeling preference; they are more certain of their capabilities and more likely to enjoy taking risks. Some of the clearest differences are seen with the Judging–Perceiving preference pair, with the Judging preference much more organized (indeed, over-organized), more keen on routine and more risk-averse.

The table below shows, for each favourite process, the top five personal characteristics – those most different from an average (middle) position.

<p>Extraverted Sensing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prefers variety 2. Optimistic 3. Lots of energy 4. More confident than most people 5. Fully aware of capabilities 	<p>Introverted Sensing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fully aware of capabilities 2. Over-organized 3. Takes too much on 4. Avoids taking risks 5. Good work-life balance
<p>Extraverted Intuition</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prefers variety 2. Optimistic 3. Fully aware of capabilities 4. Takes initiative all the time 5. Assertive 	<p>Introverted Intuition</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fully aware of capabilities 2. Over-organized 3. Takes initiative rarely 4. Takes too much on 5. Optimistic
<p>Extraverted Thinking</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fully aware of capabilities 2. Takes initiative all the time 3. Assertive 4. More confident than most people 5. Optimistic 	<p>Introverted Thinking</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prefers variety 2. Fully aware of capabilities 3. Good work-life balance 4. Takes too much on 5. Disorganized
<p>Extraverted Feeling</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Optimistic 2. Takes initiative all the time 3. Lots of energy 4. Fully aware of capabilities 5. Over-organized 	<p>Introverted Feeling</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prefers variety 2. Optimistic 3. Disorganized 4. Fully aware of capabilities 5. Takes too much on

There is clearly some overlap. For example, ‘Fully aware of my capabilities’ appears in the top five for all favourite processes. The information in this table has therefore been combined with the significant differences between the processes¹² to show the most characteristic aspects of each favourite process. These are shown below.

¹² Based on a oneway ANOVA with post-hoc LSD test

Extraverted Sensing

- Prefers variety
- Optimistic
- Lots of energy
- More confident than most people
- Enjoys taking risks

Introverted Sensing

- Over-organized
- Avoids taking risks
- Prefers routine
- Status does matter
- Motivated by money

Extraverted Intuition

- Prefers variety
- Optimistic
- Takes too much on
- Good work-life balance
- More confident than most people

Introverted Intuition

- Over-organized
- Does not care about money
- Avoids taking risks
- Prefers routine
- Unassertive

Extraverted Thinking

- Fully aware of my capabilities
- Takes initiative all the time
- Assertive
- More confident than most people
- Over-organized

Introverted Thinking

- Prefers variety
- Disorganized
- More confident than most people
- Takes initiative rarely
- Status doesn't matter

Extraverted Feeling

- Optimistic
- Takes initiative all the time
- Over-organized
- Good work-life balance
- Takes too much on

Introverted Feeling

- Disorganized
- Status doesn't matter
- Unassertive
- Takes initiative rarely
- Does not care about money

This data has been used to help to develop advice for gig workers of each favourite process.

Gender and age

Men saw themselves as significantly more confident, more risk-taking, and having more energy than did women. Women saw themselves as significantly more likely to take too much on.¹³

Within this group, older people were more confident, aware of their capabilities, likely to prefer variety, optimistic, assertive, likely to take the initiative, to take holidays more often and to have more energy.¹⁴

Summary

- On average, participants in our research said that they were fully aware of their capabilities, took too much on, were more confident than most, had lots of energy, were assertive, had a good work-life balance, preferred variety, took the initiative and were optimistic.
- Those with only a regular job were more likely to avoid risks, had less energy, and were less assertive than those in either of the other two groups. They were less confident than those with both gig and regular work. Those in gig-only jobs were less concerned with status and had a greater preference for variety than those in either of the other two groups.
- There were a number of statistically significant differences between how participants in different types of work saw their personal characteristics, with those in a professional or business consulting role seeing themselves in a particularly positive light.
- Those with more positive reasons for having a gig job (freedom and flexibility, passion about the area, wanting to be their own boss, wanting a gig career, meeting people, having gig work as their main income) were more likely than others to enjoy taking risks and prefer variety. To some extent, they also saw themselves as having more energy, optimism, and confidence, and less concern for status. Those doing gig work as something temporary were less aware of their capabilities, had less energy and a poorer work-life balance, and were more concerned about money. Those who had retired but still wanted to work saw themselves as less busy, more optimistic and able to take more holiday.
- There are several clear and consistent relationships between the personal characteristics of gig workers and the characteristics of their jobs. For example, those who are more pessimistic feel that they are more stressed and see their jobs in a more negative light (less enjoyable, flexible and empowered, with higher job demands and lower levels of financial reward).
- There are many relationships between personality type and personal characteristics, in the directions that would be predicted by personality type theory. Some of the clearest differences are seen with the Judging-Perceiving preference pair. Those with a Judging preference see themselves as much more organized (indeed, over-organized), keener on routine and more risk-averse.
- Men saw themselves as significantly more confident, more risk-taking, and having more energy than did women. Women saw themselves as significantly more likely to take too much on.

¹³ Based on independent-groups t-tests

¹⁴ Correlations with age of 0.234, 0.220, 0.218, 0.203, 0.200, 0.197, 0.179 and 0.171 respectively.

- Within this group, older people were more confident, aware of their capabilities, likely to prefer variety, optimistic, assertive, likely to take the initiative, to holiday more often and to have more energy.

Best and worst things about being a gig worker

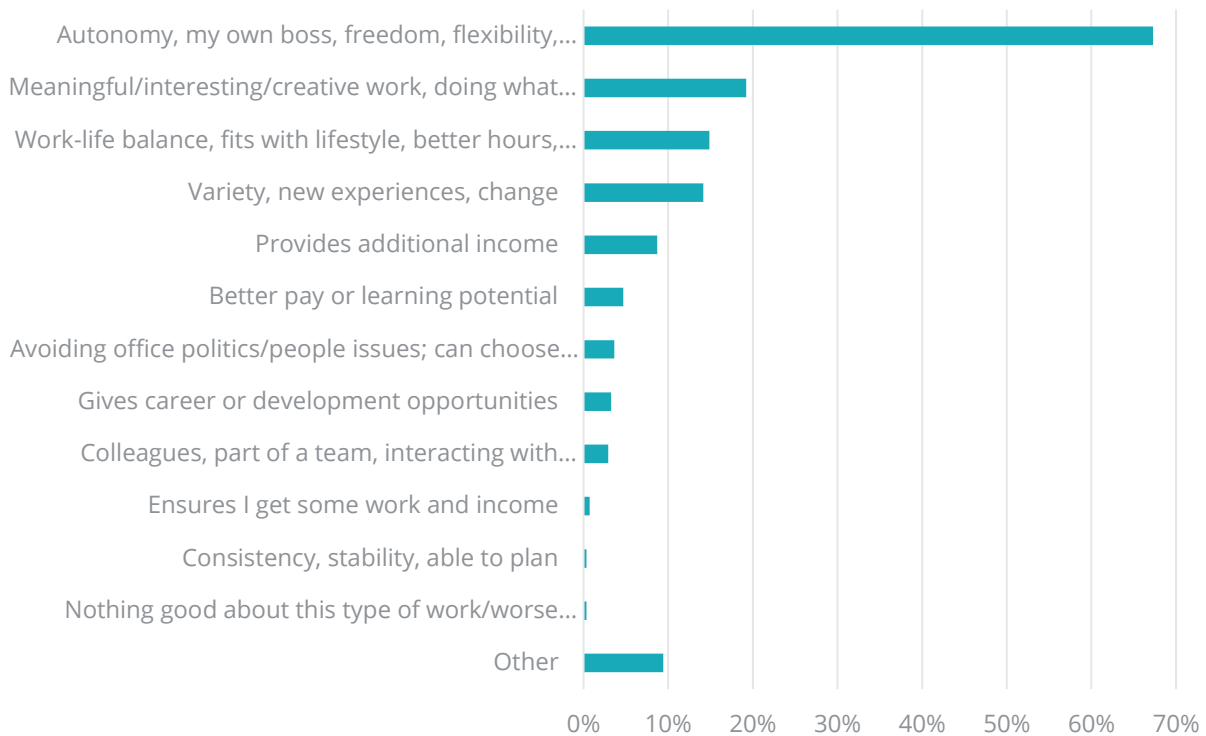
Overall results

We asked gig workers, regular workers, and those who had both types of job what were the best and worst things about being a gig worker or a regular worker. For gig-only workers, we asked the following questions:

- In a few words, what is the best thing about working in the gig economy?
- In a few words, what is the worst thing about working in the gig economy?
- What would be the best thing about having a 'regular' job as an employee?
- What would be the worst thing about having a 'regular' job as an employee?

Those in regular jobs or in both types of work were asked similar questions. The answers were categorised into themes, using thematic analysis.

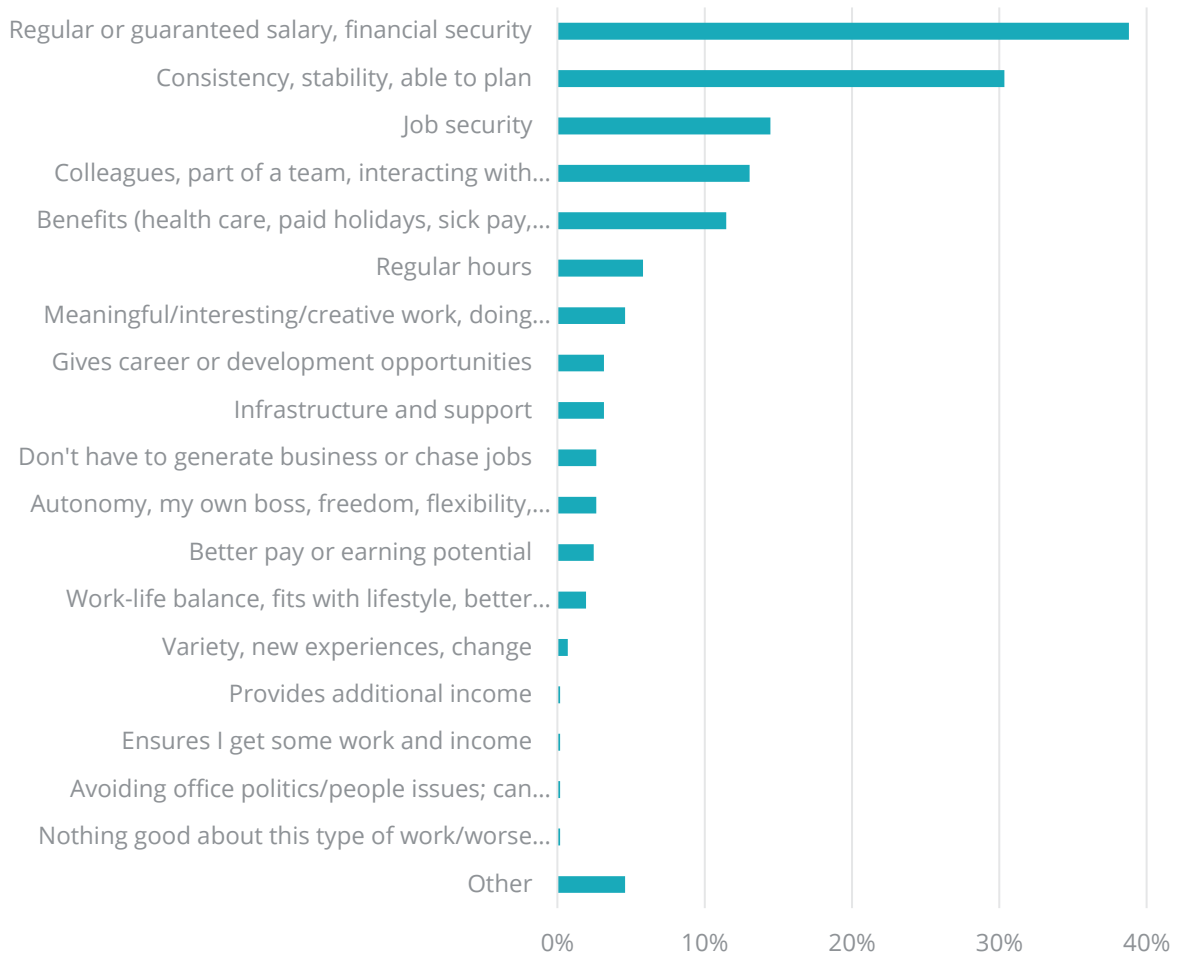
What is the best thing about working in the gig economy?



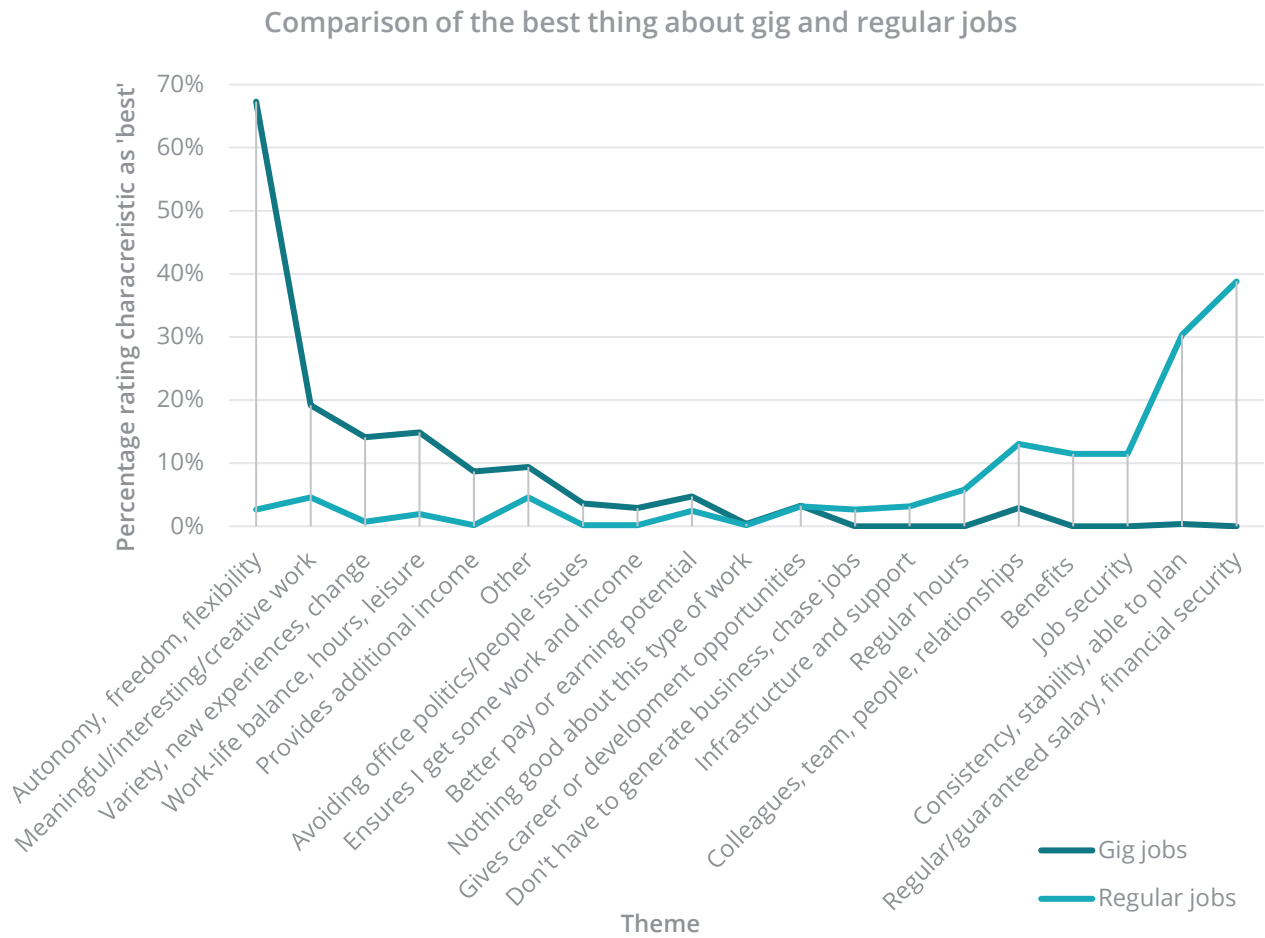
These results are broadly in line with those of Broughton, et al. (2018), who found, in interviews with 150 gig workers, that the main perceived advantages were: autonomy and flexibility; fitting round other work commitments; earning a secondary income; freedom to travel and work remotely; the opportunity to gain experience and skills. As with our research, autonomy and flexibility were most often mentioned. Our study differs in the importance given to having meaningful, creative or interesting work; this may reflect the nature of our sample, with a greater proportion of 'white collar' and professional jobs.

Those in 'regular' jobs were also asked to comment on the best thing about this type of work.

What is the best thing about having a regular job as an employee?



Comparing these two lists, some clear patterns emerge:



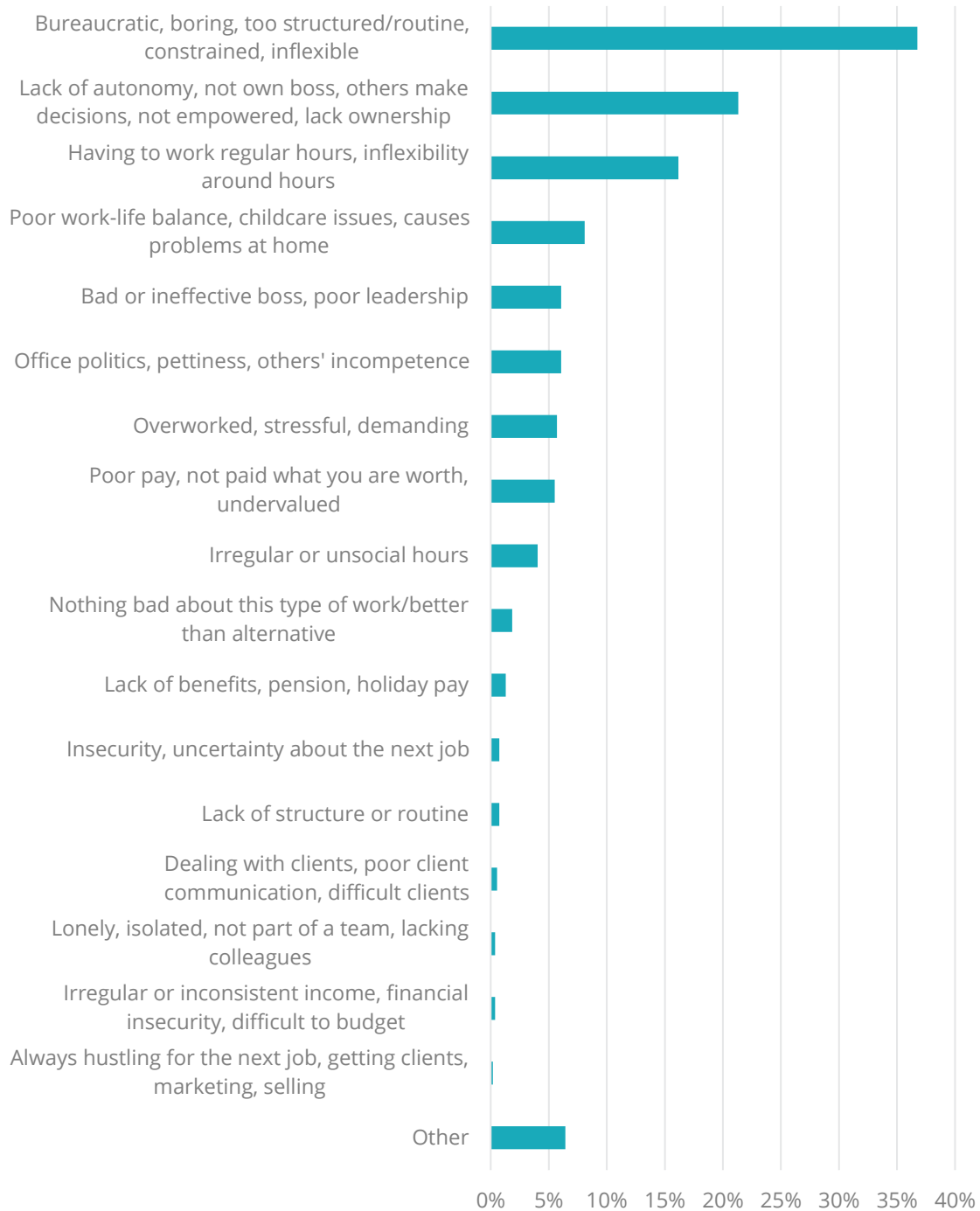
Autonomy, meaningful work, variety, work-life balance and the provision of additional income are more likely to be seen as one of the best characteristics of gig jobs. A regular or guaranteed salary, consistency, job security, benefits and having colleagues or a team were more likely to be seen as among the best characteristics of regular jobs.

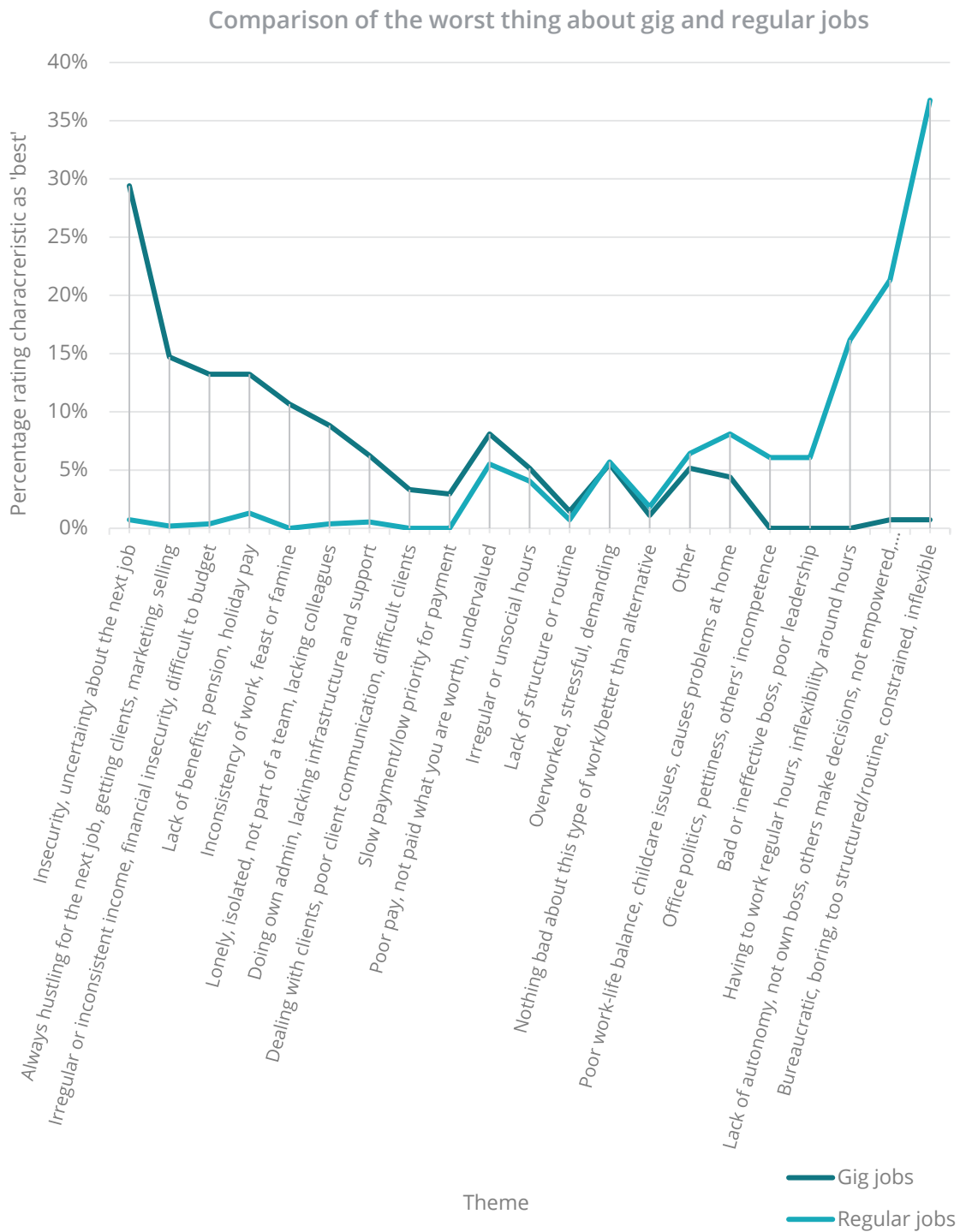
What is the worst thing about working in the gig economy?



Insecurity and uncertainty about the next job was seen as the worst thing about working in the gig economy by 29% of gig workers. This was also the disadvantage most frequently mentioned by respondents in the study carried out by Broughton et al. (2018); other common responses in their study were lack of employment rights and benefits, low pay, and loneliness and social isolation.

What is the worst thing about having a regular job?





The factors seen as the worst thing about gig jobs and regular jobs are mirror images of each other. Insecurity, uncertainty about the next job and having to hustle to get it, irregular or inconsistent income and work, lack of benefits, being lonely and isolated, and having to rely on oneself for admin and infrastructure were seen as the worst things about gig jobs. Bureaucracy, too much structure, lack of autonomy, inflexible regular hours and issues with their boss were seen as the worst thing about regular jobs. Some factors, such as being overworked, stressed and having a demanding job, were equally disliked by both groups.

Gig job type

There were some statistically significant differences¹⁵ between participants in different types of gig jobs in terms of what they saw as the best thing about gig work. Compared with other gig workers:

- Those in administrative roles were less likely to mention having meaningful, interesting or creative work, or doing what they love.
- Those in business services were more likely to mention working with colleagues, people or being part of a team, and variety, new experiences or change.
- Those in creative, media or communications roles were more likely to mention having meaningful, interesting or creative work, or doing what they love.
- Those in IT jobs were more likely to mention having better pay or earning potential.
- Those in professional and business consulting roles were more likely to mention having autonomy and flexibility, and less likely to mention the provision of additional income.

There were also some statistically significant differences in terms of what they saw as the worst thing about gig work:

- Those in creative, media or communications roles were more likely to mention insecurity and uncertainty about the next job.
- Those in professional and business consulting roles were more likely to mention irregular or inconsistent income, but less likely to mention irregular or unsocial hours, poor pay and feeling undervalued.

¹⁵ Based on χ^2 analysis

Reasons for joining the gig economy

For any one gig worker, they may or may not have mentioned one or more of the best things about being a gig worker. An independent-samples T-test was used to identify, for each category of 'best thing', whether gig workers who had mentioned that category were significantly more or less likely than chance to endorse each reason. The table below summarises these results. A "+" means that the reason is more likely to be endorsed, and a "-" that it is less likely. For example, those who thought that gaining additional income was the best thing about being a gig worker were less likely to endorse positive reasons for becoming a gig worker, less likely to have become a gig worker to make this their main or only source of income, but (not surprisingly) more likely to have entered the gig economy as a way of gaining some extra income. Only those categories which showed a relationship with at least one reason are shown.

Best thing category	Reasons										
	Positive reasons				Contingent reasons			Other reasons			
	Career I want	Passionate about area	Be own boss	Freedom & flexibility	Made redundant	Not planned	Temporary	Retired	Extra income	Main or only	Meeting people
Additional income	-	-	-	-					+	-	-
Autonomy	+	+	+	+						+	
Better pay (or potential)										+	-
Ensures some work, income		-	-								
Having colleagues											+
Meaningful/creative work		+								-	
Work-life balance										+	

The table below presents the results for the worst thing about being a gig worker.

Worst thing category	Reasons										
	Positive reasons				Contingent reasons			Other reasons			
	Career I want	Passionate about area	Be own boss	Freedom & flexibility	Made redundant	Not planned	Temporary	Retired	Extra income	Main or only	Meeting people
Bureaucratic			-								
Dealing with clients									-	+	
Doing own admin							-		-		
Hustling for next job					-	-	-				
Irregular income				+						+	
Irregular hours				-					+		-
Lack of benefits										+	
Lack of structure										+	
Lonely, isolated	+		+	+					-	+	
Overwork, stress											+
Poor pay, undervalued	-		-	-		+				-	
Poor work-life balance			-						+	-	
Slow payment									+	-	

Job characteristics

An independent-samples T-test was used to identify, for each category of ‘best thing’, whether gig workers who had mentioned that category saw their job as significantly different from those who had not, in terms of each of the seven job characteristics scales. The table below summarises these results. A “+” means that those who mentioned this advantage rated their jobs as significantly higher on this characteristic, and a “-” that they rated it significantly lower. For example, those who thought that gaining additional income was the best thing about being a gig worker were less likely to see their job as having enjoyable, motivating work and less likely to see it as being flexible. Only those categories which showed a relationship with at least one reason are shown.

Best thing category	Job characteristics						
	Enjoyable, motivating work	Flexibility	Degree of empowerment	Level of job demands	Financial rewards	Additional benefits and support	Job-related stress
Additional income	-	-					
Autonomy	+	+			+		
Better pay (or potential)					+		
Career/level opportunities							-
Ensures some work, income	-						+
Meaningful/creative work					-		

These results are in general unsurprising, though they demonstrate that those for whom the best thing about the job is some extra income, or ensuring at least some work or income, may not see their job in the most positive way. It is also interesting that those who see the best thing about their job as having meaningful or creative work do not feel as financially rewarded as other gig workers.

The table below presents the results for the worst thing about being a gig worker.

Worst thing category	Job characteristics						
	Enjoyable, motivating work	Flexibility	Degree of empowerment	Level of job demands	Financial rewards	Additional benefits and support	Job-related stress
Bureaucratic		-					
Dealing with clients		+					
Hustling for next job		+					
Insecurity, uncertainty		-					
Irregular income						-	+
Irregular hours		-					
Lack of benefits						-	+
Lack of structure				+			
Overwork, stress		-		+		+	
Poor pay, undervalued	-				-		

It is interesting to note that those gig workers who have the greatest level of job related stress are those who feel that having an irregular income or few benefits are the worst thing about their role. This agrees with research by Schonfeld & Mazzola (2015), who found that uncertainty about income was the most common background stressor.

Personality

The table below shows which advantages and disadvantages were more likely to be mentioned¹⁶ by each type pair – Extraversion (E) or Introversion (I), Sensing (S) or Intuition (N), Thinking (T) or Feeling (F), and Judging (J) or Perceiving (P). For example, those with a preference for Intuition were more likely to mention autonomy.

Best thing category	Personality type pair				Worst thing category	Personality type pair			
	E or I	S or N	T or F	J or P		E or I	S or N	T or F	J or P
Autonomy		N			Hustling for next job	I, P			
Career/development opportunities	E				Irregular income			F	
Having colleagues	E				Lonely, isolated			T	
Meaningful/creative work		N			Slow payment				J

There were also significant differences by whole type, favourite process and process pair:

Best thing category	More likely to be mentioned by	Less likely to be mentioned by
Autonomy	ENTP	INFJ, INTJ
Having colleagues	Ne	Ni
Meaningful/creative work	Fi	Si

Worst thing category	More likely to be mentioned by	Less likely to be mentioned by
Hustling for next job	INFP Fi	Te
Insecurity, uncertainty	ISTJ ENFP Si ST	INTJ ENTP Ni NT
Irregular income	NF	NT
Overwork, stress	ESTP	
Poor pay, undervalued	ENFJ Fe	ENTJ ISTJ Te

¹⁶ All results on this page are based on χ^2 analysis.

Gender and age

In terms of gender, men were more likely than women to mention a good work-life balance as the best thing about being a gig worker. Women were more likely than men to mention avoiding office politics. Women were more likely than men to mention being lonely and isolated as among the worst things about being a gig worker¹⁷.

Those mentioning the provision of additional income, better pay or earning potential or better work life balance as the best thing about being a gig worker were on average significantly¹⁸ younger, as were those who list bureaucracy, being overworked and stressed, or being poorly paid and undervalued as the worst thing. Those who mentioned always having to hustle for the next job as the worst thing were on average older.

	Category	Mean age of those mentioning this	Mean age of those not mentioning this
Best thing	Additional income	39.88	45.86
	Better pay (or potential)	38.00	45.70
	Work-life balance	41.54	46.00
Worst thing	Bureaucratic	25.50	45.42
	Hustling for next job	49.30	44.58
	Overwork, stress	37.20	45.75
	Poor pay, undervalued	38.68	45.77

Summary

- Almost 70% of gig workers thought that having autonomy and flexibility was the best thing about working in the gig economy, some distance ahead of other reasons (having meaningful, interesting or creative work 19%, work-life balance and fit with lifestyle 15%, variety, new experiences and change 14%). This contrasts with those in regular jobs, who see the best things about their types of job as being regular or guaranteed salary, consistency and stability, job security, having colleagues and being part of a team, and benefits.
- The worst thing about gig jobs was felt to be insecurity and uncertainty about the next job (mentioned by 29%), followed by always having to hustle for the next job (15%), irregular or inconsistent income (13%), lack of benefits (13%) and inconsistency of work (11%). Again, this is very different to the views of people in regular jobs.
- There were several relationships between reasons for joining the gig economy and what were seen as the best aspects. Those who mentioned having additional income or having at least some income were less likely to have positive reasons for having a gig job. Those who mentioned autonomy were more likely to have positive reasons.

¹⁷ Based on χ^2 analysis

¹⁸ Based on an independent-samples t-test

- There were also relationships with the job characteristics scales. These results show that those for whom the best thing about the job is some extra income, or ensuring at least some work or income, may not see their job in the most positive way. It is also interesting that those who see the best thing about their job as having meaningful or creative work do not feel as financially rewarded as other gig workers.
- Those gig workers who have the greatest level of job related stress are those who feel that having an irregular income or few benefits are the worst thing about their role.
- People with particular personality type preferences were more likely than others to mention particular advantages and disadvantages. This data has been used to develop guidelines for people of each type preference.
- Men were more likely than women to mention a good work-life balance as the best thing about being a gig worker; women were more likely than men to mention avoiding office politics. Women were more likely than men to mention being lonely and isolated as among the worst things about being a gig worker.
- Those mentioning the provision of additional income, better pay or earning potential, or better work-life balance as the best thing about being a gig worker were on average significantly younger. So were those who listed bureaucracy, being overworked and stressed, or being poorly paid and undervalued as the worst thing. Those who mentioned always having to hustle for the next job as the worst thing were on average older.

Type-based advice for organizations and gig workers

Advice for organizations

Introduction – why should organizations care?

The concept of the ‘gig economy’ first became widely known through news stories about organizations such as Uber, Deliveroo or Task Rabbit. However, many other organizations employ gig workers, often known as ‘contingent workers’, as an essential part of their workforce. A 2016 report from Ernst and Young suggests that one in two US organizations had increased their use of gig workers in the previous five years, at the same time as the rate of hiring for full-time employment had declined. 40% of organizations expected to increase their use of gig workers in the next five years, and a quarter of organizations expected that at least 30% of their workforce would be made up of gig workers. (Storey, Steadman, & Davis, 2016).

This increase is not surprising. The use of gig workers can be very attractive for organizations. As a flexible resource, gig workers can help organizations to cope with seasonal demand or other peaks and troughs, control labour costs and allow specialist expertise to be bought in for specific projects. Gig workers are, however, not always easy or cheap to recruit or replace. Despite popular perceptions, many, possibly the majority, will work in highly skilled or professional roles (Burke & Cowling, 2015). In addition, many organizations have not developed systems to effectively manage their gig workers (Storey, Steadman, & Davis, 2016). Considering the needs of gig workers therefore makes good business sense.

Tips for organizations

Here is a checklist of hints and tips to help organizations make better use of gig workers:

- Treat them as people and as employees rather than as a resource. Coping with gaps in resourcing might be your reason for hiring gig workers, but that doesn’t mean that they aren’t people with particular likes and dislikes. Not accounting for these may mean you lose valuable workers. Almost 70% of our sample of gig workers thought that autonomy and flexibility were the best things about working in the gig economy – can you provide this, or does your organization act in an unnecessarily controlling way towards gig workers? Insecurity, uncertainty, irregular income and lack of benefits were amongst the worst aspects of being a gig worker. What can you do to alleviate these?
- Acknowledge their contributions. Gig workers can be just as demotivated as regular employees if they feel they are being undervalued or ignored. Demotivated workers are less engaged and less productive, and more likely to go elsewhere.
- Remember that gig workers are individuals. Although certain personality preferences are more common amongst gig workers than among ‘regular’ employees, there are gig workers of every personality type. Just as you would with employees, take these individual differences into account when working with them.
- Review whether your organization is attractive to gig workers. People enter the gig economy for many reasons, but those with positive motivations such as having freedom and flexibility, being one’s own boss, and working in an interesting job have a more positive experience of gig work and are therefore likely to be more productive. Are these aspects that you emphasise when you are recruiting gig workers? What is your employee value proposition?

- Streamline the way in which you recruit, contract with and manage your gig workers. The Ernst and Young research found that over a third of organizations have fragmented and inconsistent processes for managing gig workers, several using many different vendors to manage them, with poor and inconsistent systems to measure their performance.
- Do not neglect onboarding – the Ernst and Young study found that 55% of gig workers had not gone through any form of onboarding or induction process. Some gig workers may be with your organization for a considerable length of time, and all will benefit from knowing more about your organization and where their jobs fit in – just as much as permanent employees. For many (though not all) gig workers, your organization may provide their sole employment.
- Don't isolate gig workers. A significant minority will have gone into gig work partly as a way to meet people and be part of a community. Include them, as far as possible, in company communications and avoid the creation of a 'them and us' culture.
- Offer opportunities for learning and development. This will be greatly appreciated by some gig workers and will help to create loyalty. Incorporate gig workers into your learning and development strategy and budget.
- Listen to what gig workers have to say. Many will have a wealth of relevant experience; almost all will be able to bring a fresh outside perspective which can facilitate change within your organization. There is even some evidence that they may be more innovative than other employees (Rasch, 2014).

In short, treat gig workers as you would employees – with (hopefully) respect.

Type-based advice for gig workers

Introduction

People of each type preference will have their own particular strengths as a gig worker – and things that they should watch out for. This section presents these for each favourite process.

Dominant Introverted Sensing (ISTJ, ISFJ)

In our survey, ISTJ and ISFJ types were less likely than those with other personality preferences to have a gig job, or both a gig and a regular job. They were more likely to only have a regular job.

These types like order and routine and can in general be relied on to work on a task-by-task basis, to deliver on time and to specification, and to honour commitments. They are less concerned than most if their work does not appear to be creative or meaningful, which can be a feature of some gig tasks. They can, however, be over-organized and will tend to worry more than most about the insecurity and uncertainty of gig work. They also tend to be more risk-averse and less optimistic than most. This may be, in part, why they are less likely to take up gig work.

Our research shows that as gig workers, ISTJs and ISFJs are on average less confident, less assertive and less sure of their abilities than most. They may benefit from taking calculated risks and (where possible) being more assertive about conditions or pay, rather than focusing on job insecurity. It may also be useful for them to get an objective appraisal of their skills and abilities, as otherwise they may undersell themselves. To do this, they may find it useful to remind themselves of past occasions, relevant to the situation at hand, where things have gone well. Building a network of friends or contacts who can suggest solutions or offer support will also be useful.

Dominant Extraverted Sensing (ESFP, ESTP)

These types want to enjoy the experiences and opportunities that life offers. They enjoy taking risks, are happy to take the initiative, are energetic, optimistic and adaptable. In our research, they were more likely than most others to mention meeting people or being part of a community as a reason for taking up gig work; it is important for them to get this sort of ongoing stimulation, from people or from other aspects of their work, from any gig job. Work that is routine or divorced from the real world is likely to become boring quickly. They may therefore need to stop and think, just for a moment, before taking on a gig job – will it meet their needs? They may find this difficult as they are orientated to act, living their lives through trial and error.

ESFPs and ESTPs see themselves as more energetic than most and may tend to neglect planning and administrative tasks. In the role of a gig worker, they will need to organize themselves and ensure that they do not over-commit. In our research, some ESFP/ESTP types did say that they suffered from overwork or stress.

Dominant Introverted Intuition (INFJ, INTJ)

INFJ and INTJ types tend to be organized and methodical, enjoying order and routine in the outer world while quietly focused on concepts, patterns and meanings in their inner thoughts. They are less concerned than most by the day-to-day insecurity and uncertainty of gig jobs (though they may have concerns over long-term security), and are less worried about status, both of which may be an advantage when working in the gig economy. They do, however, need some long-term, underlying meaning in their work. This may not be an obvious feature of some gig jobs, and in order to achieve this they may benefit from being more assertive, less pessimistic, and more willing to take risks. They should try to avoid over-thinking the negative possibilities of the situation.

Many gig jobs are short-term and task-focused in nature. INFJs and INTJs may benefit from seeking out longer-term or more in-depth roles that better suit their long-term vision and their search for deeper understanding.

Almost 70% of all gig workers see autonomy, freedom and being their own boss as the best thing about this sort of work. For INFJ and INTJ types, this is mentioned by just over 50%.

Dominant Extraverted Intuition (ENFP, ENTP)

In our research, these types were over-represented in the gig economy. They were significantly more likely than most to have a gig job, and less likely to have a regular job. This may be in part because they are generally optimistic, happy to take risks and take the initiative, and keen to try something new.

ENFPs and ENTPs often have a great deal of energy and enthusiasm, especially around new projects and tasks, and as a result can take too much on. As they typically do not enjoy planning, this may mean that they can find themselves working long hours, or becoming stressed, in order to fulfil their numerous commitments. They may need to stop and take stock before they take on a new gig job or task. This will be particularly important when they already have several tasks with similar deadlines, as they have a tendency to leave things to the last minute. Of course, not all ENFP/ENTP types are stressed or overworked. In our research, they were more likely than most to report having a good work-life balance.

They enjoy discussing ideas and possibilities with other people and, if possible, should seek out a gig job where they can have this sort of contact. They are likely to lose interest and become demotivated if they need to work alone for long periods. Many will also be de-energized by spending too much time concentrating on detail, or by having to carry out routine and repetitive tasks.

Dominant Introverted Thinking (ISTP, INTP)

ISTP and INTP types are not especially status conscious. The loss of the trappings of status that comes from taking a gig job instead of a role in a traditional, hierarchical organization is unlikely to be of great concern for them. In our research, many saw their gig economy jobs as significantly more financially rewarding than did those with other personality preferences; it may be that money is more important for them than status (though few saw financial reward as their main motivator).

ISTPs and INTPs tend to be flexible, adaptable, and open to new ideas and experiences, and this is likely to prove useful in embarking on a gig career. Similarly, the transactional nature of much gig work, without the opportunity to build very many working relationships, is unlikely to concern them and they are generally happy to work alone. They are typically more confident than most people, though this may be a quiet confidence in their own abilities rather than overt social confidence.

ISTP and INTP types like variety and are unlikely to enjoy a repetitive or routine gig job. They can neglect planning or administrative tasks, which may create problems if they are self-employed. They can take some time to act on their decisions, or to take the initiative, which as a gig worker may mean missed opportunities.

Dominant Extraverted Thinking (ESTJ, ENTJ)

Those with Dominant Extraverted Thinking see meeting people and being part of a community as one of their top five reasons for entering the gig economy. They have a desire to organize their world and the people in it, and see themselves as confident, assertive, energetic, and very aware of their capabilities. They are happy to take measured risks. As a gig worker, they are more motivated by money than those with other personality preferences, and less likely to see themselves as poorly paid or undervalued.

ESTJ and ENTJ types are action-orientated and happy to take the lead, and therefore may take too much on. Those who have not developed a high level of self-awareness can then become overly organized, and impatient with any perceived inefficiencies or incompetence – for some, this can lead to an attempt to change systems, or direct or control others. As a gig worker, this may not be a strategy that is realistically open to them and they may find this frustrating. They may instead drive themselves too hard, taking even more on. In this situation they may need to stop and take stock, cut back on tasks, and avoid alienating others by being too impatient. If necessary, they may need to step away from a particular gig job entirely to reflect on and reappraise the situation.

Dominant Introverted Feeling (ISFP, INFP)

People with Introverted Feeling as their dominant process are more likely than most to have a gig job, and less likely to have only a regular job. They are less likely than those with other personality preferences to see their roles as financially rewarding, but this may not be so important to them. They are the group that is least motivated by money. Similarly, status is less of a concern. Instead, they are especially keen to have work that is meaningful and fulfils a real or deeper purpose. Where a gig job seems not to have meaning, or contradicts their values, they are likely to find this difficult, and this is something that they should consider in taking on gig work.

Although they can be very forceful when their values are crossed, ISFPs and INFPs are in general less assertive than most and may have trouble saying 'no'. They are also less certain of and less confident in their capabilities. This can lead to them being taken advantage of, and this group is the most likely, in our research with gig workers, to report having a poor work-life balance. They may need to develop a more sceptical mindset in taking on new tasks. Many see the process of competing or hustling for the next job as one of the worst aspects of working in the gig economy. They may need to engage with this task in a more organized, deliberate and timely way to get the most from their gig career.

Dominant Extraverted Feeling (ESFJ, ENFJ)

ESFJ and ENFJ types also see meeting people and being part of a community as one of their top five reasons for entering the gig economy. Relationships and people are important to them. While they are less concerned with formal status than most, they need to feel valued by the people they work with and see being undervalued as one of the worst things about working in the gig economy. Those who cannot gain this support from their job – for example, those who work alone and use an app to communicate with their clients or employer – will need to find other people to have contact with and other sources of support. This support should include positive feedback from others.

People with Extraverted feeling as their favourite process are typically organized, conscientious, and keen not to let people down. As a gig worker, this means that they can generally be relied on to deliver, though it can result in them taking too much on. In our research, however, most saw themselves as optimists and as having a good work-life balance. They reported being less certain of their own capabilities than most and may find rejection or criticism hard to take. Though it will be difficult, they should try not to take these experiences personally.

Summary and conclusions

Overview and methodology

Why do this research?

A 'gig worker' is someone who is employed on a freelance basis, carrying out short-term jobs or contracts, not necessarily fixed to a single employer. Some may use a website or app to help them find or organize their gig work, but others may not. The 'gig economy' forms a significant and growing part of the workforce, but there has been very little systematic research into how the personality of the individual gig worker relates to their motivations, the stresses that they face, or other aspects of their jobs.

This study was designed to investigate how personality relates to the differences between gig and 'regular' jobs, the reasons why someone becomes a gig worker, types of gig work done, and views on gig jobs. For gig workers, this information could be very useful in making them aware of their likely strengths and possible blind spots, and in deciding whether gig or other freelance work was right for them. For organizations, this could be the key to managing their gig workers and contractors more efficiently and effectively. The aim was to develop straightforward guidelines that could be used by both.

The survey

To carry out the research, we created an online survey. Participants identified their age, gender, MBTI personality type, age, and what country they principally worked in, and rated themselves on several personal characteristics that previous research suggested may relate to aspects of gig work. They were then asked a series of questions relating to the characteristics of their gig and/or 'regular' job, covering:

- Employment status
- If applicable, number of gig jobs and time working in the gig economy
- If applicable, the type(s) of gig economy jobs they had
- If applicable, the extent to which a number of reasons for taking a gig job applied to them
- If applicable, their use of websites or apps to help them find or organize their gig work
- Views on a wide range of aspects of their gig and/or regular job(s)
- Best and worst thing about working in the gig economy and in a regular job

Results

Sample description

- The data from 1,308 people who completed the survey was used in the analysis.
- 76% of the group were female, and 23% male, with less than 1% choosing “other” or “I’d rather not say”.
- Age ranged from 16 to 78 years, with an average (mean) age of 41 years.
- The majority (61%) worked principally in the United States, though in total 56 different countries were represented.
- 215 people (17% of the group) worked only in gig jobs, with a further 244 (19%) having both gig and regular jobs, meaning that 36% of the group had a gig job of some sort.
- Those who had gig jobs were asked what type of role they had. The largest single group was ‘Professional/business consultancy services’; there were very few respondents in roles such as driving or manual work. Therefore, this survey should be seen as focusing on gig workers in professional and other ‘white collar’ roles. It should be noted that although much of the debate around gig work has been concerned with less skilled roles, the evidence suggests that skilled workers actually make up a larger proportion of the gig economy.
- Comparing those who only have gig jobs with those who have both gig and regular jobs, a higher percentage of the gig-only workers had professional/business consultancy roles.
- On average, those working only as gig workers had been employed in the gig economy for slightly longer than those doing both gig and regular work.
- Most respondents had only one or two gig jobs at the time when they took the survey. For gig-only workers, the average (median) was two jobs; for those who also had a regular job, the average (median) was one gig job.
- Most of those with only gig jobs saw themselves as self-employed; most of those with regular jobs, or both gig and regular jobs, saw themselves as employed full-time.

Reasons for becoming a gig worker

- The most common reasons for becoming a gig worker were:
 - To have freedom and flexibility
 - To work in an area I’m passionate about
 - To be my own boss
 - Freelancing/gig work is the career I want to have
- The reasons cluster into three categories or factors: positive reasons, temporary or contingent reasons, and other reasons around needing to work. Positive reasons are in general rated higher. Those in professional/business consultancy roles are particularly likely to rate positive reasons highly; those in healthcare or other care roles were less likely.
- Those in administrative work, business services and professional/business consultancy tended to view gig work as their main or only source of income. Those in healthcare or other care roles, IT and teaching tended to see it as an additional source of income.

Job characteristics

- Six scales of job characteristics relevant to work in the gig economy were developed: Enjoyable, motivating work; Flexibility; Degree of empowerment; Level of job demands; Financial rewards; Additional benefits and support. A separate scale of Job-related stress was also developed.
- Comparing those with only a gig job with those who only had a regular job, the former saw their work as more enjoyable, more flexible, and more financially rewarding, but as less empowering and with fewer additional benefits. There were several differences between how participants in different types of gig work saw their jobs.
- Ratings of the reasons for joining the gig economy were correlated with job characteristics. The results show that those who become a gig worker for positive reasons will tend to enjoy the role. Those who are forced into it or who otherwise did not make a positive choice typically will not.

Personal characteristics

- On average, participants in our research said that they were fully aware of their capabilities, took too much on, were more confident than most, had lots of energy, were assertive, had a good work-life balance, preferred variety, took the initiative and were optimistic.
- Those with only a regular job were more likely to avoid risks, have less energy, and be less assertive than those in either of the other two groups. They were less confident than those with both gig and regular work. Those in gig-only jobs were less concerned with status and had a greater preference for variety than those in either of the other two groups.
- There were a number of statistically significant differences between how participants in different types of work saw their jobs, with those in a professional or business consulting role seeing themselves in a particularly positive light.
- Among gig workers, those considering themselves to be in full-time work were more concerned by status than those in part-time work or the self-employed. The self-employed had a greater preference for variety than others did.
- Those with more positive reasons for having a gig job were more likely than others to enjoy taking risks and prefer variety. To some extent, they also saw themselves as having more energy, optimism, and confidence, and less concern for status. Those doing gig work as something temporary were less aware of their capabilities, had less energy and a poorer work-life balance, and were more concerned about money. Those who had retired but still wanted to work saw themselves as less busy, more optimistic and able to take more holiday.
- There were several clear and consistent relationships between the personal characteristics of gig workers and the characteristics of their jobs. For example, those who were more pessimistic felt more stressed and saw their job in a more negative light (less enjoyable, flexible and empowered, with higher job demands and lower levels of financial reward).

Best and worst things about being a gig worker

- Almost 70% of gig workers thought that having autonomy and flexibility was the best thing about working in the gig economy, some distance ahead of other reasons (having meaningful, interesting or creative work 19%, work-life balance and fit with lifestyle 15%, variety, new experiences and change 14%). This contrasts with those in regular jobs, who see the best things about their types of job as being: regular or guaranteed salary, consistency and stability, job security, having colleagues and being part of a team, and benefits.
- The worst thing about gig jobs is felt to be insecurity and uncertainty about the next job (mentioned by 29%). This is followed by always having to hustle for the next job (15%), irregular or inconsistent income (13%), lack of benefits (13%) and inconsistency of work (11%). Again, this is very different to the views of people in regular jobs.
- There were several relationships between reasons for joining the gig economy and what were seen as the best aspects. Those who mentioned having additional income or having at least some income were less likely to have positive reasons for having a gig job. Those who mentioned autonomy were more likely to have positive reasons.
- There were also relationships with the job characteristics scales. These results show that those for whom the best thing about the job is some extra income, or ensuring at least some work or income, may not see their job in the most positive way. It is also interesting that those who saw the best thing about their job as having meaningful or creative work did not feel as financially rewarded as other gig workers.
- Those gig workers who had the greatest level of job-related stress were those who felt that having an irregular income or few benefits was the worst thing about their role.

Personality type

- Type data was available for 1,274 individuals. Within this group, those with preferences for Intuition were more likely than those with a preference for Sensing to have a gig job, whether as their main employment or in addition to their regular job. Individuals with preferences for ISTJ and ISFJ were the least likely to have a gig job of any sort.
- Positive reasons for joining the gig economy related to personality and were rated more highly by those with an Intuition and/or Perceiving preference. Contingent and other reasons showed no consistent pattern. There was a great deal of communality between the top reasons chosen by people from each favourite process.
- Those with a Perceiving preference tended to see their jobs as more enjoyable and motivating than those with a Judging preference. Those with a Thinking preference tended to be in more financially rewarding jobs than those with a Feeling preference. The differences in financial reward could also be seen at whole type level.
- There were many relationships between personality type and personal characteristics, in the directions that would be predicted by personality type theory:
 - Extraverts saw themselves as more energetic, assertive, optimistic, confident and status conscious than did Introverts. They were less risk-averse, had a greater preference for variety, and more frequently took the initiative.
 - Those with a Sensing preference were more concerned for routine, organization and status than those with an Intuition preference. They were more motivated by money but also more risk-averse.
 - Those with a Thinking preference saw themselves as more confident, assertive and motivated by money than those with a Feeling preference. They were more certain of their capabilities and more likely to enjoy taking risks.
 - Some of the clearest differences were seen with the Judging-Perceiving preference pair, with the Judging preference much more organized (indeed, over-organized), keener on routine and more risk-averse.
- People with different personality type preferences were more likely than others to mention particular themes as the best and worst thing about working in the gig economy. For example, autonomy and flexibility were most likely to be mentioned as the best thing by those with preferences for ENTP, and least likely to be mentioned by those with preferences for INFJ or INTJ. This data has been used to develop guidelines for people of each type preference.

Gender

- Men were more likely than women to combine both regular and gig jobs. Women were more likely than men to have only a gig job or only a regular job.
- Across the whole group, women gave a higher score to “It wasn’t something I planned” as a reason for joining the gig economy. Within the gig-only group, they gave a significantly higher score to “I am doing this temporarily until something else comes along”.
- There were no significant differences between male and female gig workers in how they saw the characteristics of their jobs.
- Men saw themselves as significantly more confident, more risk-taking, and having more energy than did women. Women saw themselves as significantly more likely to take too much on.
- Men were more likely than women to mention a good work-life balance as the best thing about being a gig worker. Women were more likely than men to mention avoiding office politics. Women were more likely than men to mention being lonely and isolated as among the worst things about being a gig worker.

Age

- Gig workers tended to be slightly older. The average (mean) age of gig-only workers was 46.40 years, of those with both gig and regular jobs 41.49, and of regular-only was 39.78
- Older people are more likely to give a higher rating to retirement as a reason for taking up gig work.
- Older gig workers tended to see their jobs as more enjoyable and motivating, and to a lesser extent as more financially rewarding, less demanding, more flexible, less stressful and more empowering.
- Older people were more confident, aware of their capabilities, likely to prefer variety, optimistic, assertive, likely to take the initiative, to holiday more often and to have more energy.
- Those mentioning the provision of additional income, better pay or earning potential or better work-life balance as the best thing about being a gig worker were on average significantly younger, as were those who list bureaucracy, being overworked and stressed, or being poorly paid and undervalued as the worst thing. Those who mentioned always having to hustle for the next job as the worst thing were, on average, older.

Conclusions

The gig economy is an important aspect of modern business. Many organizations employ gig workers, who in turn form a significant part of the workforce. In the US, gig jobs contribute to the income of over 30% of all families. This study has shown how personality and other factors relate to the personal characteristics of gig workers, the reasons why they took on gig jobs, and the characteristics of those jobs.

The data show that although people with personality preferences for Intuition are more likely than others to have gig jobs, there are workers of every personality type within the gig economy. Many gig workers are employed in highly skilled or professional roles and are difficult to replace, so it makes sense for organizations to try to understand the motivations of gig workers and keep them on board. Given that almost 70% of gig workers in our sample thought that the best thing about gig work was the opportunity for flexibility and autonomy, organizations should consider whether they can provide this, as opposed to acting in an unnecessarily controlling way. Similarly, anything that can be done to alleviate the insecurity, irregular income and lack of benefits experienced by many gig workers will also pay dividends. The research showed that the best things about gig work and 'regular' work were mirror images of each other, as were the worst aspects. Organizations can also use the detailed findings in this report to become more attractive to gig workers and better understand their individual needs and motivations. We hope that the results will help employers see gig workers as individuals, just as they (hopefully) see 'regular' employees.

For individual gig workers, understanding their own personality preferences can help them to appreciate why they enjoy certain aspects of gig work and dislike others. The findings in this report should help them to see what suits them best and what they are looking for in gig employment, and allow them to have a more rewarding gig career.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Psychological type and the MBTI® assessment

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) assessment is probably the most widely used personality questionnaire in the world. It does not measure our ability or skill, or how much of a particular personality trait we have; it looks at whether we have an in-built preference to do things in one way or in another way. It looks at four pairs of preferences:

Opposite ways to direct and receive energy	
Extraversion (E)	Introversion (I)
Gets energy from the outer world of people and experiences	Gets energy from the inner world of reflections and thoughts
Focuses energy and attention outwards in action	Focuses energy and attention inwards in reflection
Opposite ways to take in information	
Sensing (S)	Intuition (N)
Prefers real information coming from five senses	Prefers information coming from associations
Focuses on what is real	Focuses on possibilities and what might be
Opposite ways to decide and come to conclusions	
Thinking (T)	Feeling (F)
Steps out of situations to analyze them dispassionately	Steps into situations to weigh human values and motives
Prefers to make decisions on the basis of objective logic	Prefers to make decisions on the basis of values
Opposite ways to approach the outside world	
Judging (J)	Perceiving (P)
Prefers to live life in a planned and organized manner	Prefers to live life in a spontaneous and adaptable way
Enjoys coming to closure and making a decision	Enjoys keeping options open

For convenience, these pairs of preferences, or pairs of opposites, are often called type preference pairs. So, we might talk about the E–I preference pair, the S–N preference pair, the T–F preference pair or the J–P preference pair.

In each pair, we will have a preference for one type. So, for example, we might prefer E rather than I, and spend much more of our time and energy doing things typical of Extraverts, and little of our time or attention on activities and ways of doing things typical of Introverts. Or we might

prefer I rather than E. Whatever our preference, however, we will spend some time and carry out some activities associated with the other side. The same applies to S-N, T-F and J-P – in each case we will have a preference, but we will visit the other side from time to time. We will use all eight modes at least some of the time.

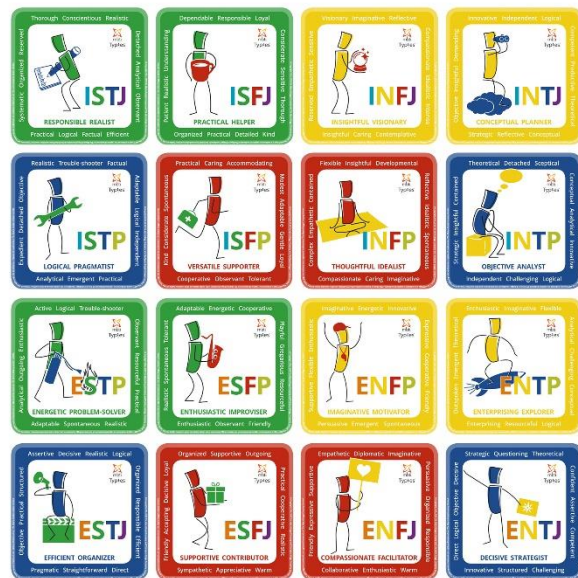
The MBTI assessment is a method for helping individuals to work out what their type preferences are, so you may hear people say things like "I'm an ESTJ" or "I've got preferences for INFP" or "I'm definitely a Perceiving type". They can then use this knowledge in all sorts of ways to help them with their development as human beings. The four letters can be combined to give 16 different types, but this four-letter type formula should not be used to "put people in a box"; the MBTI instrument is used to open up possibilities, not to limit individuals.

The 16 types are often illustrated using a *type table*, as shown here.

Each of these 16 types has a particular characteristic taking the lead in directing their personality – what's often called their favourite process.

So, for ISTJ and ISFJ for example, Introverted Sensing (Sⁱ) leads. Central to their personality is the importance of lived experience and drawing on their rich store of memories.

For ESTP and ESFP, it is Extraverted Sensing (S^e) – experiencing the moment and the here and now with all their senses – that leads, and so on for all 16 types. See the table below.



Types	Favourite process
ISTJ, ISFJ	Introverted Sensing (S ⁱ)
ESTP, ESFP	Extraverted Sensing (S ^e)
INFJ, INTJ	Introverted Intuition (N ⁱ)
ENTP, ENFP	Extraverted Intuition (N ^e)
ISTP, INTP	Introverted Thinking (T ⁱ)
ESTJ, ENTJ	Extraverted Thinking (T ^e)
ISFP, INFP	Introverted Feeling (F ⁱ)
ESFJ, ENFJ	Extraverted Feeling (F ^e)

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