

# Solve

Issue 5 | Jan 2023

## *Human asset creation*

**From Navy Sailor to fintech  
leader: see potential over  
experience in action**

Read the full story on pg 14



As a global company with headquarters in Australia, WithYouWithMe acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.

We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

# solve

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Front cover image produced by WithYouWithMe.  
Edited by Alicia Kouparitsas  
Magazine design by Jess Haines-Hann  
Printed by WithYouWithMe, Australia  
First printing edition 2022

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## Opening remarks by Tom Moore

CEO & Founder, WithYouWithMe



I've been speaking with a lot of people recently around the idea of 'wellness' in the workplace. Many of these conversations follow a similar path around what leaders can do to improve the wellness of employees.

I agree that employee wellbeing, both mental and physical, is an absolute non-negotiable. It was why WithYouWithMe was founded in the first place. But I do challenge the idea that workplaces can introduce band aid solutions to bring on meaningful change. Things like lunchtime yoga, karaoke Fridays, kombucha bars, book clubs and fitness challenges all look at fixing the symptom of unwellness and are not effective at solving the greater problem.

*It's time for the wellness narrative to be flipped.*

True "wellbeing" starts with quality of life. And in my experience, quality of life cannot be achieved without financial means.

People want to buy a home.


They want to live a certain lifestyle. To do those things, you need a well-paying job. You also need the potential to grow that job into a career path that allows you to continue building knowledge and wealth.

For organisations, investing in helping employees build rewarding (both financially and emotionally) careers over short-term wellness plays will generate greater results, both for the individual and the organisation. Churn and corporate wellness packages cost companies more than increasing employee satisfaction through suitable salaries, training and meaningful career paths. And boosting your Employee Lifetime Value is an added bonus.

For the individual, the best way to guarantee financial security and improve wellbeing is to become a technologist. I truly believe this. All jobs of the future will require technology-based skills. Being a technologist is a strong first step towards wellness.

This edition of Solve explores organisations and individuals who are winning the wellness fight. I hope you enjoy their stories.



A person is running away from the camera on a brick path that leads towards a body of water. The scene is set during sunset or sunrise, with a warm, golden light illuminating the sky and the runner's silhouette. The path is made of reddish-brown bricks, and the water is visible in the background under a cloudy sky.

**Lunchtime yoga,  
karaoke Fridays,  
kombucha bars,  
book clubs &  
fitness challenges  
don't solve the  
wellness problem.**

## Case study

# Atos puts diversity at the heart of recruitment efforts



*"The beauty of WithYouWithMe's solution is that diversity is built in from the start. A lot of recruitment partners provide skilled people first and then consider diversity afterwards. WithYouWithMe gives us skilled people who happen to come from under-represented groups."*

**Julie Adamson**

Social Value Solutions Lead

**Atos**

Atos is a global leader in digital transformation. With over 112,000 employees, providing tailored end-to-end solutions to organisations in 70 countries around the world. Atos has a bold mission: to design the future of the digital space - and to do that they need highly skilled people and innovation at the core of their thinking. To create that capability, they look for diversity of skill, thought and experience.

"Diversity is core to everything we do," said Julie Adamson, Social Value Solutions Lead at Atos, UK & Ireland. "A significant amount of our business in the UK is in the public sector, therefore, by reflecting the diversity of the citizens we serve, we can deliver services that meet the needs of all of our end-customers."

Atos' recruitment structure is reflective of them as a large, matrix organisation with a high-volume of technically skilled roles. Atos work with many specialist recruitment agencies, however, due to barriers in acquiring technical/digital skills for many minority/underrepresented groups, there is often a lack of diversity in the technically skilled candidate pools and proactive measures are required to meet their ambitions. Therefore, the team wanted to expand their DEI approach in recruitment to lower barriers to entry, increase the diversity of the technically skilled talent pool and expand their definition of diversity.



They discovered WithYouWithMe (WYWM), a social impact company that offers data-led SaaS workforce solutions. WYWM allows organisations to build and train teams for in-demand tech roles by identifying and upskilling talent for free, and focusing on overlooked sections of society such as Armed Forces veterans and their spouses, refugees and neurodivergent individuals. WYWM leverages a data-driven approach to employment, that involves a series of scientifically-based aptitude tests that identify a person's true potential to excel in a tech-based role – regardless of whether they have had the opportunity to attend university or secure previous employment in that field.

"We love that WYWM's solution has diversity built in from the start. It's not a bolt-on. It's not an afterthought. It's the whole purpose of the program. That's what made them stand out to us," said Julie.

## *A "disruptive" approach to recruitment*

"WYWM's model is completely different from what we're used to," Julie pointed out. "Normally, we'd go to a recruitment partner with a list of skills we need and they bring us candidates - most of which come with long and robust CVs. So to be presented with a company that's saying 'someone might have no technology experience but they have the aptitude and potential to be fantastic in this role' is a new and disruptive approach."

Once the team saw use cases and proof points, the true value of WYWM's programme was evident.



## Pilot sets the stage for a new approach to talent acquisition

One of Atos' first placements was Alice Aumonier. After being a military dependent for 10 years, Alice found herself stagnating in her career as a nurse and unable to move professions due to lack of experience. But after going through the WYWM program, she's now training as a Full Stack Developer and will soon be joining the Atos team.

"Alice is the perfect example of how, with the right training and support in place, someone with no digital experience can thrive in a

technical role," Julie pointed out. "She's shown our business that WYWM's model can absolutely work."

Alice is one of eight people who are joining Atos through WYWM's "squad" model, a temp-to-perm arrangement that enables organisations to hire people on a 12-month basis, before transitioning them to permanent staff. The new recruits all come from under-represented parts of society, and have been carefully selected using WYWM's screening tool, Potential.

As an AI-powered solution, the platform uses scientifically-based psychometric testing to identify candidates with the aptitude to thrive in tech-based roles, and provides them with certified training to make them rapidly proficient and job-ready.



*Alice Aumonier – one of the individuals placed into a new tech career with Atos – spoke at the 15,000 Future event, an initiative aimed at driving more veterans and military families into rewarding new careers.*

## Creating long-term value beyond recruitment

With the first pilot well underway, Julie and her team are looking to expand the WYWM program to other areas of the business. As well as working with different practices to fill in-demand roles, Atos is also considering how they could work with WYWM to support internal reskilling opportunities.



*Speaking of pilots...*

# Are you new here?

If you've been searching for solutions to improve the talent journey for current and future employees across your organisation, take advantage of WithYouWithMe's introductory offer.

**Unlock the benefits of a Potential package to suit your organisation's needs:**

## **Discover Potential**

Self-serve access to external and internal candidate pools.  
Fill your digital skills gap and build a more diverse workforce at scale.

## **Grow Potential**

Our market-leading proprietary profiling tool creates an accurate assessment of your workforce potential and opportunities for optimisation.

**Unlock the offer**  
(Oceania)

**Unlock the offer**  
(United Kingdom)

**Unlock the offer**  
(North America)

Thought piece

# From Cyber Forces to Cyber Citizens – a future facing approach to digital skills

As the world moves out of lockdown and back to a 'new normal', digital dependency grows ever greater.

Contributing author: **Sally Walker**  
Former Director Cyber, GCHQ



## The lifeblood of society is internet connected...

Digital systems and data underpin the very foundations of our society.

The world of communication - the estimated 7 billion smart phones on the planet – integral to everyday life. Shopping, family connections, business meetings and supplementary schooling, all conducted in the digital environment.

The operating systems that lives depend on - power, water, transport, health. The beating heart of the world, controlled remotely, often built for a different threat landscape.

Automated human assistants monitoring and sense making, bringing the world ever closer and ever faster; tracking data, people, money, deliveries around the globe and to

the doorstep. All done using technology so sophisticated it was only recently restricted to military use and is now available to all.

Data, networks, the internet of things. Volume, velocity, variety, and constantly under threat.

“Critical national infrastructure”, once the bastion of must protect and have to defend, has become a sprawling, complex mass of vulnerability and interdependency (in the UK the CNI spans 13 infrastructure sectors and includes “all facilities, systems, sites, information, people, networks and processes for a country to function and upon which daily life depends”<sup>1</sup>).



As in any other walk of life, where there is dependency, there is opportunity to project power or exploit.

Insider information or intelligence. Breaches of confidentiality to obtain data at scale.

Financial benefit. Exploitation of vulnerability and dependency (ransomware)

Command and control. Exploiting the integrity of technology to dominate geography, physical assets or people.

Functioning societies require trusted sources of power, water, finance, emergency response, healthcare... The cyber war isn't to stop a 'digital pearl harbour' – but it is about keeping the lights on, everywhere, now and tomorrow. Contesting the dark side of tech; including legitimate use of harmful techniques back against those that would otherwise do society harm. Often out of sight and out of mind – but no less important for that.

The solution is part technology. Secure by default, trusted at its core. Better designed and managed to be alert to the potential for unauthorised use, or deliberate misuse. Digital data and digital infrastructure is a nervous system to the globe; confidentiality, integrity and availability is vital to the functioning of a healthy modern society.

But according to just one global investigation into data breaches<sup>2</sup>, more than 80% of the problem is human. Cyber isn't (just) tech, and cyber security isn't for the IT department to fix.

Humans are error prone, with instincts honed over millenia for a different threat and a different world. A front line operator in the digital battlefield becomes anyone who depends on accurate and timely information and on trusted capabilities and logistics chains. All of us depend on each of us, to have a safe and secure digital world.

## **...and yet, still, there is a vast and growing skills gap.**

Nations are chronically short of digitally skilled personnel. Nation states have built their cyber forces, and their cyber centres; they need cyber citizens.

Citizens don't have to be sophisticated in their skills or specialist in their roles to add value to the collective digital health of a system or society. The most basic of training or cultural awareness can assist in recruiting and deploying new personnel to the front line of the digital world – not just to defence, or to cyber specialist functions, but to banks, schools, energy companies, transport logisticians, manufacturers, medical research centres. The people exist, as the 160k strong IT army of Ukraine is showing. Mobilising citizens can be done, with a sense of purpose and self belief.

Providing practical, low cost and high-quality training to all citizens builds depth in national strategic resilience and enables a whole of nation approach to cyber security, even cyber conflict. Scalable platforms already exist to provide the training.

1. Critical National Infrastructure, CPNI.gov.uk

2. <https://www.verizon.com/business/resources/reports/dbir/>

Dealing with the digital skills shortage requires the brain power of all of society. The specialists are vital (those who can read and write – or code) - but for most, the challenge is developing digital literacy with a difference – the ability to read, write, and think. People with knowledge have become expert on yesterday's problems; people with curiosity and motivation will solve tomorrow's challenges. Thinking differently is the cyber superpower.

The brains, the training platforms and the ability to assess potential are all out there. Government, industry and education institutes must do better and double the talent pipeline for digital skills. And they can.

The opportunity to solve the digital skills gap requires a whole nation approach; it requires bold decisions by Defence, Government and industry leaders; and it requires a wholesale change to the approach to human talent. Digital platforms are the scale solution across education and training to recruitment and retention of skilled personnel – and the answer exists for all.

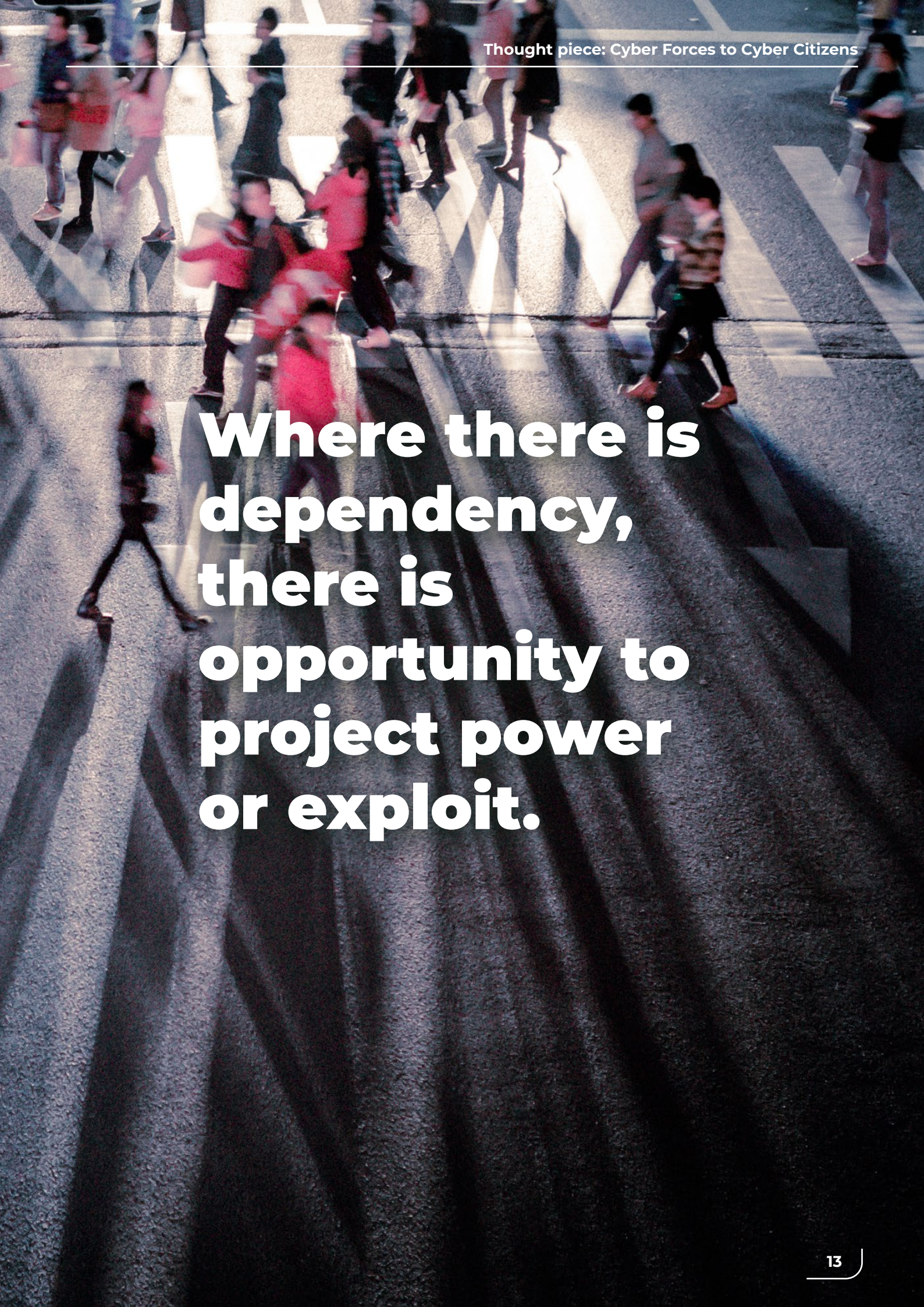
### *About the author:*

Sally Walker spent 25 years in the national security community, 16 years of which were in the senior civil service in various crisis management and military support roles.

A civilian graduate of the Higher Command and Staff Course at Shrivenham, her final job in government was to design and deliver the National Cyber Force, as Director Cyber for GCHQ and in full partnership with Ministry of Defence. She also had joint responsibility for the National Offensive Cyber Programme, led many aspects of the UK's partnership with US Cyber Command, and was GCHQ's diversity champion for over a decade.

She is currently a board chair in local UK government and a non executive for her "new tribe", WithYouWithMe, while also working with a portfolio of clients from all sectors of society.





**Where there is  
dependency,  
there is  
opportunity to  
project power  
or exploit.**





Potential in action

# Human faces of potential over experience

Every day, WithYouWithMe – together with our global network of like-minded employers – is supporting a growing network of individuals from diverse backgrounds into new tech roles.

Every licence sold of WithYouWithMe's technology platform, Potential, allows us to train 10 individuals for free, forever.

Meet three people who've secured new career opportunities, thanks to their courage and potential – and the support of WithYouWithMe's employer network.





# Sharon Lewis

## Service Desk graduate

**“I was diagnosed recently with ADHD which helped me to understand some of the challenges I’ve faced through my career. I had always wanted to get into tech but as a single parent I didn’t have the flexibility to be able to attend formal classes at TAFE or uni. And then I came across WithYouWithMe.**

“All of the things that had previously held me back – like resumes and cover letters – weren’t needed. The team was warm and genuinely helpful. The aptitude and skills assessments were spot on and helped match me to a great entry-level Service Desk Analyst role. I did that role for 10 months before WithYouWithMe found a new opportunity with one of their partners. I still can’t believe I landed my dream job – an Associate Analyst (Operations Support) at Monash University.

“WYWM has changed my life completely. I gained training, support, encouragement and a sense of value and community. I was able to pivot into tech. I would never have been able to do this without the free training and flexibility provided by WYWM. I can’t recommend this organisation and their life-changing program enough.”



*I gained training, support, encouragement and a sense of value and community.*





# Pablo Quintana

## Pega Low Code graduate

**“After leaving the Royal Australian Navy, I found it difficult to adapt to anything new. I went from being a cook in a cafe to a janitor and was even considering working at a fast-food restaurant. None of my skills at the time felt transferable. That changed when I found WithYouWithMe and heard about their partnership with Pega.**

I couldn't believe I'd have the opportunity to learn and upskill in their low-code platform, and then be offered a job at the end of the training straight away, it almost seemed too good to be true.

Since landing my first role at Accenture, I went on to work for WithYouWithMe in a customer-facing role – and now have secured my next big gig at one of APAC's leading financial services institutions. It's an exciting career path I never dreamed possible and I'm grateful to WithYouWithMe and all their great partners who have given me the opportunity to demonstrate my potential to excel in the tech sector.”





# Erin Deacon

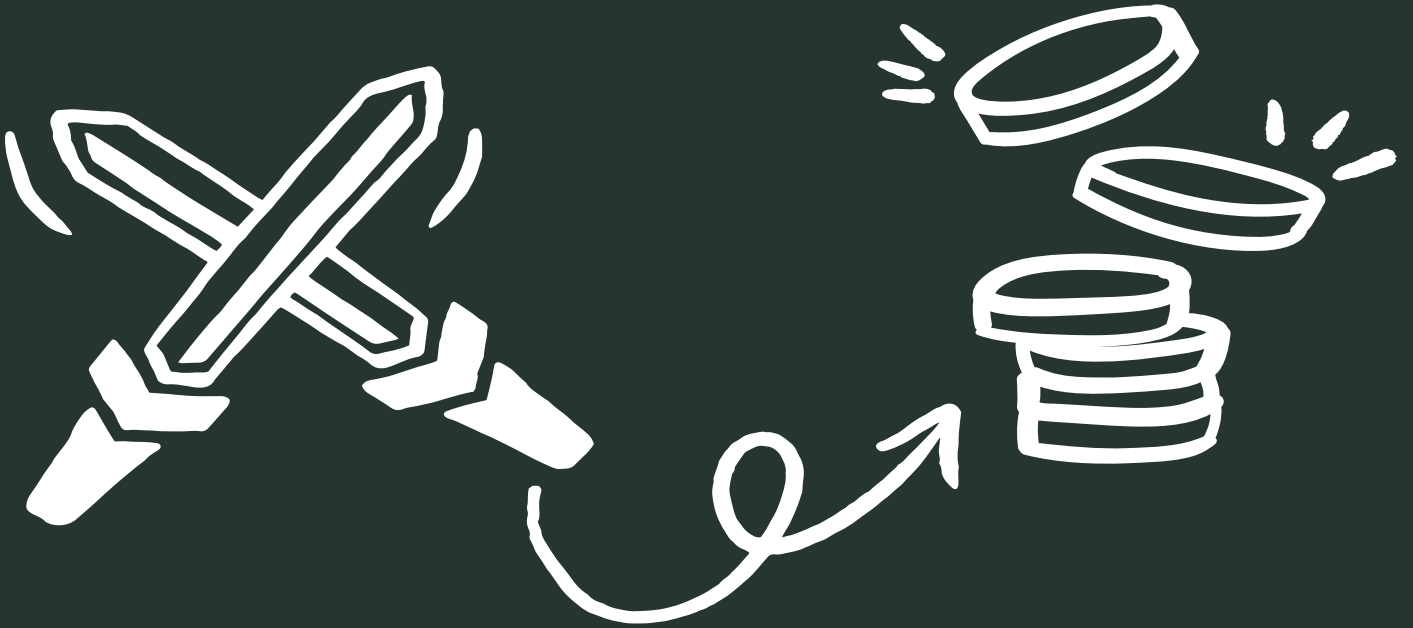
## Project Management graduate

**“I was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) as an adult. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects the parts of the brain that help us plan, focus on, and carry out tasks. This diagnosis changed my life. It also uncovered the underlying cause of my speech impediment (Palilalia), which is defined by the involuntary repetition of words and phrases during verbal output.**

As a result, I struggled in starting a career. I had a business degree, but had no one to help me look for work. I needed extra support and guidance, but I didn't know who to ask or how to ask for it. I struggled with making a good first impression in phone and face-to-face interviews. I knew I wanted to work in digital marketing, but I didn't have experience.

With the assistance of my ADHD Coach, I discovered WithYouWithMe, completed their aptitude assessment, and discovered that I was a creative thinker and that I excelled at digital marketing and project management. When I told WithYouWithMe's Career Success team about my situation, they made it their mission to find me the necessary marketing work experience. Following my four-month work placement, I was hired as a full-time Digital Marketing Specialist by WithYouWithMe, and I have since expanded my career into other organisations and possibilities.”

Meet more inspiring people who are proving that potential over experience works at:  
[withyouwithme.com/individuals](https://withyouwithme.com/individuals)



Thought piece

# **VC investment in Defence and MOD's readiness to exploit digital opportunities**

**Contributing author: Rupert Jones**

Former Deputy Commander of the US-led Coalition that defeated Isis;  
Senior advisor, WYWM

After decades of UK Defence under-investment, the stars are ever-more in alignment for a correction. Events in Ukraine have shaken many from their belief that a globalised economy meant that everyone would play by the same set of rules and that peace and harmony would endure. Russian aggression has also served to bring the threat from China into starker relief; their economic imperialism is not benign and we should not be surprised that they see the world differently to us.



Consequently, there is wider recognition that our national security cannot be taken for granted. We are only as secure as we pay to be. For the first time in a long time, Defence spending is a major political issue. Budgets are on the rise, or at least political undertakings have been made. Three percent of GDP is the new two percent. However, only time will tell how much NATO governments will really increase spending and what this will mean in practice against static or falling GDP and soaring inflation.

In this context, there are encouraging indications that investors are now more inclined towards Defence, in some cases because they care about national security, in others purely because it looks like a growth area with money to be made.

NATO recently announced the launch of a new €1bn fund and accelerator, Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic,

catchily abbreviated DIANA, to attract VC funds. The aspiration is for DIANA to spend €70m annually for the next 15 years investing in early stage tech start-ups. All good so far. However, the fund won't be operational until 2023 given the bureaucracy involved in co-ordinating member states. Indeed some nations, including the US, have opted out of the fund altogether.

Time will tell what DIANA will amount to in practice, but it points to a shift in how Defence is seen among investors. Historically, many were loath to invest in Defence companies, some claiming that it ran against their ESG principles. Of course, they only enjoyed the freedom to espouse such principles because others were guaranteeing their safety and security, but no matter. Many now see the value in committing funds to companies that will help keep our way of life safe and we should applaud and encourage this.



A person wearing a headset is working at a computer in a server room. The background shows server racks with green lights. The text is overlaid on the image.

**Much of this spend will be directed towards digital technologies where tech start-ups have the potential to bring real competitive edge against our adversaries.**

Recent figures reported by PitchBook indicate that \$7bn had been invested in the first 10 months of this year in VC-backed US aerospace and defence companies. This should see 2022 exceed last year's record value of \$7.6bn. At one level this may not seem surprising given global security threats, but it runs counter to the wider trend of reduced investment in most other sectors brought about by the economic downturn. Companies that offer dual-use capability, not solely selling into Defence, are inevitably the most attractive to investors as commercial buyers secure initial revenue ahead of slower Defence procurement.

Much of this spend will be directed towards digital technologies where tech start-ups have the potential to bring real competitive edge against our adversaries. This begs the question about how ready the UK MOD (and those of our key partners) is to exploit these opportunities. The National Audit Office's (NAO) October report on the initial

implementation of the MOD's April 2021 Digital Strategy helps answer that question.

The strategy set out how the MOD plans to transform digitally out to 2025 and the report points to some encouraging signs, but not surprisingly also to areas of concern.

The scale of the challenge facing UK Defence is vast: the MOD by its own admission isn't structured to implement digital technology at speed and at scale; it is fixed by myriad legacy systems; they hold vast amounts of data which is not readily accessible; the department's organisational processes are not well-suited to delivering digital technology; and critically they have a significant deficiency in digital skills. The MOD is not alone in facing these challenges and a similar story exists in other government departments.



The Digital Strategy sets out the challenge effectively, but diagnosing the problem is the easy part. Developing a full plan to deliver change is rather harder. Not only does the MOD not yet have this overall plan, the NAO judges that they also do not have the mechanisms to secure a complete and confident picture of progress.

The NAO also highlight the MOD's dearth of skilled and experienced digital staff, although they are hardly alone in this. There is a desperate shortage across all sectors, both in the UK and across the globe. Most organisations are struggling to secure and retain digital talent, but the MOD challenges are particularly acute. Like the rest of the public sector, they cannot offer competitive wages, but just as importantly their deserved reputation as being overly-bureaucratic is a major disincentive to dynamic, young talent.

On the plus side there is no shortage of desire to address this skills gap. However, the path is laden with process and obstacles; it is just taking too long. Without the right people the MOD will continue to be limited in making decisive strides. The Australian digital skills company, WithYouWithMe, has been working closely with Defence Digital and the Services to understand their digital challenges and to help them in two key ways. Firstly, to identify their latent talent and then up-skill their existing workforce. Secondly, by working to source digital talent from among veterans and other under-represented groups to help fill some of Defence's workforce gaps.

The imperative to get this right couldn't be clearer and initiatives like these are vital if Defence is to deliver on its strategy and be fit to compete for the future. The NAO judges that achieving the strategy's objectives by 2025 will be ambitious. However, the opportunities are there. The department has a digital budget of £4.4bn in 2021/22 alone and VC funds are showing a greater readiness to invest in Defence, but they will need help. WithYouWithMe is one of a growing group of companies looking to partner with Defence to help it succeed – and succeed it must.

### *About the author*

Major General Rupert Jones CBE draws on 30 years of leadership experience in the British Army. Promoted as the youngest Major General at the time, his focus was on overseas operations, commanding in Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and the Caribbean. He enjoys a proven track record working with multinational and inter-agency teams to deliver in the most challenging and complex international crisis situations. His roles included serving as deputy commander of the US-led coalition that defeated ISIS.

He recently left the military and is now working as a global advisor for WithYouWithMe. He is also Resident Expert to the Oxford Foundry entrepreneur accelerator programme.

Case study

# Northrop Grumman finds diverse new talent to help fill its digital skills gap



**Northrop Grumman aims to solve the toughest problems in space, aeronautics, defence and cyberspace.**

Its 90,000 global employees come from a diverse range of backgrounds, bringing ambitious, curious people together to create technology and solutions that advance the future of humankind.


Working towards this clear vision, the company's 900-strong UK business (NGUK) is deploying a proactive approach to bringing new talent on board, amidst the challenging backdrop of a digital skills shortage in the market. To provide a sense of scale, it has been estimated that there were **more than two million UK tech vacancies in 2021**, more than any other labour area.



Northrop Grumman is adapting and evolving the methods its UK HR team uses to not only look at past experience as an indicator of suitability for a role, but also to identify the types of activities and behaviours of talent and future potential of candidates, which aligns with the approach taken by WithYouWithMe (WYWM).

NGUK's HR team is working with WYWM to assess for potential in untapped talent pools, meaning that the company could provide people from diverse backgrounds – who may be new to a career in tech but have a natural ability to learn it quickly – with the chance to join their ranks.

WYWM is a social impact company that offers data-led SaaS workforce solutions. WYWM effectively allows organisations to build and train teams for in-demand tech roles by identifying and upskilling talent in overlooked sections of society such as Armed Forces veterans and their spouses and neurodivergent individuals.



We are passionate about attracting the broadest possible range of people and encouraging diversity of thought, experience and background to help solve our customer's toughest challenges across space, air, land, sea and cyber globally.

The technology and digital skills divide is one that we are bridging as its key to our mission to secure the UK and our allies' defence.

Northrop Grumman recognises the value of diversity and works hard to ensure that all our people can bring their full selves to work and so make the most of their skills and experience to build exciting and rewarding careers in technology and innovation.

**Nick Chaffey**

Chief Executive Northrop Grumman UK  
Europe and Middle East



*Babou Jobe, formerly a British army veteran moved into a position as a Senior Developer with Northrop Grumman UK*

In partnering with WYWM, Northrop Grumman is seeking talent that will support its cyber and intelligence business within the UK's National Security Solutions division. Using WYWM's SaaS platform called 'Potential', ten individuals were identified from WYWM's diverse talent pool that could fill in demand roles. As an AI-powered solution, the Potential platform uses scientifically-based psychometric testing to identify candidates with the aptitude to thrive in tech-based roles, and provides them with certified training to make them rapidly proficient and job-ready.

Given the nature of Northrop Grumman's business and its highly advanced technical offerings to its customers, the quality of talent delivered to Northrop Grumman by WYWM is of paramount importance.


In August 2022, WithYouWithMe deployed its first members of the 'squad' of ten

to the cyber and intelligence business, NGUK's biggest business unit. Roles include business analysts, as well as software and Java developers, based in both London and Manchester.

The squad's backgrounds are broad and varied, from a former police officer with a disability to a neurodivergent military veteran.

As Sophie Ball, HR Business Partner at Northrop Grumman in the UK, said: "I am genuinely excited for the diversity of thought these squad members will bring. Beyond having impressive tech skills in some of our highest-demand positions, they also have such different life experiences and have encountered different scenarios that they can bring fresh and new approaches. The fact that they are dispersed across more than one location within the business will also be beneficial."





***Tech skills are in high demand and this won't change.***

We know there are untapped pools of skill, knowledge and potential in the UK.

We want to uncover and develop that hidden talent by breaking down biases and barriers. Partnering with a company like WithYouWithMe has given us the opportunity to meet great new people and bring them into our team, offering them a new rewarding career path, which may not have been obvious to them before.

Working in the world of defence and security we can't always talk about the work we do but it is critical and inspiring.

**Rishi Badiani**

Head of Software, Northrop Grumman  
National Security Solutions

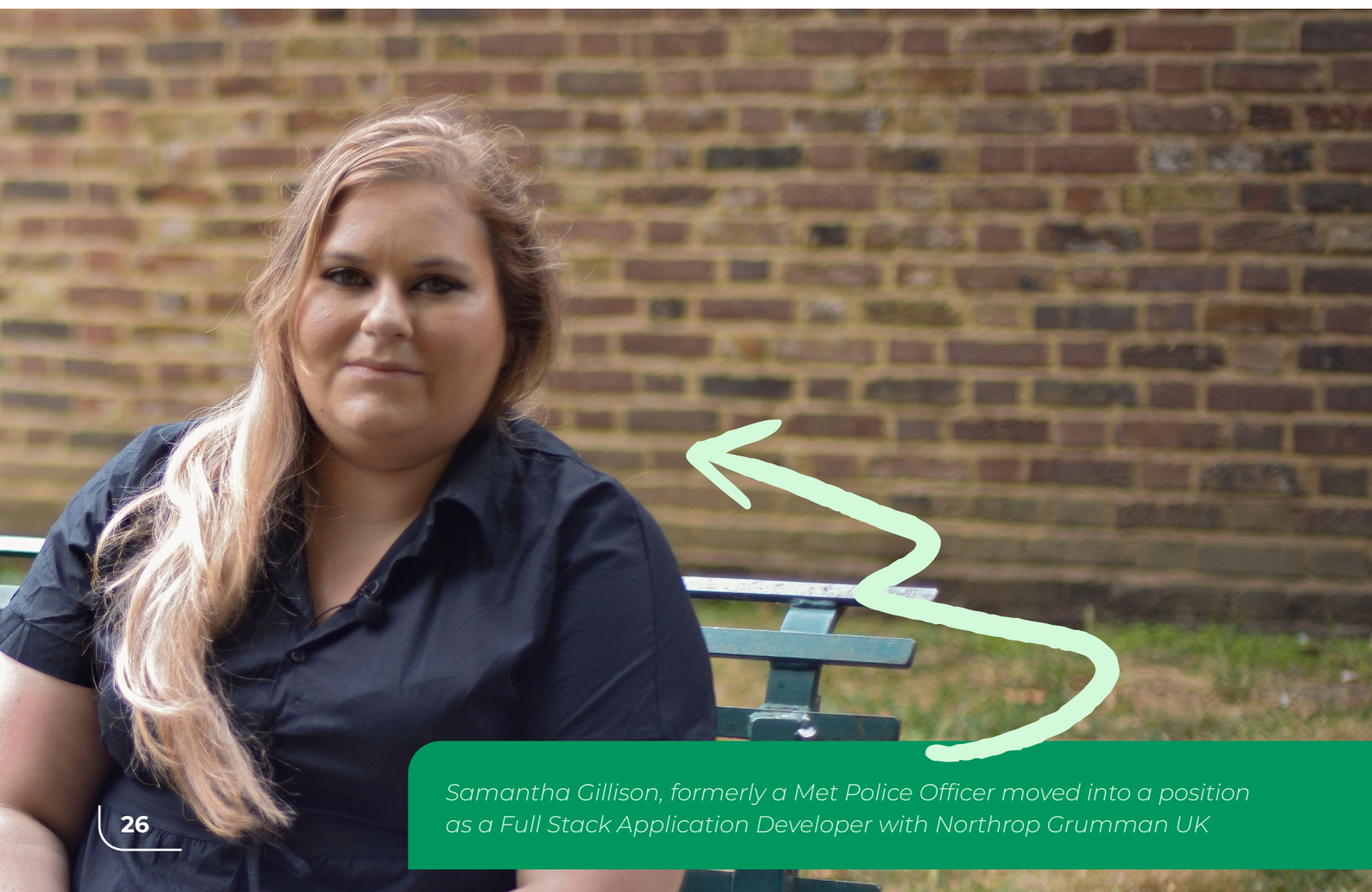
Constant contact is central to the partnership. While the squad is currently employed directly by WYWM and contracted to Northrop Grumman, it's a 'temp to perm' model, meaning the ultimate goal is to have them transition to permanent Northrop Grumman employees.

Northrop Grumman views this as a long-term investment. As a result, there are weekly meetings with WYWM and its customer excellence team. This close contact is important, not only to successfully onboard people in the squads, but to build a pathway for more squad deployments in the future. Northrop Grumman is an organisation that cares passionately about diversity. It has a number of employee-led groups, each with a senior executive sponsor, to support and encourage underrepresented groups and there are already a large number of ex-military personnel in its UK team. It has developed a 'buddy' programme, where current employees from across the business provide mentorship and advice to members

of the WYWM squad. Carefully considered initiatives such as this benefit from WYWM's extensive knowledge of how Armed Forces personnel can effectively make the transition to civilian life without suffering from 'imposter syndrome' which has become a key area to tackle.

In the short-term, it hopes to deploy more new squads in the next year and beyond. NGUK is also exploring other ways the Potential platform could be used, including providing more opportunities for existing employees to explore different career pathways, outside of their previous experience/expertise.

Sophie concluded: "WYWM is complementing our recruiting effort as we engage candidates with the potential to join our team, where employees are willing and able to support one another, have rewarding careers and deliver the best possible service for our customers."



*Samantha Gillison, formerly a Met Police Officer moved into a position as a Full Stack Application Developer with Northrop Grumman UK*





Northrop Grumman is just one UK organisation that has committed to WithYouWithMe's 15,000 Futures initiative, which calls on all UK employers to help servicemen and women and their families to find meaningful employment.

Working in collaboration with WithYouWithMe to discover, train and deploy veterans into high-value, digital industry roles, the initiative aims to help fill the chronic technical skills shortage that many UK companies face today.

To learn more, visit: [15000futures.co.uk](https://15000futures.co.uk)

**NORTHROP  
GRUMMAN**



[withyouwithme.com](https://withyouwithme.com)



Case study

# Building a sustainable pipeline of IT talent for the Canadian government

Authored by Jamie O'Hare

Associate Partner, EY Canada Technology Practice



As Canada grapples with declining unemployment and increased job vacancy rates, private and public sector institutions need to rethink their talent strategy to fill the growing demand for resources.

Cross-industry labour shortages, coupled with the rise of remote and hybrid working models and the expansion of corporate internet networks, has particularly affected talent availability within the IT industry. Yet, the existing supply of these resources struggles to keep up with demand. Businesses are faced with an urgent need to upskill talent to prepare them for a workforce of the future — and fast. Not just to meet increasing needs for skilled IT talent to drive digitalization and innovation, but to address the risks that come with it.



It's no surprise that demand for IT resources has skyrocketed as [41% of Canadian business leaders](#) said they're more concerned than ever about managing IT and cyber threats. With no sector immune to cybersecurity threats, organizations are being challenged to think about their approach to talent differently, to scale teams as quickly and effectively as possible.

At EY, we look to tackle these tough problems by asking Better Questions. And this is exactly what we did. After being approached by the Government of Canada, our Government and Public Sector teams identified an opportunity to bridge the gap between IT resource supply and demand to help organizations think outside the box by leveraging members of the broader community to build a sustainable cybersecurity workforce. Here's what we did.



## *Bridging the gap for IT resource demand*

Thousands of IT positions remained vacant at the Government of Canada due to high demand and a lack of qualified professionals. This left many government departments struggling to implement new IT mandates while working to maintain existing operations. Though recruitment efforts and training programs were well underway, they weren't moving fast enough.

We needed to build a workforce. Enter, the Cyber Workforce Enablement Program (CWEP), an EY held Government of Canada (GoC) Supply Arrangement that places upskilled military veterans in vacant IT positions throughout various departments.

Since 2020, EY Canada has been collaborating with WithYouWithMe to address the IT talent gap by upskilling Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) veterans and their spouses for positions within the Government of Canada (GoC). The WYWM platform upskills veterans and their spouses for free in technology-based roles based on aptitude testing and intense hands-on training. Then, through the CWEP, EY

works with GoC departments to identify requirements of IT roles, placing program graduates with the right complementary skills.

CAF veterans are some of our country's most highly trained personnel, yet they face disproportionately high under- and unemployment rates following their military service. Luckily, they possess many inherent soft skills and aptitude that can be beneficial for the labour market. They have been training to do extraordinary things their entire career — IT is simply their next mission.

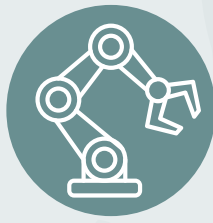
What's more, these individuals have typically held a security clearance during their military career, meaning they qualify for clearance, which EY assists with re-obtaining for GoC postings. By matching high-potential and upskilled candidates with crucial public service roles, the CWEP is both addressing the labour shortage while helping find meaningful employment for veterans and infusing new IT talent for Canadian organizations.

## Embarking on the next mission with the right tools

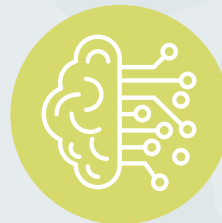
Along with WYWM, EY Canada's CWEP program is currently upskilling over 4,000 veterans and their spouses, empowering them to confidently step into one of 57 IT domains across the Government of Canada including:



**Cyber**



**RPA**



**AI**



**Cloud**



**Process Automation**



**Data Analyst**



**Developers**



**Administrators**



**Threat Hunters**



**Technical Writers**



**Project Coordinators**



But before candidates are matched to their respective roles, they undergo vigorous testing following a similar methodology used by the military for new recruits. This includes:

- \* **Over 300 hours of specialized training** tailored to each individual based on aptitude testing, personality testing, psychometric testing and learning style assessments.
- \* Following the initial 300 hours of hands-on training and certification the resource is deployable, however, they **continue to receive additional upskilling and support** to meet the specific needs of the Canadian Government departments they'll serve.
- \* **EY manages security clearance requirements** for each veteran participating in the CWEP program.
- \* Since the CWEP contract has already been completed and awarded, **SSC partner departments can submit a Task Authorization via P2P to connect CWEP-trained veterans to their IT teams**, creating a sustainable pipeline of IT talent for Canada.
- \* Departments have the option and are encouraged to **hire the veteran resource full time following the initial contract period at no additional cost**.

As of today,  
**24**  
**CAF Veterans** are full  
time civil servants  
thanks to the program.

Every CWEP candidate is a highly skilled IT professional, ready to help each department accomplish its IT objectives and manage its existing environment. Best of all, on completion of the initial contract, the department has the option to hire the veteran as a full-time employee at no additional cost — helping to solve their IT staffing challenges.

At EY, we believe that the strength of an organization comes from the variability and diversity of its workforce to bring new ideas and perspectives to the table. CWEP builds a workforce that didn't exist before — furthering the Canadian Government's IT mission while providing meaningful, inclusive and long-term employment for CAF veterans and their partners.

## About the Author

Jamie O'Hare leverages more than 15 years in industry to help the public sector bolster their defenses and seize opportunities across the cyber space.

With vast experience in information management, technology, risk and account management, Jamie understands the issues that matter most today for today's business. He works with clients to assess current state, understand the business objectives in order to design actionable business enablement programs so organizations can safely thrive in the digital ecosystem.





Thought piece

# Future proofing your talent strategy *for 2023*

Contributing authors:

Gabriele Birnberg, Chris Manning, Liz Tolcher

PA Consulting

In this post Pandemic era, the 'great resignation' is still grabbing the headlines. On average, one in five people are actively looking for a new job, with figures considerably higher for the Financial Services industry at 26 percent.

Although the impact may have been overstated to some degree, a paradigm shift in the employer-employee relationship is palpable, with employees seeking more of a partnership with their employer and confidently demanding what they want. Additionally, 'quiet quitting' – the practice of doing no more work than one is contractually obliged to – is on the rise.

Better pay and benefits, improved job satisfaction, and greater work-life balance have long been reasons as to why people move to a new organisation, but now those motivations are more complex. People want flexibility, digital empowerment, strong and sensitive leadership, and social consciousness. They want to work for an organisation with purpose.

Organisations need to fundamentally change their approach to talent management to avoid a significant negative impact on the bottom line. The cost of replacing individuals who leave their current roles can be as much as double their salaries, demonstrating the significant impact of failing to retain employees. Not only that, compared with business units in the bottom quartile, those in the top quartile of engagement realise substantially better customer engagement, higher productivity, better retention.

To improve talent management:

- \* Walk in the shoes of your workforce,
- \* Broaden your approach to talent attraction,
- \* Manage your employee proposition like a brand.

Together, these three strategies can all help you attract and retain dedicated, engaged employees.



# Walk the proverbial mile in the shoes of your team

Do you really understand your current workforce? Do you know who they are, what makes them tick, why they work for you, and what's in it for them? How do they view the employer-employee relationship, and how does work fit in with the rest of their life?

In a fiercely competitive market, employees expect empathy from their leaders. Thinking of your workforce as you would a customer segment, creating personas and mapping their pains, gains, motivations,

and frustrations, can be a very useful tool towards required transformation. Use this understanding of your teams to develop testable hypotheses, for instance, about how mental wellbeing impacts productivity and substantiate or disprove them with data collected through insight platforms. The results will help shape global strategies and reimagine the future of employee health.



## *Broaden your approach to talent attraction*

Here, it pays to be a pioneer. Try new approaches and see what works, building this into your talent acquisition strategy. To broaden your appeal to potential applicants, introduce strength-based recruitment, promote location agnostic roles, and offer a variation of employment contracts to meet diverse demographic needs. Build Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) into your recruiting process, and smooth out unconscious bias through fair recruitment policies.

Prospective employees want to see that your organisation is transparent and open. Simple ways to build trust and transparency include vlogs, podcasts, and Instagram reels showing a 'day-in-the-life' of certain roles. This can be hugely powerful, especially when engaging with the younger generation of talent. Many firms also partner with other organisations to better equip against emerging talent risks. PA partners with WithYouWithMe, a social impact organisation founded by veterans, whose mission is to create a world where people are seen, hired, and developed based on their skills and potential.





# Manage your employee value proposition like a brand

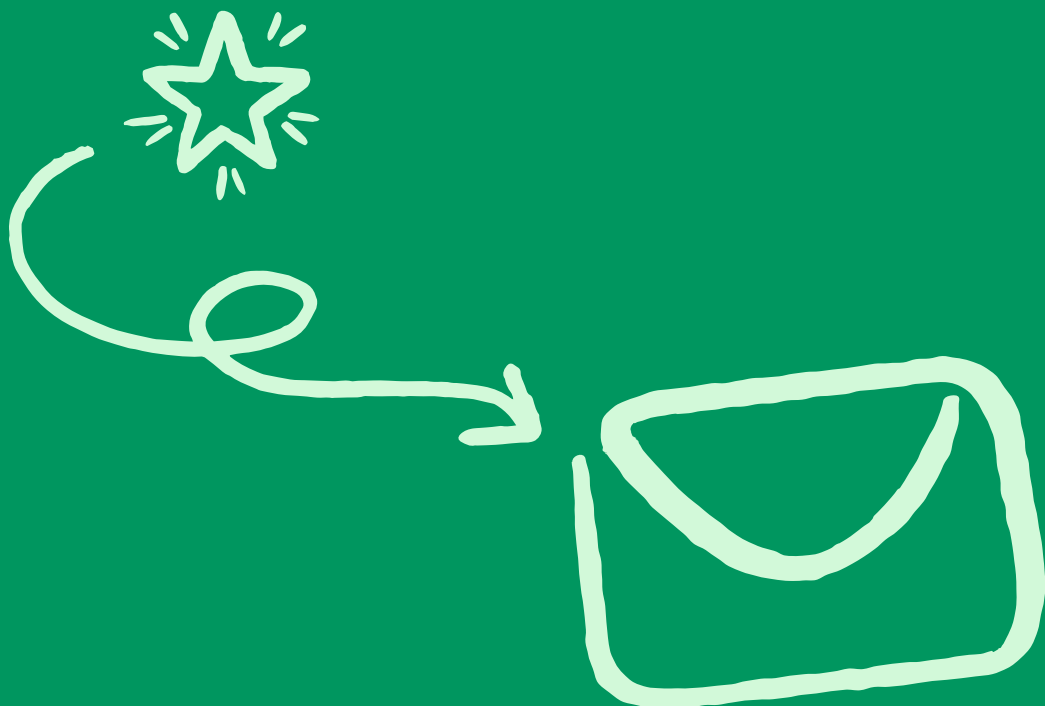
As the labour market continues to be squeezed, newer aspects of the employee value proposition are becoming increasingly important, especially values and purpose. This includes more comprehensive support for working families as well as individuals and couples on their journey towards parenthood. Employees increasingly benefit from the flexibility to work remotely, and from structured opportunities to create social value as part of their work. The challenge for leaders is to focus not just on your existing population, but to also think ahead about what future talent pools might want.

The challenges of identifying, attracting and retaining top talent have become more complex and are here to stay. Taking practical steps that are in tune with your current and future workforce will help you lead the way with a talent strategy that moves with the times.



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# solve

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Front cover image produced by WithYouWithMe.  
Edited by Alicia Kouparitsas  
Magazine design by Jess Haines-Hann  
Printed by WithYouWithMe, Australia  
First printing edition 2022

WithYouWithMe  
109 Regent St Chippendale, NSW 2008  
ABN: 70 615 621

[www.withyouwithme.com](http://www.withyouwithme.com)

