

Some of these clauses are:

- protection of **intellectual property rights**, if they are accessed or used;
- **confidentiality** or **non-disclosure agreement**, which forbids any confidential aspect of a business to be revealed (such as a project schedule, performance targets and deadlines or a payment schedule);
- conformance to **quality, health and safety standards**;
- conformance to **environmental protection agreements**, under the Environment Protection Act 1997 (a regulatory framework to help reduce and eliminate the discharge of pollutants into the air, land and water, besides environmental pollution due to noise).





1 Complete these sentences in an appropriate way.

1. A contractor needs a subcontractor's help when
2. The person who signs the contract with the client is
3. In some periods of the year subcontractors replace
4. One economic advantage of hiring subcontractors is that
5. Hiring subcontractors may cost
6. It is often quite difficult to
7. Contractors can't deduct and have to
8. Outsourcing business functions may
9. In order to protect their financial and personal reputation from the disclosure of confidential data
10. An employee cannot reveal a company's projects, payments and schedules because



2 Choose from the sentences A-E the one which fits each gap.

Is Subcontracting Always Worthwhile?

Subcontracting is a good solution to businesses which lack the resources or who don't have the required expertise in-house to obtain the required results. What is more, management can determine that external suppliers, who specialise in a particular field, can carry out work at a lower cost than internal departments. **1.**

However, subcontracting has disadvantages too, which businesses should reflect on. Companies using subcontractors, in fact, often accept projects that are much larger than those they could handle on their own. Obviously, they earn a profit on the parts of the project handled by subcontractors and can greatly increase their overall revenues. **2.**

Therefore, the company acting as the main contractor must ensure that the extra profit and revenue is sufficient to make the higher-risk project worthwhile.

Many tasks and projects require the services of professionally qualified specialists and a company may not have the required professionals on staff. In this case, it is an advantage to subcontract professional services even if costs may be extremely high. **3.** This is because specialised companies in areas like environmental disciplines, traffic management or archaeology can usually get the work done more rapidly and at lower cost than non-specialists. **4.**

Last but not least, companies producing large volumes of products or services generally have lower costs than main contractors. **5.** Their disadvantage is, in fact, the risk that they may not meet schedules or quality requirements.

- A. If the involvement of professionals is not legally required, it may still be advantageous for a company to subcontract specialised consulting services.
- B. Subcontracting to these high-volume companies generally saves substantial amounts of money, but the contracts must specify the levels of performance and the quality that the principal company requires.
- C. In all these cases, companies look at subcontracting as a possible option, since it solves the immediate problem the company is facing.
- D. But, since the main contractor lacks the expertise in these fields, he is at the mercy of the subcontractors in that respect.
- E. However, larger projects always come with higher risk and when more subcontractors receive orders, the risk that one of them will not perform as required is higher.