



A GUIDE FOR INUIT WOMEN IN BUSINESS

# COMPLETING A CONTRACT



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**PAUKTUUTIT**  
INUIT WOMEN OF CANADA



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Inuit Women In Business Network

## Topics Covered

- Steps to completing a contract
- Understanding the Contract
- Key components of the contract
- Mobilizing Resources
- Establishing Communication Channels
- Project Planning and Execution
- Quality Assurance and Control
- QA & QC Processes
- Managing Risks
- Risk Mitigation Strategies
- Change Management
- Progress Reporting and Documentation
- Client Satisfaction and Project Closeout



# Steps to Completing a Contract

1. Understand the contract
2. Mobilize resources
3. Establish communication channels
4. Project planning and execution
5. Quality assurance and control
6. Managing risks
7. Change management
8. Progress reporting and documentation
9. Client satisfaction and project closeout



# Understanding the Contract

It's important to review the contract terms and conditions to ensure they are complete, and your customer is satisfied.

This way, you can meet obligations, avoid misunderstandings, mitigate risks, manage expectations, and maximize performance.



# Key components of the contract

**Scope of Work:** tasks, deliverables, and performance expectations.

**Specifications:** technical requirements, standards, and quality expectations (ex: dimensions, materials, performance).

**Pricing and Payment Terms:** Pricing structure, including unit prices, quantities, and any applicable taxes or fees. Payment terms, such as the schedule, method, and currency of payment.

**Duration and Timeline:** end dates of the contract, milestones or deadlines.

**Terms and Conditions:** such as warranties, indemnification, liability, dispute resolution, etc..



# Key components of the contract (continued)

**Performance and Service Level Agreements:** key performance indicators (KPIs) for quality, timeliness, responsiveness.

**Intellectual Property Rights:** ownership, licensing, and usage rights.

**Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure:** the protection of sensitive information.

**Insurance and Liability:** such as liability insurance, worker's compensation.

**Compliance with Laws and Regulations, and Industry Standards** during the fulfillment of the contract.



# Mobilizing Resources

Mobilizing resources means using the things that your business needs to get the job done. In other words, getting to work! In order to meet project milestones on time, the resources must be in place before the project starts.

- 1. Assess your needs:** Understand what resources are required to fulfill the contract.
- 2. Evaluate capacity:** Determine if you have the necessary resources or if there are gaps.
- 3. Create a plan:** Develop a resource plan, considering availability, dependencies, and contingencies.
- 4. Manage suppliers:** Identify reliable suppliers and maintain strong relationships.
- 5. Allocate resources:** Assign resources strategically based on project milestones and deadlines.
- 6. Optimize resource use:** Continuously monitor and improve resource efficiency.
- 7. Communicate and collaborate:** Maintain open communication with your team and stakeholders.
- 8. Manage risks:** Identify potential risks and have contingency plans in place.



# Mobilizing Resources Example

Inuk seamstress is fulfilling a procurement contract for sewing traditional garments.

- First, she should assess the contract requirements and her own capacity.
- She creates a plan outlining the needed resources, such as additional sewing machines, quality fabric, and accessories.
- She then allocates resources strategically by scheduling work and managing time effectively.
- She communicates with clients, clarifies specifications, and collaborates with others if necessary.
- She also identifies potential risks and has contingency plans ready.

By mobilizing resources effectively, she can successfully fulfill the contract, delivering high-quality traditional garments.





# Establishing Communication Channels

1. **Identify key contacts:** Determine who you need to communicate with from the client's team.
2. **Preferred communication methods:** Understand how the client prefers to communicate (email, calls, video).
3. **Regular check-ins:** Schedule meetings to provide updates and discuss any changes or concerns. This includes project status updates and progress reports.
4. **Clear roles and responsibilities:** Define and communicate each party's tasks to avoid confusion.

**clear communication**

**smooth information  
flow**

**positive working  
relationships**

**timely decision-making**



# Establishing Communication Channels (continued)

- 5. Document communication:** Keep records of important discussions, decisions, and agreements.
- 6. Prompt responses:** Be timely in addressing client inquiries or requests.
- 7. Professional and respectful communication:** Use clear language, be polite, and maintain professionalism.

**clear communication**

**smooth information  
flow**

**positive working  
relationships**

**timely decision-making**



# Project Planning and Execution

Project planning helps to pace the required work, so it is sustainable and maintains the quality and timeliness that the client expects. To create a detailed plan, **the project should be broken into phases, and then into smaller steps.** By scheduling these bite-size pieces, you know the project will be completed well and on-time. Monitoring the plan and adapting to unexpected events will help the project to stay on-track for success.



# Project Planning and Execution (continued)

- **PLAN:** Set clear goals and objectives and allocate resources.
- **BITE-SIZE:** Break down tasks and create a schedule.
- **DELEGATE:** Assign responsibilities to team members.
- **MONITOR:** Monitor progress and track the schedule.
- **COMMUNICATE:** regularly with the client and team.
- **MITIGATE:** Identify and address potential risks.
- **ENSURE:** quality and compliance.
- **ADAPT:** to changes and problem-solve.



It can be very intimidating, I was very intimidated at the beginning, it's very important to read all the fine print.

– Inuit Woman Business Owner



# Quality Assurance and Control

It is important to maintain high-quality standards throughout the project. Quality assurance(QA) and control (QC) are processes used to guarantee that quality standards are met and maintained. This includes regular inspections, testing, and adherence to industry standards.

### **Objectives:**

- **Meet contract requirements:** including technical standards, project milestones, and customer expectations.
- **Minimize risk:** By addressing issues promptly, we can avoid delays and ensure smooth progress.



# QA & QC Processes

### **Pre-contract Evaluation:**

- Evaluate your business' capabilities and performance history.
- Use past performance to gauge what expectations you have for this project.

### **Clear Quality Standards:**

- Establish clear and understandable quality standards and specifications with your client.
- This helps align expectations between all parties.

### **Regular Monitoring:**

- Monitor ongoing work for compliance with quality standards.
- Conduct site visits and/or progress reviews to stay on track.

### **Quality Audits:**

- Periodically assess the effectiveness of QA and QC processes.
- Identify areas for improvement and ensure ongoing quality.

### **Corrective Actions:**

- Address identified quality issues promptly.
- Take corrective measures to ensure adherence to standards.



# Managing Risks

It's important to identify and mitigate potential risks that may impact the success of the project.

Contingency plans and proactive risk management can help the project to succeed and lower stress levels through the contract duration.





# Risk Mitigation Strategies

### **Robust contract negotiation:**

- Carefully negotiate and establish clear contractual terms and conditions that address potential risks.
- Include provisions for performance guarantees, dispute resolution mechanisms, and remedies for non-compliance.

### **Continuous Communication:**

- Establish effective channels of communication with the buyer to foster a collaborative relationship.
- Promptly address any concerns, changes in requirements, or unexpected challenges that may impact contract execution.



# Risk Mitigation Strategies (continued)

### **Risk Assessment and Contingency Planning:**

- Conduct a thorough risk assessment to identify potential risks and their potential impact.
- Develop contingency plans and alternative approaches to minimize disruptions in case of unforeseen events.

### **Performance Monitoring:**

- Use performance monitoring systems to track key performance indicators (KPIs) and milestones.
- Regularly report progress, identify any deviations, and take corrective actions promptly.
- Implement and carry out QA and QC processes.



# Risk Mitigation Strategies (continued)

### **Diversify Supplier Base:**

- Engage multiple suppliers for critical components or services to reduce dependency on a single source (avoids risk via supplier failures, quality issues, or capacity constraints).

### **Insurance and Risk Transfer:**

- Consider insurance coverage for things like liability or property damage.



# Change Management

Change management involves addressing modifications, adjustments, or deviations from the original contract scope, requirements, or specifications. It focuses on minimizing disruption, ensuring smooth transitions, and maintaining the successful delivery of the contract.

A client may request changes to the scope (asking for more or less than originally planned), timeline, budget, technical specifications, contract terms, and for many other reasons.

- Importance of documenting and assessing any requested changes to the original contract.
- Highlight the need for proper change management processes and approval procedures.

**Big clients often seek small suppliers because they are dynamic and can pivot to make changes easily and efficiently while continuing to provide excellent customer service**

**Inuit Women in Business are known for being dynamic and resilient.**



# Change Management Processes

### 1. Change Identification:

- Recognize and identify any requested changes to the original contract scope, deliverables, timelines, etc.

### 2. Impact Assessment:

- Evaluate the possible impact of the proposed changes on your company's ability to deliver the contract effectively.
- Consider factors such as resources, costs, timeline adjustments, and overall feasibility.



# Change Management Processes (continued)

### 3. Communication and Negotiation:

- Engage in open and effective communication with the buyer to discuss the proposed changes, negotiate any necessary adjustments, and reach mutual agreement on the modified terms.

### 4. Documentation:

- Maintain accurate and thorough documentation of change requests, agreements, and any related correspondence throughout the change management process.



# Change Management Processes (continued)

### 5. Resource Planning:

- Assess and plan for any necessary adjustments in resources, manpower, equipment, or subcontractors required to accommodate the approved changes.

### 6. Risk Assessment and Mitigation:

- Identify and address risks, such as increased costs, timeline delays, or impacts on quality or performance.
- Implement appropriate mitigation strategies to manage and minimize risks.



# Change Management Processes (continued)

### 7. Implementation and Integration:

- Integrate the approved changes into the ongoing contract, coordinating with relevant stakeholders, and without compromising overall project objectives.

### 8. Review and Evaluation:

- Assess the effectiveness of the change management process
- Identify lessons learned, and incorporate feedback into future contract fulfillment activities.





# Progress Reporting and Documentation

- Progress reporting and documentation are important to meet expectations for communications, transparency, and accountability.
- As a supplier, you should tell the buyer how the project is going in a formal way, including things like progress, quality control, and timelines.
- You should also keep good records and documentation to benefit and protect your business and the buyer.



# Key Elements of Progress Reporting

- 1. Timely Updates:** Suppliers should provide regular progress updates to the buyer, including:
  - Status of deliverables
  - Milestones achieved
  - Relevant project updates
- 2. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** Define and track KPIs that align with the contract objectives and deliverables. For example:
  - Quality metrics
  - Schedule adherence
  - Cost variances
  - Customer satisfaction ratings

**Milestone: a significant event or achievement within a project that marks a specific point of progress.**



# Key Elements of Progress Reporting (continued)

- 3. Milestone Tracking:** Highlight key project milestones and their timelines. Report on the progress made toward achieving these milestones, providing a clear understanding of the project's overall progress.
- 4. Risk and Issue Reporting:** Communicate potential impacts, proposed mitigation strategies, and actions taken to address these challenges.
- 5. Variance Analysis:** Compare actual progress against the planned project schedule, budget, and performance metrics. Analyze any variances and provide explanations, highlighting actions taken or adjustments made to address deviations.

**Key Performance Indicator:** a measurable value used to evaluate the success or performance of a specific aspect of a project.



# Progress Reporting Example

An Inuk woman sculptor has been commissioned to create a unique whale bone sculpture for a government agency.

To ensure effective progress reporting, she recognizes that customer satisfaction is a vital Key Performance Indicator (KPI).

To measure this KPI, she actively seeks feedback from the client through surveys and direct communication. The client's satisfaction is rated on a scale of 1-10, accompanied by narrative feedback, enabling her to gauge the client's contentment with the artwork and service provided.



# Progress Reporting Example

Throughout the project, the sculptor establishes two critical milestones. The first milestone is Concept Approval, which signifies the stage where her design is approved by the client. After effectively communicating her artistic vision and presenting the design, the client grants approval, allowing her to start work. This milestone is time-bound, motivating her to meet the associated timeline goal and ensure progress within the project.

The second milestone is Sculpture Completion, a significant achievement indicating the artwork's finalization and readiness for delivery. As the sculptor adds the finishing touches and perfects the sculpture, this milestone represents the culmination of her artistic vision.



# Progress Reporting Example

Achieving this milestone signifies the artwork's completion and prepares it for presentation to the client, marking a crucial step toward successful project delivery.

By focusing on customer satisfaction as a KPI and tracking milestones such as Concept Approval and Sculpture Completion, the Inuk woman sculptor can effectively report progress, ensure alignment with the client's expectations, and maintain a transparent and productive working relationship throughout the project.



# Key Elements of Documentation

### **Contractual Documentation:**

- All contract-related documents
- The original contract
- Amendments
- Change orders
- Related communication records

### **Meeting Minutes and Project Communication:**

This documentation ensures a trail of communication history, aids in issue resolution, and provides reference material for future inquiries. Document all project-related communications, including :

- Emails, texts, phone calls



# Key Elements of Documentation (continued)

### Meeting minutes:

- Discussions, decisions, and action items
- Formal reports

### Technical Specifications and Designs:

These records provide a reference for project implementation, quality control, and future maintenance.

- Technical specifications
- Design documents
- Modifications made during the project





# Key Elements of Documentation (continued)

### **Change Requests and Approvals:**

Ensure transparency, clarity, and a shared understanding of any modifications to the contract.

- Change requests
- Evaluations
- Approvals or rejections

### **Quality Assurance Records:**

These records demonstrate compliance with quality standards and provide evidence of adherence to contractual requirements.

- Quality control activities
- Inspections
- Test results



# Key Elements of Documentation (continued)

### Lessons Learned:

Capture lessons learned throughout the project. Document successes, challenges, and best practices to improve future project execution and enhance organizational knowledge.



# Client Satisfaction and Project Closeout

- Client satisfaction, in any field of work or business, is a key measure of project success.
- The project closeout process is the final phase of a project, where all project activities are formally concluded, and the project is handed over to its intended stakeholders and/or the buyer.



# Client Satisfaction and Project Closeout (continued)

Steps typically included:

- **Final inspections:** review of all project deliverables for specifications and quality to verify that all work has been completed as per the agreed-upon scope and contract requirements.
- **Acceptance:** project deliverables meet client expectations and sign-off is granted.
- **Documentation and archiving:** collect all records and create a closeout report. Archive all documents for reference or audits.
- **Transition and handover:** deliverables go to the client and responsibilities are transferred. Project closure meetings are for review, feedback, and follow-up.



# Client Feedback & Project Review

Conducting a project review and obtaining client feedback is a valuable practice that helps identify areas of improvement and enhance future project performance.

- **Establish a review process:** this should be structured, systematic, and timely. Include important people who were involved.
- **Client Feedback:** This can be done through surveys, interviews, meetings, or formal feedback sessions.
- **Evaluate Feedback:** identify common themes, patterns, and specific areas for improvement.
- **Lessons Learned:**
  - Reflect on the project's successes, challenges, and opportunities for improvement based on the feedback received.
  - Create strategies and changes that can improve future projects
  - Communicate and implement these improvements



# Summary

Carrying out a contract as a supplier requires careful planning and execution. It starts with understanding the contract's requirements, timelines, and client expectations. Step two is mobilizing resources, where we gather a team and supplies and get to work.

Establishing communication channels with regular updates on progress, seeking feedback, and addressing concerns promptly foster a positive working relationship, built on trust and transparency. Executing the project plan is crucial for meeting the contract's objectives.

## Summary (continued)

By following the plan diligently, adhering to project milestones, and maintaining high-quality standards, your business can ensure on-time delivery and will exceed client expectations. Change management is a testament to the dynamic nature of the business, allowing us to adapt and pivot in response to client requests or unforeseen circumstances.

Progress reporting and meticulous documentation not only keep us on track but also ensure thorough due diligence, safeguarding both the business and the project.

Lastly, client satisfaction and project closeout is an opportunity to learn from our experiences and seek improvement with each contract that is won.

# Who can help?

There are many resources available across Canada for indigenous entrepreneurs.

These are just a starting point:

- Pauktuutit offers many resources supporting Inuit women in business, including:
  - Mentorship Programs
  - Training Workshops
  - Inuit Women in Business Network
- Local Economic Development Officer: see your municipality's website
- Indigenous Services Canada programs and services

