

# Alsbridge plc F&A BPO Case Study



## Centrica



### Background

Centrica, a top 30 FTSE100 organisation, is known for being a leading energy company. Centrica are energy experts, who provide a range of services for millions of homes and businesses across the UK, North America and Europe.

The energy sector is extremely competitive, and in order to remain ahead Centrica quickly embraced outsourcing. They have a strong track record in migrating business functions offshore including a range of support functions.

Alsbridge plc started working with Centrica as their Project Lead was planning to leave. Centrica needed an experienced outsourcing manager to work with their team and manage the project.

The project scope involved offshoring more than 100 Finance and Accounting (F&A) roles. In addition to the project management requirements, Centrica came to realise that F&A was more complex than the other functions, and would require more support in transition.

### Objectives

Alsbridge were initially asked to provide support in a traditional outsourcing advisory capacity. They helped manage Centrica through the process of defining their requirements, assessing potential suppliers, and signing a contract for offshore delivery through the supplier selection and contracting stage. Alsbridge worked closely with the Centrica outsourcing team, quickly establishing a relationship built on trust.

As the deal approached contract signature, it became increasingly clear to Centrica management that outsourcing these critical parts of the finance function were going to prove more of a challenge than the non-finance functions which had gone before. They would therefore require further support particularly with regard to baselining the service levels expected, and establishing a robust working relationship between supplier and client.

Centrica realised that they would need hands-on support to make the transition work on the on-shore side, support which neither in-house staff nor the supplier staff were in a position to provide. Alsbridge were asked to provide the "missing link".

### Alsbridge approach

**Contracting** – Alsbridge advised on all contractual matters and drafted the necessary contract schedules to cover the functions' specifications, service levels and contractual terms relating to the finance offshoring.

**Project management** – Alsbridge successfully managed the transformation programme within budget and timescale.

**Strategy** – Alsbridge advised on the procurement strategy, governance and retained function.

**Performance management system** – In common with many in-house organisations, there was no clear history of the level of service delivered to the business before the outsourcing deal. Alsbridge co-developed an approach with Centrica and then collaboratively worked with both the in-house staff and the supplier, WNS, to successfully baseline the service. Alsbridge designed and implemented a performance management system which both sides bought into; this provided the vital missing baseline performance data.

**Transformation** – Alsbridge provided support in transforming the business with ongoing coaching to the functional managers on the use of the performance management templates and helping to bed-in new processes. Alsbridge developed an Operations Guide which became the “deal bible” for both Centrica and WNS managers, this in turn, helped build the partnership relationship.

**Change management** – Alsbridge worked with Centrica’s retained managers assisting them in adjusting to their new role. Their role had changed from hands-on operations manager to third party manager. Alsbridge provided advice to the team on how to best work with a supplier and on how to use the performance data to proactively manage the supplier.

### Alsbridge impact

The client was extremely satisfied with Alsbridge involvement and contribution to the success of the finance change programme.

“Most consultancies we work with try to impose theoretical approaches on us – Alsbridge were completely different. They listened to what we wanted, integrated themselves into our team and built strong relationships based on personal credibility. This was particularly challenging on the ground, as most of the Centrica people they had to work with were leaving as a result of the outsourcing, so real sensitivity and cultural awareness was needed. Alsbridge combined this with a hands-on approach which got things done.”

*Nikki Flanders, Head of Offshoring for Centrica*

Centrica successfully outsourced their F&A to WNS with the delivery and contract teams benefiting from the kind of relationship that would normally have taken several years to build. Furthermore, Alsbridge went on to work with Centrica in North America to transfer the lessons learned from this project.

**To find out more about Alsbridge, please contact us today on  
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We look forward to hearing from you.**

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