

Ins & Outs of Successful Outsourcing for Internet Businesses

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So You Have Questions About Outsourcing!



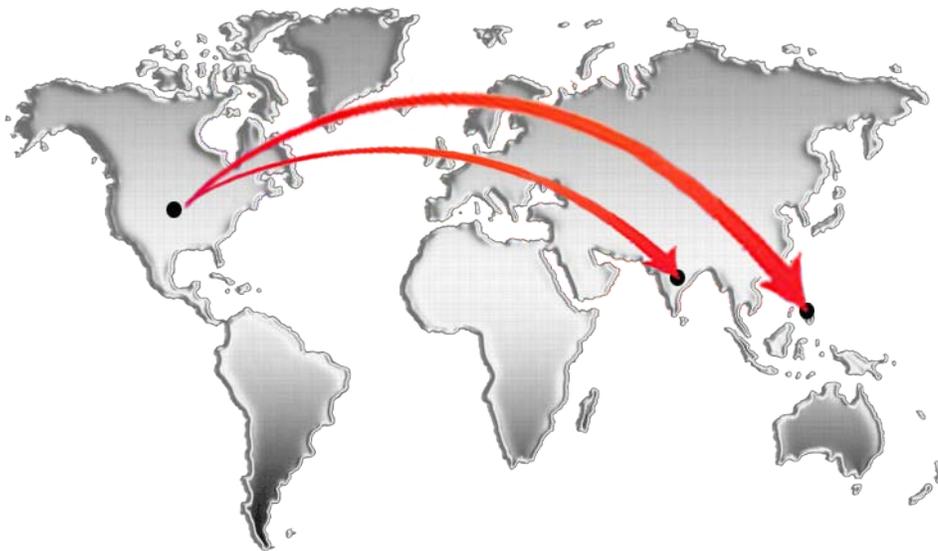
You may have little or no experience when it comes to outsourcing and are looking to learn how to effectively implement outsourcing into your online business.

If this is the case, then this is the e-book for you!

This guide will teach you the ins and outs for successful outsourcing.

What is Outsourcing?

Outsourcing refers to when a business contracts some of their work or tasks to another company or individual outside their organization. These outsource employees in turn provide services to complete the work that otherwise would be completed by you or an in-house employee.



Many companies currently outsource jobs such as call centers, customer support, e-mail services, and more to outsourcing agencies or individuals that specialize in these tasks. Other online business tasks such as research, content writing, website design, SEO, and internet marketing can also be outsourced.

These outsourcing resources are usually located overseas and take considerable less time and/or money than if the same job was performed in-house. It is for this main reason that companies are looking at outsourcing as a means for business success and profitability.

Why Use Outsourcing?

There are many reasons why a company might consider outsourcing various jobs. They are as follows:



- **Save Money** - The most prominent advantage is to save money. Outsource services can do the same work for considerably less money, because they have lower wages and incur fewer overhead costs than if done in-house.



- **Save Time** - Outsourcing can also save you valuable time that would otherwise be spent on simple, redundant tasks that can easily be completed by others. This in turn frees your time to do other more important tasks that require your attention.



Increase Efficiency - Have your non-core business functions completed by your outsourcing employees, while your core functions can be efficiently carried out by yourself or in-house personal, who now have more time to concentrate on managing the business.



- **Grow Your Business** - When you are ready to expand your business and require more man-power and resources to meet increasing demands and sales. - Outsourcing can be used to help alleviate the overflow of work, while continuing to meet customer's increasing demands.



- **Access Specialized Services** - Outsourcing gives you access to specialized services that are not available within your current business structure. Tap into resources and skills such as web design, programming or SEO that you are not currently capable of performing in-house.



- **Take Advantage of Different Time Zones** - Outsourcing to other countries can give you the added advantage of completing work in a more timely manner. Outsource employees or partners can finish critical work while you sleep and send it to you, completed for the next day.

Hello My Fellow Internet Entrepreneurs,

I would like to take a minute and tell you about my outsourcing experience.

I have been outsourcing for several years now and have learned a lot of useful tips and tricks that I would like to share with you in this e-book.

Outsourcing is a very valuable resource if done correctly. There are a lot of benefits and advantages to outsourcing that can help you and your business save money and increase profitability.

As I talk to other individuals about outsourcing, I find that there are many mixed feeling about it. Some have had great success, whereas many others have experienced great difficulty with outsourcing. Maybe they had a bad experience, or they had difficulty coping with cultural differences, or difficulty trying to train someone half way around the world. Whatever the reason, they were unable to take advantage of the great benefits that I have experienced with outsourcing.

I have used outsourcing to help me with several internet businesses that I currently have online. I use outsourcing for customer service calls & inquires, for article and content writing, internet marketing and any number of the myriad tasks that I may need assistance with.

Outsourcing has enabled me to complete all my daily tasks in a timely manner and free my valuable time for important projects that require my attention. I now have the time to focus on growing my business rather than just maintaining it. I outsource my repetitive maintenance tasks to more able individuals and then focus all my attention and energy on growing my business and spending time with my family and loved ones.

I would like to share my outsourcing successes with you in this e-book. I would also like to share my proven, tried and tested methods for successful implementation of outsourcing for my Internet Businesses.

This e-book will cover the ins and outs, as well as the ground work that is needed when outsourcing. You will learn how to outsource many service positions and online marketing tasks that are critical for your Internet and small business. You will see how you can build a strong online presence with less time and effort using outsourcing.

I hope this e-book will give you all the techniques and tools required to successfully implement outsourcing into your company and grow your Internet Business to achieve online success.



Sincerely,

Mukul Verma

Outsourcing is an Investment

You MUST look at outsourcing as an investment.

You must invest the time and money needed in order to generate the returns you desire from your outsource staff and business.

If you are not willing to put the time into interviewing prospective candidates and finding the right person for the job you will be disappointed by the work they perform. And if you are not willing to take the time to train them and provide them with the correct information, processes and know-how to do their job, then you may not get the returns you desire from your outsource staff.

Also remember that outsource employees should be treated with the same courtesy and respect as an in-house employee. Pay them fair wages for the work they do (which will still be much lower than the wages in North America). Pay them at the same time each month and do not delay or miss payments as this could reduce employee morale.

I am speaking from personal experience when I say that the time and money you invest into your outsource staff will benefit you ten fold when implemented correctly. When I hired my first outsource employee to take over the customer service and support functions of my online business, I spent considerable time training them to ensure that they understood all aspects of their job. This was a very long and tedious process, but well worth every moment.

As a result of implementing proper processes and training for my outsource employee, my wife and I were able to take a two month vacation to South America and Asia, with no problems with the day-to-day functions of the business. In fact during the entire trip, I only turned on my computer for two hours each Monday morning to check e-mail for any urgent messages. As a precaution, I had given my outsource employee an emergency contact number - which was never used. As you can see, this was well worth the initial time spent training them.

Today this online business is fully self-sustaining with very little to no direct involvement on my part. All day-to-day functions are taken care of by my outsource employee, freeing my time to start new online ventures and spend more time with family and loved ones.



Setting The Foundation Before Outsourcing

Before hiring your first outsource employee or service there are several questions you must answer and decisions you must make:

- 1. What work or tasks are you looking to outsource and why?**

Keep in mind that the work or tasks that you outsource is something that needs to be completed, but it no longer needs to be completed by yourself or your in-house employees.

OR

You might want to outsource a specialized task, that you do not have the knowledge or expertise to complete yourself (i.e. programming or web-design). The work that you outsource should require minimal supervision and/or assistance from yourself, management, or other employees once the initial training has been completed.



- 2. How much time is required to complete the outsource work?**

Is this a repetitive task that needs to be completed daily or at a periodically scheduled time or is this a special project (a one-time task that once completed will not be repeated again). **This is important to help you determine if you need to hire your outsource staff full time, part time or on a contract basis.**

- 3. Do you have any special equipment or work requirements?**

Does the job that you would like to outsource require any special equipment or work requirements (i.e. computer, telephone, high-speed internet, software programs, etc.).

- 4. What is your outsource budget?**

How much are you looking to spend on your outsource employee? Determine your outsource budget prior to looking for your outsource employee. I recommend doing some research to determine typical wages for the job you would like to outsource.

3 Questions to Ask Yourself Before You Outsource

1. What work would you like the outsource staff to complete?

Before you start the hiring process and begin looking for an outsource staff member, you need to first clarify what tasks or jobs you want to outsource. What work would you like this person to do?



Does it Require General or Specialized Knowledge?

You might want to hire your outsource staff to perform a general knowledge task like customer service, internet marketing, etc. Tasks that require little or no specialized skills and can be taught to any outsource employee (with general computer and internet knowledge) with minimal training.
OR

You might want to hire your outsource staff to complete a specific, specialized knowledge task like hiring a programmer to design a custom software application for your business.

What Outcome Do You Hope to Achieve?

When you outline what tasks you are looking to outsource, be clear on the outcome you want to achieve and have realistic results in mind.

Be realistic about the amount of time it takes to complete a task. Keep in mind that it might take the outsource employee longer in the beginning to complete the same task but as time progresses the task will be completed with less time.

Limit the number of different tasks you assign at the beginning, as it could be overwhelming for your outsource employee to be juggling customer service calls, e-mails, internet marketing, social book-marking, blog posting and more in their first few days or weeks.

You must be realistic in what you expect from an outsource person. Outsource people do not think like us business owners who wear many hats at the same time. Your outsource employee is accustomed to doing one or two tasks at any given time. I recommend that you start your outsource employee with one task and then slowly work them up to several tasks over time, if that is what their job entails.

2. **Do you have knowledge about the task and the ability to train or evaluate the work your outsource employee completes?**

Next ask yourself if you are knowledgeable about the task being completed by your outsource staff. Do you have the knowledge and experience needed to train your employees on how to complete their job or would you need to hire someone who has those pre-set skills already (i.e. accounting, or web design).

Ensure that you and your outsource employee are on the same page when it comes to what is expected of them for each task they do. Ensure that the meaning you give to a task is the same as the meaning your employee takes. Be clear with your instructions and intended results, to ensure the work that is required is done right the first time. Vague or unclear instructions will only lead to frustration and disappointment.

When hiring an outsource employee to do a standardized job, with set processes and procedures, their past experience or skill level are not as important as their attitude and ability to learn new things.

Meanwhile if you are looking for someone with a specialized skill set that you do not possess, you will be looking more carefully at their past experiences, accomplishments and will look to pay a lot more for this specialized outsource person.

If you do not have any knowledge or expertise about the task you need completed, I recommend that do a little research and familiarize yourself with what is involved to complete the task. If that is not possible find someone whom you can trust and who has the expertise to complete the task at hand. Ask them to assist you with training your outsource employee or explaining to you what needs to be done, so then you know what to expect from your outsource employee.

- **For Example:**

I am not a very good writer, this is my first e-book. I rather like making videos. I am writing this e-book for feedback, I want to know if this information was presented in a video series or membership site would it be useful to you. Please provide me your comments and feedback. Let me know, what you think by emailing me at - outsource@mukulverma.com.

Since I do not know how to write well, I called up a friend of mine who has hired outsourced content writers in the past. He was able to give me some good ideas and pointers of what to look for and what to expect from a good content writer. I have also sent writing samples to my friend to have him evaluate if an outsource candidate meets the criteria for a good content writer.

When hiring an outsource employee ensure you have a way to evaluate the work they are doing, to double check and make sure it is done right.

It is also recommended that whenever hiring an outsource staff member, hire them initially on a one month probationary period, to ensure that they fit into your business well and work to the desired levels you are expecting. This will give you sufficient time to evaluate the new outsource employee's performance and work. It also gives you the option to keep them on your team or dismiss them and start the search for a more suitable candidate.

3. **What type of outsource staffing do you require?**

So now that you have determined the work that you need your outsource staff to complete and how to evaluate it. You now need to figure out which outsourcing method you want to use. This is an important step because hiring the wrong outsource staff can cost you additional time and money, both of which you do not want to waste.

There are 2 different outsource staffing decisions you need to make as follows:

1. **Salaried Employees vs. Contracted Projects**

| Salaried Employees | Contracted / Projects Based |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaried Employees works a set schedule and number of hours per week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Time or Part Time: Determine if you need them <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full-time (30-40 hours per week) OR - Part-time (Less than 30 hours a week) • Set hours and a monthly wage which you will pay them for their work during that scheduled time. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract or Project Based staff are hired for a special task or project for a specific time period and are paid for the completion of the project regardless of the time or other resources required to complete the task. • This is ideal for one-time speciality jobs that will not be repeated again. |

I am personally a fan of salaried employees, as they suit my business structure better. I appreciate that I can train them once and that they only work for me and no other employer. Salaried employees are great for any repetitive or small tasks I may have for them.

The type of outsource staff you hire is really dependent on the task you require to be completed. For marketing and customer service tasks I would recommend hiring a full time, salaried employee. Start them off with 1 or 2 tasks and then work your way up to have them do more and more.

2. Outsourcing Company vs. Direct Hire

Once you have determined your outsource staffing requirements, you then need to decide if you would like to hire through an outsource agency/ company or hire your employee directly from an outsource job database. Each has their own advantages and disadvantages. See Below:

| Outsourcing Company | Direct Hire |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater Security - The outsource company take responsibility for their employees and services, but are more expensive to hire. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct hires have more flexibility and are cheaper to hire, but may quit at anytime with no notice or replacement. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More reliable equipment (computers, phones, etc.) and support - Ideal for call center and customer service positions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are more prone to the effects of power outages and technical difficulties due to third world conditions. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have many rules and restrictions placed upon them, preventing them from completing necessary tasks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexibility to work when, where and however you want. Flexible hours, and no company imposed network or Internet restrictions. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are additional support staff, IT specialists, management and medical staff available to assist your outsource employee if issues arise. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You do not have to pay for unnecessary additional staff or support you do not use, and only pay for the outsource employee and the work they produce. |

Outsource Agencies or Companies are ideal when hiring for call center or customer support type positions. Ask yourself -

"If this job was not completed for several day, due to unforeseen problems would it impact my business and bottom line negatively?"

If you answered YES to the above question then hiring through an Outsource Company would be right for you.

Direct Hires are ideal for piece work or project work, and positions that have more flexibility. Article and content writing, internet marketing, programming, and social book-marking are ideal for direct hires.

So take the time to weigh the pros and cons for both and decide which outsourcing method best suits you and the work you are outsourcing.

EXAMPLES

Here are some good examples of typical outsourcing scenarios and how we would answer the three outsourcing questions and as a result, the conclusion we would make.



Example #1: Customer Service

Q#1: What work or tasks are you looking to outsource and why?

A #1: Customer service answering calls on the toll free 1 800 # and answering customer inquires via e-mail.

Q#2: Do you have knowledge about the task and the ability to train or evaluate the work your outsource employee completes?

A #2: Yes I have been doing the customer service for my business until now and can train the employee on how to take over the job.

Q#3: What type of outsource staffing do you require?

A #3: Salaried Employee or Contracted Project
 Outsource Company or Direct Hire

Conclusion:

It would be best to hire a full time salaried employee through an outsource company. If the phones and e-mails are not answered, your business can be affected negatively and could affect your bottom line and overall sales.

As a result of outsourcing the customers service for my online business I was able to free up my time. The outsource company manages my call center employee which limits my direct connection to the everyday functions of the business and gives me the added freedom to take a worry free vacation with family, knowing that the calls and e-mails will continue to be answered during my absence.

You can find a blank questionnaire for your reference under **Appendix A** at the end of the book.



Example #2: Social Book-marking

Q#1: What work or tasks are you looking to outsource and why?

A #1: Social Book-marking on the Internet to build awareness and drive traffic to my website and online business.

Q#2: Do you have knowledge about the task and the ability to train or evaluate the work your outsource employee completes?

A #2: None

Q#3: What type of outsource staffing do you require?

A #3: Salaried Employee or Contracted Project
 Outsource Company or Direct Hire

Conclusion:

Social book-marking is an ongoing task, but requires minimal supervision. You can hire on a contract basis or salaried employee, but as traffic generation on the Internet is an on-going procedure, I would hire a full-time salaried employee who can do social book-marking and other traffic generation tasks on an on-going basis. I would hire direct, as this job does not require all the additional support provided by an outsource company, an Internet connection and minimal training would suffice.

In this example, I said I had no experience with social book-marking (I am actually pretty experienced), but for this example if I had no experience I would need to hire someone who was experienced with social book-marking and/or spend a bit of time and read up about social book-marking myself.

I could learn the ins and outs about social book-marking myself from a professional and train the outsource employee to do the task, but this does take time, but can be well worth it. Another option would be to pay more and hire an outsource employee who is experienced in social-bookmarking and trust that they are doing the job right and bring you the results you desire.

You can find a blank questionnaire for your reference under **Appendix A** at the end of the book.



Example #3: Article Writing

Q#1: What work or tasks are you looking to outsource and why?

A #1: Article writing for your online business, advertisements and/or blog posts.

Q#2: Do you have knowledge about the task and the ability to train or evaluate the work your outsource employee completes?

A #2: None

Q#3: What type of outsource staffing do you require?

A #3: Salaried Employee or Contracted Project
 Outsource Company or Direct Hire

Conclusion:

Article and content writing are ongoing tasks, like social book-marking and also requires minimal supervision. You can hire on a contract basis or a salaried employee. This will all be dependent on the amount of work that needs to be completed and if you have enough work to keep them busy on an ongoing basis.

I would hire a full-time salaried employee as I have several websites that I need fresh content generated for and other traffic generation tasks such as social-book-marking that need to be done on an on-going basis. I would hire direct again, as this job does not require all the additional support provided by a company, an Internet connection and minimal training would suffice.

You can find a blank questionnaire for your reference under [Appendix A](#) at the end of the book.

So from the above 3 examples you can get an idea of several different tasks that you can outsource and how to determine the right type of person to hire before searching for the right outsourcing candidate for your business.

There are no rules set in stone when it comes to outsourcing, just keep an open mind and do your homework. You may be looking for a project person and come across someone who would be amazing on your full time team. Before you start hiring it is important to ask yourself the 3 questions and prepare yourself to hire the best candidate for your business.

The Outsource Hiring Process

In this section we go over which countries and websites you should look to hire your outsource employees from and then continue with the Interview Process and Questions.



Which Country Should You Hire Your Outsource Staff From?

When you are considering hiring outsource personnel for your business, you can go to a number of outsourcing destinations worldwide like India, the Philippines or even sometimes locally, close to home.

India is still the number one outsourcing country world-wide, but has become more expensive over the years, due to increase in demand for their outsourcing services. And after spending some time recently in India, I can see why.

Many companies and businesses around the world are amazed by how cheap they can produce products and services in countries like India that they literally throw money towards outsourcing as a means of cutting production and service costs. Because of this fact outsourcing services in these countries, which were once 10 times cheaper to produce are now only 5 times cheaper than producing the same results back home in North America or Europe. But even still, companies are paying 1/5 the price for the same work done locally.

Different outsourcing countries specialize in different areas when it comes to outsourcing services.

Specialized Skills - If you are looking for outsource staff with specialized skills such as programming, accounting, graphic and web design, then look to India. The outsource employees you will find in India are very highly educated in these areas with the specialized knowledge and ideal for special projects.

General Knowledge - If you are looking for outsource staff that are well-educated and can perform exceptionally at general knowledge jobs, such as internet marketing, social book-marketing, customer service, etc, then I highly recommend outsourcing to the Philippines.

The main focus of this e-book will be on outsourcing general knowledge jobs, in particular outsourcing to the Philippines, where I do most of my outsourcing.

In the Philippines you will get very loyal, hard working and well-educated outsource workers. When hiring from the Philippines remember the following:

Philippines



- **Do not hire anyone with less than a college or university education**, unless you find them extremely impressive or really cheap and hire them first on a trial or probationary basis. Both India and the Philippines value education and so it will not be hard to find highly educated candidates.
- **The Philippines culture is hard working, but is also very laid back** - as a result deadlines and getting tasks finished in a rush is not their strong suit.

Most of the major outsourcing countries are not workaholics and work to live, NOT live to work like most North Americans. You will have to get used to their culture and work habits if you want to nurture a good working relationship with an outsource employee from the Philippines.

Most of my employees put in around 10 hours of work a day, however I am pretty sure that some of their time is spent chatting, instant messaging and surfing the Internet for fun. Still they all get their work done, even if it is not as quickly as I would like. If you have work that is time sensitive, ensure you make your intentions known from the beginning and keep a close eye on that. My outsource staff also know that if the job does not get done, they will not be on my team for very long. They understand that I am okay with their non-work activities as long as the job gets done in a timely manner and with quality work. If they work 8 hours a day but are chatting and not working for a majority of the time, they will not have a job for long. This is all part of a give and take relationship with my outsource staff, which I will explain more on later.

- Your employees should be well versed in English. This is often a major concern with most businesses when outsourcing. For most outsource employees in the Philippines, they learn US English from elementary school up until university level.

In India, they are taught to speak British English in comparison to US, so keep this in mind as their speech and use of the English language might be very different. Also remember this when hiring outsource staff whose job requires a lot of verbal communication like customer service or call center jobs that require superb English - US or British.

- In the Philippine it is customary that their employees work 10-12 hours a day.

Philippines



As mentioned earlier my first outsource employee was hired through an outsource agency. I noticed that my employee was working 10-11 hours each day. I was concerned I would receive a huge overtime bill from the agency, but the Human Resource Manager explained to me that it was in their work culture, for employees to impress their employers and this was quite normal.

If you do hire through an outsource company and are only looking to have your outsource employee work a regular 8 hour day, inform the agency at the time of hire that you do not require any overtime. Therefore you will ensure that you are not accidentally incurring additional overtime charges on your outsourcing bill.

- The concept of time for these people is also different. For me, a meeting at 3:00 PM means 3:00 PM, but for many Philippine individuals 3:00 PM could mean either 3:00 or 3:15 PM.

When I interviewed my first candidates at the outsource company - Support Save (I will provide more information about this company later), I said no way am I hiring anyone from this company, because they cannot even start the interviews on time. But later I found out that it was not just them, it was everyone else as well - consistent across the board. If you are a stickler for time like me, you are going to have to learn to let that go or you will never find anyone to hire.

Now with that being said anyone can be trained. For instance, with a customer service job where you have a 1 800 # on your website, time is critical. You may have to emphasize to your outsource employee the importance of being on time for a day or two until they realize you are serious and that being on time for work is critical for this job. Set standards within reason but be fair at the same time.

One of the Best Methods for Hiring Outsource Staff

Another excellent way, of finding good quality outsource people, would be to speak to your existing outsource staff. Usually high-quality individuals tend to stick together, so this is a great way to find additional high-quality staff, by asking them if they know of colleagues or friends looking for work.

What Websites To Use When Hire Outsource Staff?

There are several websites that you can use to hire your outsource staff - outsource companies/agencies or direct hires. I have personally hired my outsource staff from only two of these websites, but don't limit your search. Look at them all and choose for yourself which website best suits you and gives you the best results.

I will explain about the two websites that I have used in more details and give you a list of other recommended sites that I have tried out or researched.

- **Best Jobs** - For direct hire, I only hire from Best Jobs - <http://www.bestjobs.ph/> This is the only resource I use for hiring my outsource employees and I highly recommend it. I find that the selection is quite large and you can find really good candidates at great rates. You will need a membership to obtain candidate's email addresses and contact information, however you can search on the site for no charge. I have hired some amazing people from this website and highly recommend it.
- **Support Save** - <http://www.supportsave.com/r=200> - This is the outsource company I hired my customer-support employee from. I initially did this years ago, and explained to the company what qualities I wanted in a candidate. They lined up 4 people whom I interviewed. I choose 1 from the 4, but you need to keep interviewing until you find someone suitable (I will share my interview questions later on). I use this site only for critical tasks such as customer support (phones, email, live chat, etc).
- **Other websites** you can use are:
 - Craigslist Manila - <http://manila.craigslist.com.ph/>
 - eLance - www.elance.com/ - For Direct Hire, For Projects
 - oDesk - www.odesk.com - For Direct Hire, For Projects
 - Rent A Coder - www.rentacoder.com - Great for programming, software - for Projects
 - Get a Freelancer www.getafreelancer.com
 - Guru - www.guru.com
 - And there are tons more out there.

Each website has its own pros and cons. Again, I am teaching what I know and I recommend the 2 sites that I personally use and have found great outsource employees for my business.

Interview Process & Questions

I suggest the first time you hire an outsource employee, you should interview at least 10 to 15 candidates, even if you are in a rush.

The first time I hired an outsource employee, I interviewed over 30 candidates to gain a better understanding of the people, their culture and what to expect. This gave me experience and a better understanding of how to deal with my outsource employees. It would be hard for anyone to understand without real experience...



When you send out interview requests to potential candidates, expect only about 50% to respond to you. There is a high percentage of candidates who will not respond. To increase the response rate, when looking at a job search website, keep the time the resume was posted less than a week or two. I like people who are fresh in the search engines.

The Right Interview Questions

The right interview questions should be designed and directed specifically towards the tasks being interviewed for. Keep in mind you may want to look beyond what I suggest here and have other specific questions available as well. You might just find someone better than who you were looking for. I found a great article writer, when I was interviewing for a candidate to do book-marking.

3 Rules For Interviews

Rule # 1- Always Ask Open-ended Questions

- You want the candidate to talk and talk so you can get a better idea of who this person is and what they are about.
- Feel free to pick on something they say and ask for explanations.

Rule # 2 - Ask The Question and Listen (it may be boring, repetitive and you may know some answers, but let them explain it, you will learn more from listening).

- Some of us love to talk and love to give advice, this process is all about learning about the candidate, so listen to them and their answers, it will give you a better picture as to what type of employee they will be and if they fit into your organization.



Rule # 3 - Pick 1 or 2 specific points from their resume and ask them about it

- This is important because it gives you an idea of how much experience they really have and how they constructed the points on their resume. Was it a job they have only done once OR was it something they have a lot of experience in.



Example – I once picked a key point off a candidate’s resume and granted him an interview based on this skill set which they indicated that they possess. When asked to explain how he used this skill in their previous job:

He answered - "Yeah I spent one afternoon working on that." NEXT.....

Example – Another time I picked a point off a candidate’s resume and asked him to elaborate.

He Answered - "My friend told me there is good money in working for people overseas, so he help me make my resume. "

I went on to ask why did he want this job?

He Answered - "I got a month before I get my exam results back and have nothing to do, but clean my car " (I am not kidding).

I listened some more throughout the interview and came to the conclusion that his answers might be very unorthodox, but they were honest and he seemed genuine about his intentions to work, so I hired him for \$120 USD for a month. He turned out to be a great asset to my team for the month. It was too bad he went into his family business, otherwise I would have loved to keep him on a long term basis.

His work was good quality and faster. He was honest, hard-working and super motivated, fresh out of school. The job I hired him for was simple internet posting on websites, that required no past experience. I should also mention that the amount agreed upon to pay him was lower than most other candidates and it was a win-win situation for both of us.

Interview Questions

Here is a list of good interview questions that I pick and choose from during the interview process.

- **Tell me about yourself?** *(don't specify at first, see what area of their life they talk about, Education, Family, Schooling)*
- **Tell me about your past work experience?**
- **Why do you want this job?**
- **What are your career goals?**
- **Where do you see yourself in 5 years?** *(What is your Big Dream in life?)*
- **What is it that you bring, that no one else brings to this job?**
- **What are your 3 strongest qualities?**
- **What is your weakest quality?**
- **Tell me a time where you reached above your duties to help your school or team succeed?**
- **If a customer asks you a question and you do not know the answer, what would you do?**
- **Tell me why you should get this job?**
- **What are you most proud of?** *(This will tell you what they consider to be the greatest achievement and the most important to the person)*
- **What do you expect from an employer?**
- **Do you have any questions for me?**
- **Do you have a working computer? Stable Internet connection?**

This is a VERY IMPORTANT QUESTION - Because some candidates who apply do not have a good computer in working order or a stable internet connection, which could be problematic at times. Often they have an old second hand computer, they use just to get an online job, and it barely functions and usually will not make it past the first month.

I have experienced this with several different staff members on multiple occasions. I recently spent almost a full day with one outsourced employee trying to get them to watch some simple training videos, but it took what seemed like forever for their computer to load these short videos.



Poor Internet connections is another common issue because of power outages in these outsource countries. - Most well run call centers have backup generators for this purpose. If your outsource employee works from home this may be an issue as they may have to go to an Internet café to complete their work - but that is not guaranteed either. The internet connection in the Philippines might be a problem, which would slow your work down - so make sure to ask this question.

Upon Hiring Your Outsource Employee

Determining Salary & Wage Expectations

The average outsource salary or wage can vary greatly due to company, location, industry, experience and benefit expectations. Outsource employee salaries are a fractions of what you can expect to pay for the same work in North America.



There is no clear cut answer as to what the right salary or wage is to pay your outsource employees. Wages are based on the country from which you hire your outsource employees, the job you would like them to perform, the level of experience or skills required and several other factors.

I have outsource employees on my team that I pay \$940 USD a month (hired from an outsource company) and I have direct hire outsource individuals on my staff that I pay \$130 USD (for simple internet marketing task such as book-marking) which are both full time.

When determining salary expectations, you must take into consideration value vs. cost. Know the value that the outsource employee provides for your overall business and determine their wages accordingly.

If you spend less on your outsource hires, expect to get someone less experienced and spend more time training them, since they may not have the pre-set skills you want or need to complete their job. For more experience or specialized skilled outsource staff expect to pay more.

In an area where I am strong, I spend more time on purpose, because one of my goals has always been to master outsourcing, so I can build a strong team of outsource employees to run my online business empire.

Of course when building the ideal outsource team, you must take care of your team like they are your own family, always create win-win solutions for both parties.

Probationary or Evaluation Period

The probationary period is the best weapon that you the employer has when it comes to screening applicants and protecting yourself and your business. Reduce unnecessary loss or distress that comes with inefficient outsource employees or staff members who are unable to deliver at their job.

The probationary period, in my experience, is also one of the least used and least understood methods for screening employees. The probation period can be viewed, if used correctly, as one long audition for a job. It will reveal an outsource employee's true skills and attitude, and far surpasses any interviewing techniques. There is no substitute for viewing an individual on the job in real work situations.

A one month probation period is recommended for any outsource employee you hire full or part time. Your probation period could also be based on a project basis as well (i.e. Completion of 20 articles).

A one month probation period is mandatory for my outsource hires. This time gives me an opportunity to evaluate their work and performance and gives me grounds for dismissal if they do not work out.

For example, I will tell an article writer that they have a one month probation, but I usually know within the first week if I want to keep them or not. If you decide earlier that they are a keeper, let them know since they are scared to get fired as this can affect job performance negatively as well. Of course you can still fire them at a later date if they are not performing.

Expect issues in all situations even when hiring outsourced employees, but minimize the effects of these issues by implementing probationary periods into your hiring practices.

I don't know if I have ever experienced an outsource hiring situation that has been 100% smooth to date. If you don't have issues in business then you are not pushing the envelope on what you can do with your business. If you have no issues within your hiring practices, you might be paying too much money for a task that does not require a high skill level or you are not providing a challenging enough job or work schedule. And also remember that not all issues are bad issues. Examples can include technical issues, customer service issues and more. It is important to determine where these issues are coming from:

- 1. Is it the fault of a specific individual in your business or outsource team?**
- 2. Is it a communications issue between you and your outsource staff?**
- 3. Is it an issue with your outsource system and does it need improvement?**

Keep working on making your outsourcing system stronger by resolving issues and building strong business and outsourcing practices. Outsourcing is a team sport.

Expectations of Your Outsource Staff

It is very important to build a solid foundation for your business and outsource staff. Ensure that you clarify what you expect from your outsource employees and what they can expect from you in return. If you create a very strict work environment with very little or no flexibility your employees may grow to expect that and will act accordingly. On the contrary if you create a very relaxed, informal work environment your employees will expect that of you and this could have a different effect on your business. Ensure to create a balanced work situation that is compatible with you and your business.

When hiring my first outsource employee I made the mistake to create a very relaxed work environment with little structure and expectations of her. As a result I am still experiencing the consequences of my initial outsourcing decisions, and am still paying for this mistake today.

My outsource employee picked up my good and bad habits from the initial training I provided at the time of hire. My employee provides excellent customer service and understands its importance as the cornerstone of my business, but she has also picked up my laid back attitude when it comes to completing non-time sensitive tasks. As a result, these tasks are only completed when I come knocking and ask her several times for them. This is because in the beginning she got used to the fact that I never followed up on the work that she would do until it was absolutely necessary, so she developed the attitude to not complete tasks until they were absolutely necessary to complete.

Since then I have changed my tactics and now I train my outsource staff to provide work in a timely manner and keep on top of things more strictly. Even still my first outsource employee will let tasks go from time to time, but I now know that if I set strict deadlines and enforce them that they will complete the task in the allotted time given to them. So learn from my mistakes that you **MUST** set expectations of what you want early in the process or they may be hard to change in the future.

The employee I am speaking about here, does an amazing job at the customer service functions of her job (50% of her daily work) and that alone is worth the compensation for keeping her, but there are still 4 hours in her day to do other tasks. For her to complete her other daily tasks above and beyond her customer service, I must stay on top of her work and keep on correcting it, which is very time consuming at times. If I set the expectations right from the get go, I would be enjoying higher quality of customer service for my business and not have to spend that time chasing after her to complete her daily work. Again you should learn from my experience here.

The expectations you set with your outsource staff from the get go will become the standard that they will expect from that point forward. Make any variables in your business practices the exception not the rule. Once standards are established it becomes very difficult to change them and build new business and work practices.

Strategies for Hiring Outsource Staff for Cheap, for Your Online Business

I have been asked over and over again, how I am able to find good outsource employees for cheap for my online business?

In particular, I have been able to find quality full time link builders for as little as \$130 to \$ &150 per month ((which is 6000 PHP). And no I am not making this up and I am not talking about automated link building either. This is genuine high quality link building that will make a substantial difference to your online business. You're think how is that possible, well let me tell you exactly how I do that.

My Step-by-Step Strategy to Get a Quality Link Builder for Less

Where to Find A Good Outsource Link Builder & What Skills Do They Need

To find a good outsource link-builder , I suggest you do the following:

Step 1 - Open a free account at www.bestjobs.ph

Step 2 - Go to the control panel and choose 'enter new job' and fill in the following information. Know that this sites is not made for at home jobs outside the Philippines, however if you go there, you can see that's what it is used for mostly.

Here is an example of what I post (you can write something similar if you like)

Title - Seeking Link-builder (Training Provided)

Description - You do not require any special skills for this position. It is a entry level position in the company with room to grow and increase.

Your job will be to be an online link-builder.You will be 100% trained on this process (no experience needed).

Basic computer and Internet skills required including how to fill a web form, register an account, etc. Your own computer and internet are require.

This position is 40 hours a week, you may set your own hours. Please email your resume, this is an immediate opening

Cheers,
Mukul

City - Online

Location - Nationwide

Wages - 6000 PHP

Note - this converts to \$130 to \$140 USD, it is important you do it in PHP (Pesos) and always talk to them in PHP (Pesos), you can use find the conversion at <http://www.xe.com/ucc>. It will vary month to month a few dollars, well worth it at this rate. A school teacher in the Philippines makes 5000 PHP a month, so this is a decent salary.

Start - Immediate

Duration - Full Time

Type of Employment - Check only 'full time' (also important)

Screening Outsource Candidate

Step 3 - Selecting the right candidates and interviewing them. When I choose prospective candidates to interview, I prefer individuals with no prior experience. Individuals with no experience do not have the bad habits that come with experience doing it the wrong way and you can offer them a lower salary. Not to mention, whatever they lack in experience they more than make up for in willingness for hard work, and they are more keen in proving themselves and their work.

For Example: I interviewed one candidate, who I casually asked, how they found the job search and the job market today. They replied by saying that since they did not know how to use automated tools, it was very hard to find a job as a link builder.



I am VERY HAPPY they do not use automated link building tools, since I find natural, organic link building works a lot better. If they had the experience with using automated tools and that is all they knew as being link building is, then I would have to un-train them and re-train them my way. It is some times more difficult to un-train in my experience than it is to train someone to do something right the first time. More on training your outsource employee next.

Training Your Link Builder

Step 4 – Now you have hired them, you now must train them.

Here is what I do to training my outsource link builders!

Go to Angela Links

- http://angelasdiscountmarket.com/backlink_builder.html

Sign up here - There is a cost of as little as \$5 per month. Well worth it in my opinion to train your outsource link builder. Once you have subscribed give this to your outsource person.

The reason I use Angela Links is that it will spell everything out step by step on each website your outsource employee will be link building on, which means that Angelas's Links is doing your training for you through their guide. It is so easy, so simple and step by step that its impossible to mess up (unless the link building sites change their rules and specifications).

When you give this to your new outsource team member. Tell them your goal is to have them do 60 links a day. I thought this was far fetch at first, however now that I got some experience myself, I know this is not.

At first your outsource employee will do as many as they can, however over time they will improve their numbers and will eventually reach 60 links a day Let you outsource employee know that their goal is to work up to doing 60 links a day. As they do it more and more, they will become better at it taking less time. They can reach that 60 links mark in a few weeks.

More on link building

Now there are many other sources for links as well, checkout www.fiverr.com to buy links or keep an eye out. I always build a database, so I never run out of links.

Use Angela links to start off as it will train your out sou re staff for you, and once they are trained, you can just give them websites from other lists and they can easily navigate their way through themselves.

I always expect that when I give them an unfamiliar link that their goal of 60 links a day may not be reached for a day or two, until they get use to the new links.

Training Your Outsource Employees

Training your outsource staff when conducted in the right manner can yield improved service and decreased cost for your business. Whether your outsource employees require a complete turn-key solution process or targeted skill delivery, training your outsource staff is essential for long-term success of your outsource team and ultimately your business.



Employee training plays a crucial role in the success of most organizations. Due to its developmental aspect, training is closely linked to core competencies and strategic focus. Whether you train your outsource employees yourself or hire an external agency to do the training for you, proper training can increase the success and profitability of your business.

Outsourcing is not an easy task and it does take some time and skill to master, but this comes with experience. By reading and implementing these processes, you are already light years ahead compared to other companies who outsource and you are even ahead of me when I first started outsourcing.

Training Your Outsource Employee Yourself

If you choose to train your outsource employee yourself ensure that you have the skills and know the process or procedures needed to complete the task yourself. This ensures that you will be able to train your employees properly and answer any questions that require clarification for them to complete the job properly.

Before I give any assignments to my outsource employees to complete, I ensure that I have experience in completing the task myself. I will complete at least one round of the task at hand to ensure that when I train my outsource employee that I know they are doing the task correctly.

TRUST ME, when I say that doing the task yourself, even once is key to getting your outsource staff to do the job right. You will notice small details that you did not know prior to doing the task that might be essential to include in your training.

Also keep in mind that you should train your employees on every little detail even something that you may think is obvious, because it may not be as obvious to your outsource staff. It may be something that is second nature to you, but it is not that obvious to them.

Also ensure that you have all steps of your training process in writing, either in a manual, emailed instructions or some other format. You could have your outsource employee write their own instructions, but this leaves room for interpretation on their part that may not always be correct. These instructions serve as reference or guide to ensure that the task is completed properly and that nothing is missed or forgotten.

Example of Training Instructions –Writing Effective Sales Copy

Your Instructions:

For your assignment today I would like to you read up about how to write effective sales copy and then take your time to write your first sales copy piece for the ABC website. I have provided you with a Word document with the guidelines for writing Effective Sales Copy.

Here are some good references for Effective Sales Copy Writing -

Insert links for references here...

and here are guidelines that will give you a solid structure to follow when writing your own sales copy.

Add attachments of your instructions, guidelines and any other information your outsource employee might require.

Hiring a Company to Train Your Outsource Employees

If you are unable to train your own outsource employees, for whatever reason - maybe you don't have the time, or maybe you don't possess the skills yourself. There are outsource training companies and agencies available that can assist you with the training of your outsource staff members.

Many businesses and organizations hire a training company to manage their outsource staff, to increase effectiveness of their employees, cut costs and increase profitability.

If you do not have the time or skills to train your own staff then hiring a training company may be the way to go. But don't despair, if you don't have it in your budget to hire a company, there are other options available. You may be able to find training videos, instructions or other materials supplied online which are less costly than hiring a company, but just as effective. Take the time to do your research, prior to starting the hiring and training process for your outsource staff.

I think you now get why training is so critical to the success of your outsource staff and business. Training your own staff or hiring a company to do so - either way you won't regret it.

Daily Reports & Updates

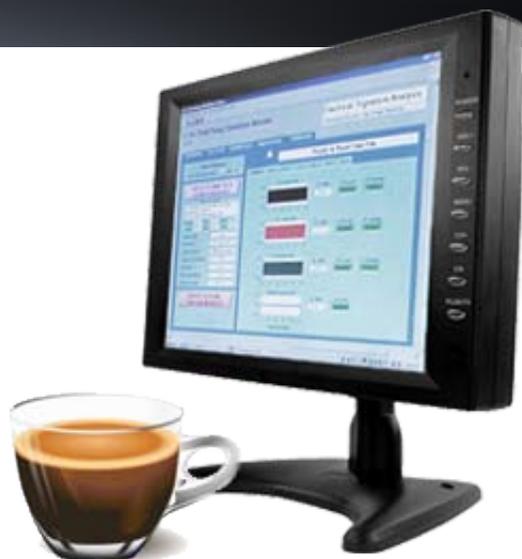
As a way to track the daily work and progress of your outsource staff, have them provide you an e-mail report of the work they completed at the end of each day. This will keep your outsource employees on their toes and accountable to complete their work in a timely manner.

A daily report is 100% required from each of my outsource employees. These reports are usually brief, but they give me a great indication of what they have been doing and the progress they have made on their projects.

I usually only read my outsource staffs reports for the first couple weeks until they get used to the assignment and only comment on their progress and work if needed. And then I don't even check the reports regularly after the first couple of days until I assign them a new task or project (Sssshhhh don't tell my outsource employees that though). These reports are very crucial in keeping my outsource staff accountable to me and to the work they do.

A good example of this is when I once hired a person who after 3 days and 2 reminders did not hand a daily update. I had no clue if they were working and completing the work assigned. As a result I fired him because without the report I have no way of determining if they are actually doing their job.

Take one piece of advice away from this, if your outsource staff cannot comply to a simple task such as providing a brief report at the end of each day, then fire them instantly. Remember when it comes to your outsource staff - you must hire slow and fire fast.



The First Outsource Assignment - Email

For the purpose of this section I am going to assume that you will be building a super outsource team for your business and will be hiring exceptional individuals to work for you for the long-term.

Regarding your outsource staff - full time, part time or project base, their first assignment and the instructions you provide are crucial. Since outsource employees work in other countries, the most ideal and frequently used form of communication between you and your outsource staff is via email. Therefore the first assignment you give your outsource employee will be instructed via email.

Your first outsource assignment email is critical for building the foundation of your working relationship with your outsource staff. Please take your time to make sure you are very clear and concise about what you expect of your employee from this task and what you would like them to complete.

First Assignment Email should include the following:

1. Start the email by outlining any ground rules or expectation you have for your outsource staff.
2. Provide your employees the bigger picture of what you would like them to accomplish in their first assignment.
3. Next, about half way or somewhere in the middle of your email, add a call to action for your employee. Something you would like them to respond to. This is very important.
 - For Example: I would write something like: "Please respond to this email with the subject line "ready to get started" or something similar to this.
 - The above statement does not look particularly like anything important or that would stick out in the email and it will not attract the reader's attention. Yet it is very important because it will tell you if your outsource staff has taken the time to read the entire email and assignment instructions or did they just skimmed through the assignment.
4. If you can create supporting documents - instructions, references or videos, to assist your staff with their assignment, then definitely do so.
 - I find videos and other references the most successful way to train my outsource staff on their assignment requirements. This enables me to show them exactly what must be done and go over everything that is needed to complete the task.

In the First Few Weeks of a New Hire

1. Review Reports and Work Thoroughly.

During the first few weeks of hiring a new outsource staff member, it is very important to keep a close eye on them and the work they do. For the first week or two, you should read the employees' daily reports they submit. Review the reports thoroughly and provide valuable feedback so that they can improve their work and overall performance on the job. Look at their reports in detail and always provide feedback - good or bad, to set the standards by which they will continue to work in upcoming days. This is the time is when you will make or break the quality of work your outsource employee will produce. If you let them slack, they will slack. If you set high quality standards for them to meet, they will meet them and will continue to perform at that level. I do my best to work with my outsource employees and set high standards from the get go. Once these standards are in place I just do spot checks on future reports.

2. Respond to the Emails Using the Sandwich Approach.

When replying to an outsource employee's email:

- Start with a compliment or a positive point about their work
- Then provide them with required areas of improvements for the work they are doing
- And end on a positive note again, with something about their work that you liked and would like them to keep on doing (i.e. keep up the great work).

3. When the Time Arises Work with Your Outsource Employee to Complete the Task.

There will be a time when your outsource employee just does not get how to complete the task at hand. At that time don't get frustrated, pick up the pieces and work with them to work through the task and ensure that they understand how it was done. Yes this means adding one more thing on top of a 16 hour day, but working with them rather than doing it yourself will work in your favor in the long run.

- The only way to get that 16 hour days down to 10 hour days (and soon to 4 hour work per week, Tim Ferris rocks!!!!) is to make sure that your outsource team are fully trained and equipped to do their job.

Building a Strong Working Relationship

So, you ask yourself, how can you develop a strong working relationship with your outsource staff when they are halfway across the world? Don't let distance and an unconventional working relationship, keep you from communicating well with your outsource employees.

Building a strong working relationship with your outsource team is critical to your business success and profitability. In order to ensure that your outsourcing employees work well, you have to build a mutual respect for each other and treat them like they are part of your team. Do not just look at them as cheap labor half way around the world, consider them an important asset to your overall business.

They are your team, they are the means to accomplishing your goals - treat them exactly like that. This is a working relationship, but it is 100% give and take. Treat them well and they will treat you well in return. This mutual respect builds loyalty among your outsource staff, that is needed for building a team of hard working employees.

You must remember that your outsource employees are people, just like you or I. They have the same wants and needs, so treat them the way you would like to be treated yourself.

For Example: One of my outsource employees who has been with me for several years was recently sick, (I knew this not because she told me but because I read her MSN name, which said she was not well). I did not wait for her to ask me for a sick day, instead I ask her if she would like to take the night off and feel better.

You might feel that this is not necessary, because if they did not ask for sick time, then why offer? Well I look at it this way. By extending that courtesy to my outsource staff, I let them know that their well-being is important to me. I am also ensuring that due to the fact that she is sick, her work performance is not being affected negatively. One night of rest can do wonders and she would perform better at work the next day. Because this particular outsource employee has been with me for a few years, I also know that she can be trusted and won't take advantage of this generosity.

On the other had you might have a new employee who has only been working with you for a few weeks. If they were to get sick, I would handle the situation differently. Since I have not figured out their work habits as of yet, I would offer that they take the sick time off, but ask them to make up the time once they were better.

As a result of my consideration towards my outsource staff, I rarely have an outsource employee ask or take a sick day.

Creating a healthy work environment is key. Employees should not be afraid to ask you for a sick day or time off if it is necessary. An employee who finds it difficult to ask for something as simple as a sick day will most likely also be afraid to ask for other things (maybe related to their work) as well.

You want employees to feel comfortable with asking questions about their work, their environment and any other situation that might affect their job and productivity. Make them feel as if they have a vested interest in the business and they in turn will treat the business with greater care, as if it were their own.

Another small but important tip when talking to your outsource staff, is to never refer to it as "my" business or website. Always refer to it as "our" business or website.

For Example: "How to do you think we can improve our business website for our customers". Simply changing the word "my" to "our" will make your outsource person feel like they have ownership of their work and the results that come of it.

I once had a conversation with my outsource employee and we were talking about money and salaries. I asked her straight out, if she would leave her position with me for a higher paying job elsewhere. She answered 'no' and went on to explain that she liked the work environment. So I went on and asked what specifically she liked about her job. She answered that she liked that her input was valued, that she was involved in some decision making processes and that her suggestions were taken seriously.

It is also good practice to check in with your outsource employees once in a while. It could be a simple email, instant message or phone call asking how their work is going and if they have any questions or comments. This will also give you a sense of comfort and calm that your business is being handled with care.

For Example: When I am in town, I try to check in with my outsource team once a week, to make sure everything is good with them and that their work and projects are going well. This also holds them accountable because they know you are on top of everything.

It will also give you a sense of relief when you decide to hand the reins of several business functions over to your outsource employees to manage. When I first handed over my customer service functions to my outsource staff - full time, it was hard to let go in the beginning and I would check in daily, then it became weekly and many times now I won't check for 1-2 months at a time. I use to call the 1 800# several time a week when I was out of the office, to make sure it worked and if my employee needed anything. For the employees who are established on my team, I would ask them once a month - "Is there anything you need training on"?

Your outsource person should always feel that they can talk to you openly about anything. I ask them what they think of their workload to get a sense of whether they have too much or too little to do. I commonly get the same answer across the board, the first few days are very overwhelming, after that, they get used to it. Now with new hires I lighten their load at the start for training purposes, and then add more work as time progresses. Giving them the time to get comfortable and adjust is a win-win for both you and your outsource staff.

Work Hours, Holidays, Customs & Birthdays

Work Hours

With my outsource staff, I will base their work hours, statutory holidays and any other holiday time on the type of job they do (i.e. customer service workers would work North American hours, meanwhile project workers can usually work local hours from their home country).

For Example: I ask my customer support employee who provides support for US/Canada to work North American EST hours, and give them US/Canadian holidays. Meanwhile if my outsource employees are doing article writing, bookmarking, programming or some other task of that nature, I will let them work local work times and holidays or let them set their own work hours.



But do set some structured hours for them, because too much flexibility becomes difficult to track as well. Also if your employees work unconventional hours I recommend on occasion checking in on them during their work hours to see if they truly are working the times agreed upon.

Also when setting work hours and holidays, I discuss this with my outsource staff and give them the option to choose local or North American hours and holidays. Once they have decided, they will continue to work those hours. Below are links to local statutory holidays in the Philippines & India.

Philippines – http://www.worldtravelguide.net/country/225/public_holidays/South-East-Asia/Philippines.html

India – http://www.worldtravelguide.net/country/120/public_holidays/Indian-Subcontinent/India.html

Statutory Holidays

Outsource employees often do not ask for statutory holidays or time off, because many times they are afraid of being fired. It is your job to keep on top of these holidays and remind them to take the time off. This is especially the case when hiring outsource companies, because many times they will work through holidays without any prior notification, in hopes that they get paid overtime wages.

Cultural Customs

Most of these outsource countries also have different customs that are important to their culture. As an employer it is important to learn about the customs and cultures of the outsource country you hire from.

For Example: In the Philippines one such custom is called 13th month. It is customary that at the end of December, that you pay your outsource employee a 13th month - think of it like a Christmas bonus. This is where the employer gives their workers an extra months pay. Often you can give them a gift of equivalent value that will assist with their work, like a laptop, camera, webcam etc... This is not mandatory, but to be in line with their culture it is good practice for building a long-term healthy work relationship. I would recommend that you research the country's customs and try to follow them the best you can.

Employee Birthdays

I have found from my own work experience that working on your birthday, is a hopeless task. Most people on their birthday, spend more time planning their birthday events, cutting a cake at work and celebrating another year getting older, than actually working. So as it is customary for my outsource staff that I always give them their birthday off. This is not something you have to do, but I enjoy it and find that it works well for me. It is also something else I can do to build better relations with my employees.

It just happened that my customer support - outsource employee's birthday, falls on the same day as my wedding anniversary. I usually plan a special day with my wife on our anniversary and go away somewhere, but as I promised my outsource staff that they could have their birthdays off, I am a man of my word. Usually this would not be a problem for both of us to take the day off, except that my customer support employee and I cannot both be off at the same time because when she is away I am her backup for customer support duties. Due to the good working relationship I have built with my outsource employee, she asked if she could work on her birthday, as all she is not going to be doing anything - just sitting at home doing laundry, so she does not mind coming in to work on her birthday. She came into work and my wife and I celebrated our anniversary. I believe that this is a direct result of treating your employees well.

None of the above recommendations are mandatory, however they can affect your outsource employees overall performance and loyalty. Most of the suggestions I mentioned above will not cost you anything, but the benefits will bring greater loyalty, happier and harder working employees. Also, employees who want to please you and build your business up, because you treat them with respect and fellow courtesy.

Information & Work Overload

As a business owner or manager you are used to wearing many different hats and performing many different function on a daily basis - product development, finance, accounting, human resources, training, growth, statistical analysis and so on. Your outsource employee on the contrary is likely to be only capable of doing a few simple tasks and functions at any given time.

Now as a small business owner you may want him or her to do multiple tasks and functions within the job. But remember that they do not think or work the same way you do and so might find it difficult to juggle the different projects. This can lead to information overload, stress and frustration for your outsource staff. None of which is good for your employee or their work performance.

Your outsource employee will not see work in the same way that you or I see it and what might be common sense to you may not be to them. To avoid undue stress and frustration for both you and your outsource staff, give them one task at a time. Let them grow and get used to a task before expanding their job functions and adding other tasks. If you expect your employees to work your way, they will soon burn out, get stressed about meeting their job goals and the quality of work will suffer. So give them their work gradually and work them up to your level slowly.



Is Common Sense, Really Common?

What might be common sense to you or I, is not always common sense to others. Some outsource employees will understand their job right away, others require a lot more time and attention. You need to hire the type of person that works best for you and be patient when training them and with their learning curve.

When assigning a new task or project to your outsource staff, ensure that you and your employee are on the same page when it comes to what you want and the results you want to achieve. Make sure that you explain in detail what you would like them to do and the results you want them to achieve. Never assume they know anything, because you might be mistaken and that can possibly lead to more issues and frustrations in the long run. Make sure all instructions are clear and that they know that they can come to you for clarification if need be. This is especially true for new outsource employees, because you do not know how much they understand, how they work or how much attention they will require.



For Example: I recently had a new outsource employee who said she was very good at social bookmarking. I was very happy to hear this because it is not everyday that you find someone who understands social bookmarking. So I asked her to tell me about her bookmarking experience, and she replied that she uses several automated software to bookmark websites. Boy was I shocked to hear this, because my definition of bookmarking is very different. I don't believe in using automated bookmarking software as there are many complications with using them. I believe the correct way to social bookmark is to contribute to the online community by bookmarking other websites not just your own. What my outsource employee thought was completely different from what I thought the task should be. So as a result of this conversation I made a training video for my outsource employee to follow on how I would like social bookmarking done.

Your Expectations of Outsourcing

When hiring and working with your outsource staff make sure you have realistic expectations of them. Understand that due to cultural and lifestyle differences, your outsource employees may not perform and/or produce the same results as you might expect to achieve from a local hire.

As management or business owners, we often have high expectations of ourselves and others. This is fine to some extent, but if your expectations are too high, they might just lead to disappointment. I can almost guarantee that when you choose to outsource, you will face some issues with communication, performance and/or quality of work your employees produce. This is part and parcel of the journey to being successful with outsourcing. Yet once you achieve this outsource harmony, you can pat yourself on the back and say, now I am really outsourcing and getting results as well.

Your expectations for perfection have to go - because unknowingly your plan may change along the way. You may hire an outsource employee who is working great, then disappears on you, or you may have someone who just does not get how to do a certain task, but is very good at everything else. Make a decision to work with them, dismiss them or replace and then MOVE ON!!!

Looking at the Cost- Benefit Analysis

If you are paying \$300/month for your outsource employee - remember if you were hiring someone for the same position locally you would be paying \$3000/ month, not to mention several other expenses as well.

Your outsource employee may only be able to produce 80 - 90% of the work that someone you hire locally can produce. The question is: "Can you live with that.?"

Weigh the cost-benefit - 80-90% of the work for 10% of the cost. Is it worth it?
Absolutely!

If you expect 100% the result, then hire someone locally, rent an office, and deal with overhead costs, equipment etc...

If you can be satisfied with 80-90%, then outsourcing is the way to go.

I am not saying settle for crappy quality, I am not saying that you should be okay with mediocrity. I am saying that expect a little less than perfect for a fraction of the cost. I can live with that, can you?

Promoting From Within

When hiring your outsource staff, I recommend to promote from within. There are many reasons for hiring your outsource staff this way. The most important is to better evaluate your outsource manager and keep an eye out for those special few individuals who show extra drive and good work ethic, as well as a potential to grow within the company.

Another great reason is that you have already build a strong working relationship with your current outsource staff and are better able to assess their skills and capabilities rather than with a new hire.

Several Things to Keep in Mind When Promoting From Within:

- Always **start your outsource staff out with the basics** or any position – you never know who will surprise you and show merit to be promoted to manager.
- Evaluate to see that there is a **good match between your business and the outsource staff member** you would like to promote. Are their long term goals in line with your business or do they have other ambitions outside the company.
 - **For Example:** In my case, I had an outsource employee I was looking to promote to Manager, be her goal was to become a teacher. As a manager her job would entail training and managing new outsource employees. So before making my decision to promote her, I asked if her ambitions where to teach in a classroom or anywhere? She said anywhere, so I asked if she would like to train and manage for me. She agreed and so I promoted her to manager and now she manages 3 other outsource staff members.
- Move your outsource staff into their new management position slowly, before you have them take over full time.
 - **For Example:** I started by giving my new manager one link-builder (which required little management work) to manage at first, then moved one to train a new link-builder, then to manage other tasks and more tasks. I also give my new manager extra time when they first start and lots of support if needed.

Qualities to Consider When Hiring Your Outsource Manager.

- Can they handle multiple tasks at once.
- Are they capable of managing other and checkup on their work thoroughly.
- Do they have Strong communication skills.
- Are they able to trouble shoot and resolve problems on their own.

Money vs. Treating Workers Well

I have touched on the topic of treating your outsource team well throughout this guide. From my outsourcing experience, I can confidently say that throwing money at your employees will not always convert into better results or employee loyalty. Most workers would much more prefer to be treated well by their employers - even at a lower wage rather than be treated poorly for a higher wage.

You want your outsource employees to be comfortable when working with you. I have found this is especially true with my outsource staff in the Philippines - they are very loyal and hard working.

When Giving A Pay Raise or Bonus

Outsource employees like most other around the world struggle with the same issues of paying the bills and supporting their families. Yet for many of them their situation are far more serious then just paying the rent. This is why when considering to give them a pay raise or bonus, consider the following.

Before I give my outsource employees a raise, I will have a conversation with them about saving money for a rainy day. Now this would depend on how close you are with your outsource employees.

What I like to do is talk to my outsource staff and asked them if their current salary or wages are paying for all their day-to-day expenses and then I go forward from there. Then when I give my outsource staff a raise I will suggest for them to take the additional pay increase and save the additional money for a rainy day or unexpected expenses that might arise.

Then a few months later I will follow up again with my outsource staff to see if they took my advice and are actually saving for something better.

I know it is not my business whether they save personally or not however if they are working for me I do want to make sure that they are taken care of and are not continuously struggling from month to month as this could effect work productivity as well, not to mention they might look elsewhere for a better paying job.

I personally, like to reward my outsource staff for showing such initiative, like saving. What I hope this does is stops them from leaving their current position in search for another job that pays better. If they are happy and are not struggling to make ends meet from month to month, they are more likely to be loyal employees for a longer period of time. It is a small thing that makes a big difference in taking care of your outsource team.

Working With Employee's Strengths

Your experience with your outsource staff will vary from individual to individual. You will find that one person will understand something right away, whereas it will take another person more time. Your outsource employee can also vary in skills, strengths and comfort level from task to task. When hiring an individual, ensure that their strong points are in the area where you want them to work (i.e. marketing or customer service). But also pay attention to any other hidden strengths that you may not currently utilize, but that may be valuable in a future task or project. Identify your outsource employees' different strengths and use them to grow your business.

For Example: You hired someone for bookmarking and they are an excellent article writer. You may have them spend time article writing and bookmarking instead of just bookmarking. You are now bringing in more quality traffic by publishing content and bookmarking at the same time.

I have an outsource employee, that I initially hired to do customer support, yet when I asked her initially where she wants to be in 5 years, she replied that she wants to go into HR. Her position has nothing to do with HR, but I saw this as an opportunity for both of us and when I started searching for other outsource staff member to expand my team, I asked her to help me with the hiring process. This was a win-win situation for both of us. I get help with searching for and hiring new staff members and she has the opportunity to explore her passion and reach her goals. As a result of one small fact, I have found a strength in my outsource staff that I otherwise would not have been able to utilize and we are both happier for it. She still spends a majority of her time doing customer support, but when the time arises, I can count on her to assist with the hiring process as well. I am not an HR expert, but I have someone who enjoys it and can deliver. This is a great example of using someone for their strengths.

Taking Corrective Action When An Outsource Employee Fails to Do Their Job or Goes Missing

If your outsource employee fails to do their job or goes missing and does not report in keep the following in mind.

Firstly, always pay outsource employees once the work period or project has been completed. Never pay them early or in advance of work being finished until you have built a strong working relationship and can trust them.

For Example: I arrange to pay all my outsource employee every two weeks for the work they completed two weeks ago. And only once an outsource staff member has been working with the company for a while and has gained my trust to I arrange to send them their pay a few days early. I pay them a few days in advance because a Paypal to bank account transfer does take an extra few days to process.

If your outsource employee goes missing and does not report in for a few days, begin by first emailing them asking them to check in as soon as possible. Then email or contact them every couple days asking them for a progress report, but stay on top of it. When sending an email to inquire about their whereabouts make sure to give them a definitive time restriction or deadline by which you would like a response. Being that you do not physically see your outsource employees, it is easy to loss track of them and the work they are doing.

It is important that you train you outsource employees that it is essential that they report in daily or on a regular basis. You want to train them that they can't get away with not reporting and still get paid for not doing their job. If you do not follow up with your outsource employees on a consistent basis and set proper reporting standards they will eventually begin to slide and might even disappear altogether.

If you have an outsource employee go missing for a few days send them an email and make sure you ask them to justify why they have not been reporting and get a suitable explanation for their absences. If no suitable explanation can be provided consider taking some disciplinary action like deducting the time form their pay or letting them go. Most people check there email once a day, if it is not customary for your outsource employee to check their email regularly, set up a schedule time for them to check in with you.

When sending my outsource staff an email to inquire about their whereabouts, I will normally state that if I do not hear back from them within 24 hours, I will assume that they are no longer interested in the position and will look for someone else who is. This I would only do after sending a few emails with no response. You are not just firing them without warning. I don't think you should ever fire an employee without warning unless they steal from you or do something very bad. Just give them a warning and spell it out very clearly, if this is not done, then I have no choice except to do this. They are essentially firing themselves. If this constantly happens, you have a choice to deal with the headache of them not reporting, if they are good OR fire them.

For Example: Always understand the situation. I have one outsource staff member who does link-building, but some days they are unable to complete their daily work (because they are still new), so as a result he does not submit in his daily reports until the weekend, when he has an opportunity to complete the allocated work. His intention are not bad, he is just shy and embarrassed that he is new and not meeting his daily link building quota.

So what do I do? Punish him OR let it go. I do have a standard for receiving daily reports, so I explained that to this outsource link builder, that I need him to submit his report even if he is unable to complete his daily allotted work. I let him know that it is OK, that the work is not completed on time and that we will towards getting him up to speed as long as he submits his reports and lets me know of his progress. So understand why they are not reporting in order to better understand and come up with a suitable arrangement.

Once you do make a decision, stick to it as you are setting a standard for your outsource employees and team. I have had several outsource employees who were good at their job but horrible at reporting. With some we were able to work out their failure to report and with others I wasn't. I did hire a couple of them back with probation and salary cut, however it does not work out in my experience. If an outsource employee has a problem with reporting their work in my experience that does not change very often.

Conclusion

That summarizes all the ins and outs of outsourcing. It is everything that you need to know to get started with outsourcing your work and how to make it work for you and be successful. I would suggest keeping this e-book close by as a resource for all your outsourcing ventures.

Just remember, you will first need to build a strong foundation, then determine the right outsource candidate to hire. Then train them and build a strong healthy working relationship with them.

Outsourcing is an ongoing process which involves time and money, but the returns you will receive are more freedom and greater profitability which will pay off substantially in the future.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at outsource@mukulverma.com.

**PLEASE TAKE A FEW MOMENTS AND ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:
and you will be rewarded.**

The purpose of this e-book was to see what demand there was for outsourcing training videos or possibly a membership website to assist you and your workers in marketing your online business and your website.

I would like to hear from you - your thoughts and opinions on the contents of this e-book. And when I develop another outsource product or service, I will reward you for your concrete comments and feedback (i.e. \$1 for the first month membership to my outsource resource site).

If I decided to make a membership website, no matter what the cost is, you will get it for \$1 for first month (I am considering charging \$99 for access to the site) or a really good deal, maybe free if this turns into another product.

I would really like the answer to the following question and any other comments:

Questions: Would you find it useful to have a membership site that trains your outsource employees for you? Instead of creating the videos yourself, you have them professionally trained by our outsource training service.

Please respond positively on the WSO or send your comments to me by email at outsource@mukulverma.com.

Outsource Toolbox

Here are some valuable outsource tools that will assist you with communicating and working more effectively with your outsource staff. Most of them are free.

Logmein – www.logmein.com

This program will enable you to share access between your computer or your outsource employee's computer. This is great if you want to watch what they are doing or show them a demonstration. It appears in a URL browser for you.

Google Docs – www.docs.google.com

Google has provided an online platform where you can create documents, presentations, spreadsheets and more, all online. This will enable you and your outsource staff to update information online on a shared platform that multiple people can have access to and make changes to. I have used this for tracking and giving assignments in the past.

Open Office – www.openoffice.org

Open Office is great if your outsource employee does not have Microsoft Office (this software includes document and spreadsheet capabilities), and can be downloaded for free online. On a side note this is great for MAC users as well.

Windows Live Messenger – <http://download.live.com>

This is a chat program that you can use to communicate directly with your outsource employees in real time.

Yahoo Messenger – www.messenger.yahoo.com

This is another chat program. I find this program more commonly used in India and the Philippines than Windows live (MSN) that is more commonly used here in Canada.

Drop Box – <http://www.dropbox.com/referrals/NTM1NTAzMDU5>

Drop Box enables you to access files on your computer from anywhere. Just save all documents and files in a special public folder on your desktop and access it from anywhere. You can have your outsource employee set this up on their computer and save all the work they do for you in this folder, that way you can always access the information and it does not take up room on their desktop. You get up to 2 Gigs free.

Paypal – www.paypal.com

You can use Paypal to pay your outsource employees. Some do accept it, others do not since they do not have a Paypal account. But keep in mind that it can take them up to 2 weeks to take the money out of Paypal, so they may not prefer this method. The outsource employee also has to pay the fee when using this service.

Xoom – www.xoom.com

Xoom is another payment service method which has different options to get money to your outsource employees. You can send payment to a location near them, a bank account or have it home delivered to them. Do a Google search for the term 'xoom promo code' and you will often find a promo code somewhere online to save on any service charges. - These promotions are available often, but for only short periods of time. You can save the \$12 fee for sending the money, using their promo codes.

Appendix A

Questionnaire: 3 Questions to Ask Yourself Before You Outsource

Example #1:

Q#1: What work or tasks are you looking to outsource and why?

A #1:

Q#2: Do you have knowledge about the task and the ability to train or evaluate the work your outsource employee completes?

A #2:

Q#3: What type of outsource staffing do you require?

A #3: Salaried Employee or Contracted Project
 Outsource Company or Direct Hire

Conclusion: