



STRIPPING
confusion from
Making Money
Online

Bonus Report #1:
*How to Get Your Freelancers
to Give You Their Best Work...
Every Time!*

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Introduction

Remote outsourcing offers you many advantages, such as the ability to choose from a far greater pool of talent than if you had hired locally. You may even find talented people at extremely competitive rates when you outsource globally.

But the problem is that the freelancers *aren't* in the same room with you.

That means you can't look them in the eye to see if they really understand the project. You can't closely monitor their work (or closely monitor the time they spend working, if they're being paid by the hour). And they may be more reluctant to ask all the questions they need to ask, for fear or "bothering" you.

End result: **You may *not* get the resulting you were expecting.**

So how do you deal with these sorts of issues? Like this, in four easy steps:

1. Set your expectations upfront.
2. Put a focus on communication.
3. Monitor and motivate freelancers
4. Use tools to manage your freelancers.

Let's look at these four keys separately...

1. Set Expectations

You operate a little differently than the last person who hired your freelancer to do a job. Indeed, your freelancer has dealt with all sorts of managerial styles, personality quirks and expectations.

Because of this – because everyone needs something a little different from the same freelancer – **it's your job to make your expectations clear so that there's no guesswork required on the freelancer's behalf.**

This starts with you signing agreements with your freelancers.

In some cases, your freelancer may have an agreement that he or she asks you to sign. If not, then you may want to draw up a formal agreement (with the help of your attorney), which will define your business relationship.

This agreement may include:

- **The scope of the project for which you're hiring the freelancer to complete.**

Example: If you're hiring a writer to create a pack of 10 articles, you should list the title, topic and word count for each article.

- **Payment terms.** Not only should you list how much you're paying for this project, but also how and when you'll be paying.

Example: Perhaps you're paying half upfront with the remainder due within 48 hours of delivery of the completed project.

- **Deadlines.** Naturally, you'll have an overall delivery deadline for the project. However, if it's a large project than you're also likely to have "milestone" deadlines.

Example: You may have deadlines for the outline, the first chapter, the first one third of the project, the second one third, the final one third and then the final (proofed and polished) project.

Note: Keep in mind that you CAN'T just arbitrarily set payment terms, deadlines and other details in a unilateral way. These are issues that you must discuss with your freelancer first.

Once you come to an agreement on these issues, then you can put the agreement in writing and sign it (both of you). As such, not only does the agreement make your expectations clear with regards to the scope of the project, but it protects both you and your freelancer in case of a dispute.

Naturally, there are expectations you have that won't be covered in a formal agreement.

Example: Perhaps you prefer to get a daily update on projects rather than a weekly update. Likewise, your freelancer may even have expectations with regards to his business relationship with you.

As such, you need to talk about these expectations upfront so you know what to expect of one another.

Note: One note, however: Even if you talk about these expectations on the phone or via Skype, be sure to put them in writing (in an email). Not as a formal agreement; rather, you should put them in writing just so that your freelancer can easily review them from time to time.

One final note...

While you should make your expectations clear, don't attempt to micro-manage your freelancers. That is, don't try to dictate exactly how he does his job. If you're happy with the end result, then how he got to that result doesn't really matter.

Example: Maybe you've hired a ghostwriter to create an ebook. And maybe you think the ghostwriter will complete the book in a conventional order: Research first, then do the outline, then chapter 1, then chapter 2... and so on.

However, maybe the ghostwriter completes his work in a different order. Perhaps he prefers to write the final chapter first, and then he writes chapters in random order.

It's not the way you'd do it - but so what? If you like what he's written - and if he's meeting deadlines (e.g., getting one third of the book complete by a certain date) - then it's not your job to micromanage the project or the freelancer. Remember, he's an expert - so let him do what he does best.

2. Put a Focus on Communication

The second issue you need to think about with regards to your freelancer is how much you communicate to them.

There are actually three issues here:

- a. What you share with regards to your overall business model.
- b. What you share with each individual freelancer about the scope of a project.
- c. What information you have freelancers share with each other.

Let's look at these issues separately...

a. Sharing Your Overall Business Model and Objectives

You don't have to share the intimate details of your business plan and marketing strategy with your freelancers.

However, it is helpful if you share with them your overall business philosophy, company's mission and similar bits of information.

Example #1: A copywriter will have a better idea of how to write your sales copy if he understands your company mission and branding strategy.

Example #2: Your customer service representatives – the face of your business – will do a better job representing you if they understand and reflect your company's mission and your philosophy.

b. Creating Project Briefs

The second area of communication is where you share information about a project with your freelancers (usually via a written project brief).

This is one of the most important things you'll write. That's because your freelancers aren't mind readers.

So the more information you can provide to them with regards to the scope of the project, the better the end results.

Tip #1: Check the main H.A.N.D.S. Free Formula guide for information about how to write detailed briefs for your freelancers.

Tip #2: Always be sure to clearly define any benchmarks or other goals you've set for the project. Also, make sure these benchmarks and goals are easily measurable.

c. Getting Freelancers to Communicate With One Another

If you're building a team of freelancers, then oftentimes they'll need to work together on a project. If they don't work together, then it just creates more work for you. That's because your freelancers will need to send their pieces of the project to you which you then pass on to the next freelancer.

Example: Let's say you want to create content for your blog. Perhaps you hire one person to do the keyword research, a second person to write the content and a third person to upload the content.

If you need to approve each step, then it's fine to have these three freelancers report to you as needed. However, if you trust these freelancers and their work, then you can have them work together.

In this case, the keyword researcher would complete his work and send it to the writer. When the writer finished his work, he'd send it to the person doing the uploading.

All of this would happen without any work nor input needed on your part.

You'll discover a set of tools just a bit later that will make it easier for your freelancers to work together.

3. Monitor and Motivate Freelancers

The third issue you need to consider is how you're going to monitor and motivate your freelancers.

Now, monitoring isn't such a big issue if you're paying your freelancers per project (rather than per hour). In other words, you don't need to track their hours. Instead, you just need to make sure that your freelancers are on track with your projects so that the projects will be completed on or before the deadline.

Here's how to make sure that happens:

- ➔ **Request regular project updates.** Depending on the project, you may request updates as often as a daily basis. With other project, two or three times per week may be sufficient.

In still other cases (such as with small one-off projects that don't take long), having freelancers check in once per week with their progress updates will suffice.

Tip: Have your freelancers check in regularly for big and/or important jobs.

Example: If you have a freelancer check in just once per week on a big project, then you'll assume that everything is going fine and the project is right on track. But after a week you may find out that the freelancer hasn't done anything, which will likely delay your project at least a week (and sometimes more).

➔ **Require approval for certain steps or create milestone deadlines.**

Sometimes it's not enough to merely have your freelancer check in – instead, you may want to actually check their work. You can create milestone deadlines, which will give you a peek at rough drafts as the project progresses.

Example: If you hire a ghostwriter, then you may set a deadline for half the book to be complete (at which time you'll see this rough draft). Just keep in mind that when you set these sorts of deadlines, you are likely to see rough drafts – so don't nitpick these drafts, as the final product will likely be much more polished.

So what happens if you're paying your freelancers by the hour?

In that case, the single best way to monitor them is to have staff in your physical location. That is, hire local freelancers (or even employees).

If that's impossible, then use tracking tools that allow you to monitor the freelancer.

Example: If you hire a "per hour" freelancer via oDesk.com, you'll automatically get access to tools that allow you to receive screenshots, keyboard data and even web cam footage from your freelancer's computer.

Maybe that sort of close tracking is too invasive or otherwise impossible for a freelancer. In that case, then always seek to pay per project rather than per hour.

The second issue within this discussion is how to motivate your freelancers. In other words, how do you make sure they continue to do a good job for you?

Here are three ways:

- **Praise generously.** This is simple, and it seems like common sense, but many business owners forget to offer praise and kind words for a job well done. However, it's one of the biggest motivational tools you have.
- **Give financial bonuses.** Another highly motivating incentive is to offer cash. You can offer cash rewards for jobs well done, without the freelancer knowing about it in advance. Or you can let the freelancer know upfront that cash will be offered if certain benchmarks and other goals are met.
- **Offer other incentives.** For example, you can offer gift cards and other incentives as bonuses for good work.

4. Use Tools to Manage Your Freelancers

The final way to get the most out of your virtual team is to use tools to help track productivity and generally manage your freelancers.

Here's a short list of tools that you can use to accomplish these objectives:

- Skype.com. You probably already have this VOIP-based software already installed (on your computer... or even on your smartphone or tablet) – if not, it's well worth the download. Skype allows voice calls and video calls, anywhere in the world for free. In addition it has a message function as well. It has made voice communication virtually free.
- Freemind.com. This is a fantastic free mind mapping software that will allow you to "mind dump" all your thoughts on a particular project, be it a completely new website you're developing or the next best-selling mystery novel you're writing. It's a great planning tool.
- Gliffy.com. Another free tool that lets you take step-by-step instructions and create them in the form of a flowchart. A great tool to use in developing

critical paths for the business but also a good training tool to give to contractors for a particular project.

- [WebEx WebOffice](#). This is the "everything in one place" project management software put out by WebEx. This isn't free; it's subscription-based but they do have a 30 day free trial. Inside WebEx you can do just about anything you need to do in terms of collaboration and communication. You can share calendars, documents, schedule projects, upload training videos and then assign different levels of access to these features for each contractor.
- [Dropbox](#) is a free tool that allows exceptionally easy sharing of documents. Both you and the contractor have to have DropBox installed in order to share but the download is quick and easy. It's a simple matter of dropping a document into the contractor's folder. Any time that document is modified, such as when the contractor makes a change, you receive a message. It's a simple system with adequate security built-in.
- [Jingproject.com](#) this is a great piece of free software that allows you to make complex training or presentation videos. This isn't your typical YouTube video; instead, this is a 5 min. video of what appears on your computer screen. As such, it can be used as a walk-through of the process or a personalized sales presentation. It's easily distributed via e-mail, a webpage or IM.

Conclusion

And there you have it – the four key issues you need to consider if you want to get the most out of your virtual team.

Remember, overall the key is to communicate.

Communicate your expectations. Communicate your project objectives. Keep in communication during the entire project.

Point is, the better your communication with your freelancing team, the better your end results.