

36

QUICK TIPS

TO HIRING AND MANAGING REMOTE TALENT



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INTRODUCTION

For the past 10 years, I have been learning and implementing best practices for building businesses using remote teams.

It was not easy! And it took a lot of trial and error to learn what works and what doesn't.

I always wished there was guide I could follow or someone I could learn from.

I made this guide to help others save time, money, and frustration.

Use this guide to make better and smarter hires for your business.



MISTAKES I MADE WHEN I FIRST STARTED HIRING ONLINE

1. Not being super clear on what I want the end result to look like
2. Not setting expectations upfront
3. Not breaking big projects into small milestones
4. Not giving honest feedback as we continue to work together
5. Not encouraging ideas. The best ideas sometimes come from others
6. Working with people that take feedback personally
7. Continuing to work with people that miss deadlines
8. Not asking about their internet and computer situation upfront
9. Not telling them how their work impacts the company

36 QUICK HIRING TIPS

QUICK TIP #1: SET CLEAR SCOPES OF WORK AND DEADLINES

When working with a freelancer, clearly create project scopes and schedules. Especially if a freelancer is working remotely, it's critical to outline the project's scope, provide clear guidelines, and set deadlines for its completion.

QUICK TIP #2: PUT EVERYTHING IN WRITING

When working with freelancers, make sure you establish ownership of the work upfront. Get everything in writing before work begins and have the freelancer agree to it in writing as well.

QUICK TIP #3: GIVE CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

Critique freelancers' work early and often. Review their work in stages to avoid being disappointed once the project is complete. Give constructive feedback so they can understand your company's voice and preferences.

QUICK TIP #4: HIRE FREELANCERS WITH RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

When hiring a freelancer, match your needs to their experience. You want freelancers who have concrete experience that matches your needs. Find freelancers who have worked on similar projects as yours in the past.

QUICK TIP #5: FIND FREELANCERS THAT CAN MANAGE TIME EFFICIENTLY

Realize that you are not a freelancers only client. Focus instead on quality and deadlines. Work with freelancers that can manage their time and that communicate at a high level.

QUICK TIP #6: HAVE A KICKOFF MEETING WITH FREELANCERS

A kickoff meeting is a great way to establish expectations and come to an agreement upfront. Figure out what you want to accomplish, when it needs to be done by, how often you will have check-ins, and what to be aware of as the project starts. A good kickoff meeting can be the difference between success and failure with a freelancer.

QUICK TIP #7: USE TEST PROJECTS

It can be a good idea to start on a smaller test project with a freelancer to make sure it's a great fit for both of you. A good freelancer will be making sure you are a good fit for them as much as they are a good fit for you.

QUICK TIP #8: BUILD A RELATIONSHIP WITH FREELANCERS

You can make people sign all the NDAs in the world, set up lastpass, and watch over their shoulder every day, but there is no substitute for building a strong relationship with people. Building strong relationships protects your business over everything else.

QUICK TIP #9: BE HONEST WITH DEVELOPERS AND GET EXPLANATIONS

If you don't understand development terms, tell this to a developer upfront. Tell them you need clear explanations that a 5th grader would understand. The best developers can translate what they are doing into a simple form that you can understand.

QUICK TIP #10: DON'T SETTLE FOR SUBPAR WORK

If your team is not performing at the level that you want, shake it up. Don't continue doing the same thing over and over. Let go of the low performers, bring in new talent, and reset expectations with everyone.

QUICK TIP #11: LISTEN BEFORE GETTING MAD

Hear people out before getting upset at them. As a business owner, it is easy to get upset and frustrated when something goes wrong. I encourage you to enter a conversation looking for information first. Once you get the information then you can decide what action to take. By starting off upset, you can miss out on learning the big picture. Ask people for their side of the story and then go from there.

QUICK TIP #12: DON'T GIVE EVERYTHING TO ONE PERSON

Entrepreneurs fall into a common trap. Hiring is hard so they make a bunch of bad hires. Then they find someone they like. So what do they do? They load that person up with everything. Don't do this. It is risky! If that person quits, you are screwed. Diversify and protect your business.

QUICK TIP #13: BE SMART WITH GIVING OUT BONUSES

Back in the day I hired two people. Let's call them John and Bob. My Amazon business was doing great and we were only a 6 person team. At the end of the year, we rewarded them and gave them each a large bonus. Really big. We thought it was a nice gesture. The issue is next year we wanted to expand. We doubled our hiring and at the end of the year, we didn't want to give out the same bonus. We had more people to pay and we wanted to invest the money into the business. We thought they would understand. They did not and it was a valuable lesson for me. I don't blame them one bit. If the business got bigger and the bonuses go down, it is very demotivating. Eventually, John and Bob quit for different reasons but I still think the bonuses had something to do with it. When you give people bonuses, keep in mind they should go up over time. Don't give someone a bonus that you can't make bigger the next year. This is something very few people think about. Spend extra time making sure you can really afford the bonuses long term.

QUICK TIP #14: DON'T FORCE SOMEONE TO STAY...LET THEM QUIT

From my experience, if someone wants to quit, let them quit. Unless there is just one reason why they are quitting that you can easily fix. Outside of that, convincing someone to stay rarely works out and usually ends up in a bigger mess. Learn from my experiences :)

QUICK TIP #15: YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR

Don't hire experts for \$5 per hour lol. It will not work out the way you think it will. As the saying goes, you pay for what you get. You're not going to get "expert" for \$5 per hour. Be realistic with your budget and pay what needs to be paid for the right person for your business.

QUICK TIP #16: AVOID PEOPLE THAT ARE MISTAKE PRONE

Don't work with people that don't have common sense or are mistake prone. You will lose all your hair.

QUICK TIP #17: AVOID HIRING PEOPLE THAT ARE DEFENSIVE

Don't work with people who get defensive. Work with people who can take feedback and improve based on it. They will add the most value to your business in the long run.

QUICK TIP #18: TAP INTO FREELANCERS FOR THEIR KNOWLEDGE

Ask freelancers about their systems and processes they have created throughout building their freelance business. The good ones have these and it will make it a lot easier for your business.

QUICK TIP #19: BE CALCULATED WITH YOUR SPENDING ON HIRING

Here's how to figure out how much to spend on hiring. First, Look at how much money you made last month. Second, figure out how aggressive or conservative you want to be. Aggressive, you will reinvest 40-60% of profits. Conservative, you will invest 10-30%. Third, figure out where to spend that money (basic, mid or expert level hires). Fourth, re-evaluate each month and make changes as it makes sense.

QUICK TIP #20: KEEP PEOPLE FOCUSED ON THEIR STRENGTHS

Don't try to teach people to be good at their weaknesses. I am so happy I finally convinced my business partner Connor to stop doing this. He is a good guy and is always looking to help others. In his mind, helping others sometimes meant getting them good at certain skills they were not good at. From a business side, this is a bad investment. Instead, focus on maximizing people's strengths and have them avoid doing things they are not good at.

QUICK TIP #21: GIVE EACH FULL TIME EMPLOYEE A VIRTUAL ASSISTANT TO WORK WITH

Do you have full time employees? Give them all a personal virtual assistant. One of my good clients Chad does this better than most. He owns a large company and everyone at his company has their own VA. If they make \$50,000 a year, they are only doing \$50,000 a year work. Anything less is done by a virtual assistant.

QUICK TIP #22: GIVE FEEDBACK TO FREELANCERS

My take: I try to give advice to any freelancers who want it. Coming not from a place of telling them what to do, but from a place of suggestions that they can improve their business. Up to them if they want to take it.

QUICK TIP #23: ASSIGN 3-5 SMALL WEEKLY TASKS TO EACH FREELANCER

Give each assistant 3-5 small weekly tasks to do on the side of their core work. It's a quick way to get annoying things off your plate and give freelancers more responsibility.

QUICK TIP #24: FIND FREELANCERS THAT OVERDELIVER

Only work with people that under promise and over deliver. Be wary of freelancers that set unrealistic deadlines and never hit them.

QUICK TIP #25: CREATE CANNED RESPONSES FOR EVERYTHING

Having canned responses on a notepad on your computer is a huge time saver. For almost every possible question a person could ask, I have a canned response. For almost every situation that comes up, I have a canned response. I encourage my assistants to think of new canned responses we need. I write them and send them to my business partner, Connor, to proof. Then they go out to all my assistants. I don't try to be a robot. You can still talk to people while not having to write out every little thing everytime. The key is also teaching your assistants how to use them right and when to customize.

QUICK TIP #26: HIRE FREELANCERS THAT LOVE WHAT THEY DO

Only work with freelancers who love what they do as much as you love what you do.

QUICK TIP #27: REMEMBER THAT FREELANCERS ARE BUSINESS OWNERS

They are business owners. Treat it as a business to business relationship. Have the mentality of collaboration and a lot of awesome things can happen.

QUICK TIP #28: GET TRANSPARENCY ABOUT WHO IS DOING THE WORK

Some freelancers are solo, some subcontract small tasks, others operate as an agency. Don't be upset about this. Instead, set the expectation of transparency. You don't care who does the work as long as they are honest about it and it meets your high standards when completed.

QUICK TIP #29: WHEN WHITE LABELING, PARTNER WITH FREELANCERS

Partner with freelancers and agencies to serve your clients and expand the services you offer.

QUICK TIP #30: WHEN WHITE LABELING, COLLABORATE

Treat the relationship as a partnership with collaboration. Work together towards the common goal.

QUICK TIP #31: WHEN WHITE LABELING, THINK LONG TERM AS YOU START

Come up with services and fixed prices with margins you are both happy with long term.

QUICK TIP #32: WHEN WHITE LABELING, MANAGE CASH FLOW CAREFULLY

Make sure the cash flow makes sense. Freelancers should be paid on-time regardless of if your client pays on-time.

QUICK TIP #33: TAP INTO AN EXPERT'S KNOWLEDGE AND LET THEM LEAD

Don't hire an expert and then ask them to do it your way. Hire experts to bring their own strategy and expertise to the table. Set expectations upfront on the type of collaboration and relationship you want to have.

QUICK TIP #34: BECOME YOUR FREELANCERS' FAVORITE CLIENT

Think of creative ways to make yourself their favorite client!

1. Ask them who their favorite client is and why
2. Have strong communication with them
3. Respect their time.
4. Don't expect them to be on call
5. Honor your word
6. Build a relationship with them

QUICK TIP #35: DON'T FORGET TO MOTIVATE FREELANCERS YOU HIRE

Keep freelancers you hire motivated with the following:

1. Tell them you appreciate them
2. Share a busy goal
3. Teach them a random business lesson
4. Point out something awesome they did in the past month

QUICK TIP #36: TRY TO BRING BACK FREELANCERS THAT SEEM TO BE DROPPING OFF

Here's how I handle a situation where a VA/freelancer who has done great work starts going downhill...

1. Pause work
2. Have a meeting
3. Reset the expectations during the meeting and don't leave the
4. meeting until you are 100% on the same page in writing
5. Restart work
6. Hold them to those expectations
7. If the issue happens again repeat. If you don't see progress replace

