

# How To Avoid Getting Burned When Outsourcing To Freelancers

 [bloggingwizard.com/outsourcing-to-freelancers/](http://bloggingwizard.com/outsourcing-to-freelancers/)

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Let's face it...

*We all want to grow and scale our online businesses, right?*

If your goal is to build your blog, monetize it, and live a lifestyle of complete freedom — *one that doesn't require you to be glued to your laptop 24 hours a day* — you will, at some point, have to outsource a portion of your work.

But there are a number of **risks** and **pitfalls** to consider.

For instance, if you outsource too soon, you risk eroding what little income you might be earning while diluting your own voice, presence and branding.

But wait too long to outsource or hang on to too much and you will be leaving money on the table while exhausting all your free time.

There is a bit of an art to doing this correctly without getting burned at either end of the spectrum.

*Now, I know what you might be thinking...*

*"Brent, I already outsource some of my work. For instance, whenever I need a logo designed, I jump on Fiverr, hire someone, and presto! I have a new logo within two days. Does hiring help really require an entire blog post?"*

**Yes. Yes, it does.**

Because for all intents and purposes, this post isn't written for those of you who are only looking to outsource one-off jobs... instead, I want to speak to the bloggers who need to hire regular, ongoing and consistent help to scale their business properly.

And that type of hiring decision is a completely different beast.

The freelancer — *or freelancers* — you choose to hire will need to be reliable, consistent, and mostly self-directed.

And should you make the wrong hiring choice(s), you risk irreparably harming your online business.

Let's begin.

[Here's how to outsource to freelancers without getting burned](#) [Click To Tweet](#)

## Don't outsource too soon

Whether you fancy yourself a professional blogger, a consultant or coach, an eCommerce guru, or a freelancer yourself — don't make the rookie mistake of outsourcing tasks too soon.

This is one of the key lessons I try to instill in new freelancers through my own blog... [if you are earning \\$0, your time is worth \\$0](#). What I mean is that it isn't worth investing financial resources into freeing up time resources if your time resources aren't worth anything.

In other words, *don't count your chickens before they're hatched*.



See, one of the main advantages to running an online business is that your upfront risk is minimal and in most cases, you need to invest very little capital to get started. But the flip side of the coin is that [you need to invest plenty of sweat equity](#) in the early days to really get things rolling.

And in those early days, you may not be earning much — **if anything**.

I understand the desire to outsource as early as possible.

*We all want to be successful as quickly as possible, right?*

And the idea is that freeing up your time on tedious tasks would allow you to focus on the bigger picture.

But building a business — *both offline and online* — requires us to be patient and humble at times.

My best advice, as always, is to avoid spending much — *if anything* — until you have a steady income, however much that may be.

For instance, I didn't outsource any tasks in my own business until I was regularly earning more than \$8,000 per month. That seemed like a good number to me... I could then **afford** to hire help while still earning enough to **pay myself** adequately.

But if you're earning \$0 and you start paying out \$2,000 a month for help, you're gambling on bouncing back from that deficit in months to come. And that approach has led to the ruination of many bloggers that could have otherwise been successful.

[Guard your financial resources tightly](#) until you have some money coming in.

And even then, **only invest \$1 if it will bring you a return of at least \$1 on your investment**.

## Which tasks should you outsource?

If you feel you are ready to outsource some of your work, it's time to consider which tasks you should part with.

Frankly, [just about anything can be outsourced](#)... everything from:

1. Research
2. Design
3. Editing
4. Proofreading
5. SEO
6. Outreach

*...and the list goes on.*



But for most bloggers, we ourselves are the brand behind our blogs. It is our names and our faces that audiences learn to **know, like and trust**.

So it's best to retain some degree of creative control, particularly when it comes to attaching our names and signatures to the content we produce.

For instance, let's say you outsource some of your content writing to a ghostwriter. That might seem like a clever way to free up a lot of time, but ask yourself...

- Is this content written in my voice?
- Do I agree with the points being made?
- Are all statements accurate and factually supported?
- Is this formatted according to my signature style?

If not, you run the risk of alienating some of your current followers and readers who have come to expect a certain level of quality from the content you publish.

Rather than delegate your content creation, consider outsourcing tasks to a freelancer that can be completed objectively, without bias. Here is a **good example** and a **bad example** of how to do just that.

#### **Good Example:**

Please collect data on the efficacy of exit-intent popups.

#### **Bad Example:**

Please collect data on the efficacy of exit-intent popups, and then ghostwrite a blog post for me based on your findings.

*Why is the second example bad?*

Well, let's suppose that based on the research this freelancer does, he or she chooses to ghostwrite a post for you entitled,

*"14 Reasons Why Exit Intent Popups Suck & Only Idiots Use Them"*

Meanwhile, exit-intent popups are prevalent all over your blog.

*You now look like a total dunce.*

**Congratulations.**

This might be an extreme and silly example, but it goes to show the importance of remaining involved in the process of your content creation, even if you allow certain freelancers to publish under their own name.

You still need to vet all work, quality control everything that gets published, and be patient while on-boarding and training help.

Remember, the idea is to free up a chunk of your time to focus on **long-term strategy** and **income-generating activities**... not to completely outsource your entire business.

## Where to find good freelancers

There are a number of places you can find good freelancers who can take some tasks off your plate — but I do say with that a bit of an **asterisk (\*)** on it.

The reason being is that — *as with interviewing for any position, anywhere* — you will always need to do some sifting to find the true gems.

Thanks to the power and global accessibility of the internet, just about anyone can start freelancing.

**The barriers to entry are rather low.**



And while this is great news for entrepreneurial types — *people like you and me* — who may wish to leave the corporate 9-to-5 life behind, it also means that there are a lot of candidates available for hire who may not be able to produce the caliber of work you need.

So, no matter which avenue you choose to find help for hire, be prepared to sort through some lousy candidates to find a good one.

Here are four avenues for sourcing freelancers that I have had success with:

### (1) Personal recommendations

Are you a part of some type of mastermind group? Or perhaps a close-knit community of bloggers or marketers? If so, start by asking some of your personal contacts who they might recommend.

This approach benefits you twice over.

**First**, good people generally know good people.

But **second**, whoever your contacts are connected to will likely take your work seriously, as they don't want to risk disappointing their current client who referred you.

### (2) Forums, groups, communities & blogs

If you blog regularly, odds are that you visit certain forums, groups, communities, and blogs.

Have you noticed a newer blogger who is showing plenty of potential? Perhaps contributing meaningfully to certain threads or groups?

Or perhaps a blogger that has recently published a high-quality guest post on a blog you follow?

It wouldn't hurt to reach out to that person directly and see if he or she is looking for some extra work.

### (3) Upwork, Guru, People Per Hour & Fiverr

I've listed just four sites in the subheading here — but as you may know, there are **many more online job sites for freelancers**.

You could search and sift through any number of active profiles to find freelancers with great reviews and relevant skills to do your job.

Alternatively, you could post a job ad for free on a number of these sites and see who applies to work with you. Yes, you will get applications from duds — *but don't lose hope*.

You will get great applicants, too.

#### (4) Consider a virtual assistant

Perhaps your needs have scaled beyond needing a freelancer to do a few weekly jobs, and you're ready to hire someone for 40 hours a week to handle a large volume of tasks for you.

If so, hiring a virtual assistant might be the best option.

If that is the case, I would like to recommend taking a peek at [OnlineJobs.ph](#) to hire your virtual assistant. This is a job board specifically for Filipino workers.

Now, I know it is our natural tendency in the West to avoid considering offshore labor. We don't want to feel as though we are exploiting anyone, and we often erroneously assume that work done in other parts of the world will somehow be of lower quality.

That said, I can quite confidently dispel **both** of these beliefs as falsehoods.

Both [my wife](#) and I hired Filipino assistants through [OnlineJobs.ph](#) this year. And while we are paying them less than we might pay to a local, Canadian freelancer, we are paying both of them significantly more than they asked for — *a very fair and healthy wage by local Filipino standards, to be honest*.

And both have delivered nothing but **exceptional** work for us so far this year.

Of course, there are plenty of agencies and websites online to connect you with a virtual assistant — I'm strictly mentioning [OnlineJobs.ph](#) because I have had a very positive experience with it.

#### Be sure to vet your freelancers thoroughly

Lastly, before pulling the trigger and hiring a freelancer to work with you, I would recommend spending some time carefully vetting your short list of candidates.

It can be exciting to hire your own help — *especially if this is your first time doing it!*

Over the years, both online and offline, I have hired a number of individuals. And please let me say from experience that the wrong candidate will cause more headaches than he or she is worth.

- From redoing sloppy work on tight deadlines,
- To resolving customer complaints,
- To bouncing back from missed deadlines and absenteeism...

...you'll want to do everything in your power to avoid a costly hiring mistake.

Remember this when it comes time to choose who to work with:



## **Never be afraid to lose a good candidate.**

Take an extra couple of days to carefully vet the person or people you are considering for hire. It's better to lose out on the chance to work with an exceptional candidate than to accidentally make a poor hiring decision.

After you have identified a few potential candidates you might like to work with, start with a short interview.

### **(1) Conduct an initial interview**

Whether this is by phone or Skype, have a short conversation with the candidate. Ask him or her questions, such as:

1. Why are you applying for this job?
2. What are your goals for the next 6 months?
3. How quickly can I count on you to turn my work around?
4. What other tasks and priorities are you working on?
5. What examples of similar work can you show me?
6. Who can you provide as a reference?
7. How well do you work under pressure?

You can develop your own list of questions, of course, but I'd rather have my candidate thinking my job will be challenging than thinking it will be a walk in the park.

Just be sure to look for red flags in their responses. You're going to have to eliminate some candidates, so start now.

#### **Did anyone leave you feeling uneasy when responding to any of your questions?**

If so, lose him or her now. Thank him or her for applying and move on.

### **(2) Do some research**

After conducting initial interviews, dig a bit deeper into each candidate's background.

Check out the work samples and references this person gave you during your interview. Do they check out?

If you found this person through a freelance job site, what do their reviews look like? What types of projects have they done historically?

Review their blog and social media content, too. If you can't seem to find him or her online, it might be a good indication that he or she isn't a good fit.

If you do find their content, review it carefully — *is it any good?* Does it exemplify strong attention to detail?

Is this someone you want your brand or blog to be associated with?

### **(3) Conduct a final interview**

If after the previous two steps you still aren't sure which candidate is right for you, invite all the remaining candidates to a final interview.

Oddly, I've found having a second interview helps to weed out the candidates who weren't serious about your job in the first place. Some find a second interview to be a nuisance and choose to decline or pull a no-show. Even better for you — **you got a fair sense of his or character before making a hiring mistake.**

Those who are still eager to work with you will happily make the time.

Ask any difficult questions you may have remaining, and then give this person a one-off task — *test* — to complete within 24-48 hours.

This might be a single editing job, or a single design job... give your candidate an outline of what you want, and then see what he or she can turn around within your time frame.

*(And yes... pay the candidate for the one-off job whether or not you choose to hire him or her!)*

Generally, based on the work samples that get turned in, you should be able to make a final hiring decision.

## **Being in business for yourself, but not by yourself**

The idea of solopreneurship is appealing, isn't it?

It sounds — *on the surface* — like the perfect combination of entrepreneurship and autonomy. You get to really be the master of your own destiny.

But what most of us figure out rather quickly is that whether we are independent bloggers, eCommerce gurus, coaches, or freelancers ourselves, eventually we need to outsource in order to grow our online businesses.

As a **one-man** or **one-woman** show, we will always be bound by the same number of hours in a week.

And if the eventual goal is to build a lifestyle around our businesses, we are going to need help to scale.

Just make sure you...

1. Don't outsource too soon.
2. Don't outsource tasks you should be doing yourself.
3. Consider multiple avenues to find talented freelancers to work with.
4. Vet all potential candidates carefully before hiring anyone.

And before long, you will be able to enjoy the benefits of earning a lucrative income from anywhere in the world without having to be glued to your desk around the clock.

Do you have questions about **freelancing** or **outsourcing to freelancers**? If so, I would love to answer them for you based on my own experiences as both a **freelancer** and a **blogger**.

Simply leave your question in the **comments** below, and I'll be sure to reply personally.

**Related:** Check out my follow up to this post – [4 Ways Freelance Bloggers Can Avoid Clients From Hell](#).