

# Three Essential Things To Do Before You Outsource

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This week we're celebrating the release of the latest book in the [Savvy Solopreneur's Guide](#) series. For a limited time the new ebook, [The Savvy Solopreneur's Guide to Outsourcing](#) will be FREE from Kindle stores worldwide, so do grab a copy while you can.

*Update: The free promotion is over, but [The Savvy Solopreneur's Guide to Outsourcing](#) is now just \$2.99 from Amazon.*

Today I'll be sharing a few tips from the book, and a few resources that will compliment the book (scroll to the bottom of the post for those). Ready to learn the three essential things to do before you outsource? Let's dig in.

## Step 1: Eliminate

Before you decide what to outsource, take a little time to get really clear on which tasks need doing and why. Paying to outsource a task that you currently do, but that has no real benefit for your business, is madness.

If it's not benefiting your business, eliminate it completely. In his book [The 4 Hour Work Week](#), author Tim Ferris sums up this step as a very succinct idea: "Eliminate before you delegate". He goes on to explain:

"Delegation is to be used as a further step in reduction, not as an excuse to create more movement and add to the unimportant. Remember, unless something is well-defined and important, no-one should be doing it."

This is a great process to go through, even if you can't afford to outsource yet. Cut out the unnecessary, including meetings, phone calls, returning email that doesn't need to be returned and reading newsletters, magazines and other material that isn't totally relevant to what you're doing in your business right now.

Get ruthless. Have old niche blogs or sites up that make no money? Delete them. Maintaining social media accounts on platforms that don't serve or attract your audience? Delete them too. Spending time reading newsletters with no actionable content? Unsubscribe. Going to meetings that produce no tangible results? Stop attending.

Now you're ready for the next step.

## Step 2: Automate

Look at what you've got left and see if any of it can be easily automated, perhaps using software or systems that you already have access to? If you pay someone to do a task that can be easily and cheaply automated, while maintaining adequate quality, you may find they automate it anyway, and pocket your money.

Can you automate some of your social media activities through [Buffer](#), [Hootsuite](#) or [JustReTweet](#)?

Can you automate sales funnels, follow up emails to your list, or an ecourse using an affordable autoresponder, like [Aweber](#) or [Mailchimp](#)?

Can a software tool like [Grammarly](#) reduce your need for proofreaders and copy editors? Can buying in [PLR content](#) or purchasing a [premium theme](#) for your company blog eliminate your need for a content creator or



designer?

Not everything lends itself to automation, and I don't advise too many 'set it and forget it' systems. They can trip you up. No-one wants to be getting outdated information with broken links as part of a course you automated three years ago. You still need to monitor what you automate, to ensure it's all running smoothly.

Automation can fill some gaps, though. Look at what can be automated now, and bear automation in mind as you decide which tasks to do and which to outsource in the future.

### **Step 3: Systemize**

When it comes to running a business, systems are your friend. Templates, checklists and step-by-step instructions are your friend. Project management tools are your friend.

Develop systems, templates and checklists for all the tasks you do regularly, that other people could follow

You can make templates for blog posts, emails, newsletters, books, info products, book covers, graphics, blog images, and infographics.

Systems help maximize productivity, even before you're ready to outsource. Getting templates set up will help you run your business more efficiently. And when you're ready to outsource, it will allow you to hand things over easily.

You can even buy in templates to save time. I like this package of [50 book title templates](#), from from [The Book Ninja](#), except that I think they're misnamed. They actually make great article/blog post titles (as well as book titles). They give you an easy way to come up with your next headline, and when you're ready to employ content creators you can simply tell them to create their titles using these templates.

For more complicated tasks, checklists are your best friend. A checklist lets you keep track of exactly what you've done and what you still need to get to. When you're ready to outsource the same checklist allows you to let your team member know exactly what a set task requires. When everything on the checklist is checked off, she's done. The task is complete. She can't have missed a step or forgotten anything. Simple.

You will, of course, have to create the checklist, unless you can buy it in, too. If you're an author, for example, [The Book Ninja](#) can help again. They have an [Ultimate Checklist Bundle](#), with 37 checklists to help with every aspect of writing, publishing and marketing your book. They'll help you get organized straight away, and when you're ready to outsource, you can simply give these checklists to your assistant, or relevant team members, and know they're working through every task and checking everything off as they go.

Not all checklists can be bought in, of course. Mostly you'll have to create them yourself. Creating a checklist takes time, but it only needs to be done once.

Once it's done, you can work from it every time you do that particular task. And when you do start outsourcing? It doesn't matter if you change who you work with, or take on extra staff. You can use the same checklist every time.

### **More resources for new outsourcers**

[Freeeup.com](#)

The folks over at [Freeeup.com](#) are currently offering a free ebook, [Learn the Ten Common Mistakes of Outsourcing](#), to all new subscribers. If you're brand new to outsourcing, this could be a really useful resource.

[Outsource Weekly](#)

This online course shows you exactly how to outsource, step-by-step, via weekly lessons, delivered to your inbox, in PDF format for easy printing. Properly applied, these lessons will take you up several levels in the way you run your business over the course of the next 12 months. Take a closer look [here](#).

## [The 4 Hour Work Week](#)

I've just re-read [The 4 Hour Work Week](#), by Tim Ferriss. It's a great book to have on your shelf if you're a solopreneur who wants to work less and earn more by making good choices, automating and outsourcing. Get it [here](#).

Don't forget to check out [The Savvy Solopreneur's Guide to Outsourcing](#) at Amazon stores worldwide, and sign up below to get your [free printable workbook](#) and other goodies to help you run your online biz.