

Quick Start Guide:

# How to Get Started Hiring & Managing Freelancers

# Introduction

Getting started outsourcing with freelancers can seem complicated, so we created this quick start guide to get you on the right path.

In this guide, you'll learn about

- How to get started hiring
- How to begin working with freelancers
- How to resolve issues that come up
- How to scale up using freelancers long term

This guide is filled with best practices and helpful tips and tricks to outsourcing & scaling your business effectively.

Enjoy!

# Hiring Freelancers

Ready to get started hiring? Here's what you need to know when making your first hires.

## Determine What You Should Outsource First With A Simple Exercise

If you aren't sure who you should hire first, use a simple exercise to bring some clarity.

If you're overwhelmed & wearing too many hats:

1. Write down a list of all the things you do on a day to day basis
2. Take a look at the list and think which would be the easiest ones to get off your plate. Think about things that take up a lot of time, but don't move the business forward
3. Select the tasks and decide which level of freelancer you need (see the next tip).

If you're trying to execute something new that you don't know how to do:

1. Get clear on what the end goal is
2. Get a base level of understanding on how you think you'd like to accomplish it
3. Hire an expert to help you flesh out what actually needs done

## Hire The Right Level Freelancer For Your Needs

Want to know how much you should be paying for a freelancer? We like to divide it up into 3 groups to help bring some clarity.

1. Basic Level (\$5-\$15 / hour, depending on location)

These are “followers.” They are fast learners, but you’ll need to train them to follow your system and show them what you want them to do.

They are best suited for accomplishing basic tasks and following systems and processes that you already have set in place that require no previous specialized skills.

## 2. Mid Level (\$10 – \$30 / hour, depending on location)

These freelancers have a specialization, or previous experience in certain areas.

You won’t have to train these freelancers on their skill set, but they generally will need guidance on what you’d like to accomplish.

## 3. Expert Level Freelancers (\$20-\$57+ / hour, depending on location)

These are freelancers with high level skills and experience. They are consultants, strategists, and planners, and are useful in certain cases to execute the most difficult and skill-intensive tasks.

Expert level freelancers are a good fit if you don’t have a process in place yet, or you’re looking to execute a new strategy.

## Save Time By Hiring Pre-Vetted Freelancers

Finding a good freelancer can feel like digging for a diamond in the rough.

You often need to dig through hundreds of applications and messages, then spend your time interviewing multiple applicants over the course of a few weeks.

Instead, you can save a massive amount of time by hiring pre-vetted freelancers with our service from [FreeUp](#). Instead of interviewing hundreds of applicants yourself, we do the work for you by pre-vetting freelancers for skills, communication, and attitude.

We only let the top 1% of applicants onto the platform, which means for every 100 people that apply, on average we only let in 1.

So if you're looking to bring on 1 more person to your team, you could interview 100 like we did, or just use FreeUp and cut straight to the top!

[Click here to sign up for a free account.](#)

## Sometimes Cheap Is Expensive

As the saying goes, you get what you pay for. You're not going to get an "expert" for \$5 per hour. Be realistic with your budget and pay what needs to be paid for the right person for your business.

"A players" may be more expensive upfront, but often can do the work of 3-5 normal freelancers, at a better quality, with better results, even faster.

Don't be fooled by the cheap prices, and instead focus on hiring for quality. You'll be much happier in the long term.

## Ask About Their Computer & Internet Connection Upfront

When you outsource, make sure to ask about computer & internet connection. Not everyone has a great connection or a great computer, so it's important to verify this in the beginning.

At FreeUp, we vet and verify internet connections with a tool called [Speedtest.net](#) which can confirm the freelancer's internet speed.

Ask your freelancers about their connection (get proof) and computer situation so you don't run into any surprises!

## Use Test Projects Before Onboarding

Before fully hiring and onboarding a freelancer, it's a great idea to give them a small test project to make sure it's a great fit for both of you.

Choose something that can be done in 30 minutes or less, and is directly related to the job that they will be hired for. Pay them for this time.

This will be a good indication of their skill, effort, and communication before you go through a full onboarding.

## 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.

This can also be risky if that person quits, so it's a good idea to spread out your hires!

## Ask About How They Take Feedback

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.

## Find Freelancers That Underpromise & Over-Deliver

Are you interviewing a freelancer that sounds too good to be true? Do they claim they can do it all?

Surely there are some supercharged A+ player freelancers that can do it all, but it's uncommon. If you have someone promising that they can do it all, it can be a cause for alarm.

The best workers are honest about timelines and expectations. Be wary of freelancers that set unrealistic deadlines.

## Get Transparency About Who's Doing The Work

Some freelancers are solo, some subcontract small tasks, others operate as an agency. Make sure to ask about who is going to be doing the work and set the expectation of transparency.

## 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.

# Getting Started Working With Freelancers

## Hold A Formal Onboarding With Freelancers

After deciding on who to hire, it's time to give a formal onboarding. This is a great way to welcome a freelancer into your business, get them familiar with your processes, and establish expectations upfront.

In the onboarding, you'll want to:

- Welcome them to your business
- Introduce them to key personnel
- Share an overview of what they need to know about your business
- Create necessary accounts and/or give them access to key resources
- Set expectations about communication
- Set expectations about work hours

By taking extra time to make sure they have everything they need, they will feel much more welcome and invested in your team.

By clarifying and setting expectations from the beginning, you'll both be on the same page and this will help solve issues that could creep up later.

A good kickoff meeting can be the difference between success and failure with a freelancer.

## Share How Their Work Impacts The Company

Give your freelancer context into the “why” of the work you are assigning to them.

This gives their work purpose, you’ll get more buy-in, and you’ll see an overall performance increase by taking the time to do this simple step.

## Set Clear Expectations & Deadlines

Create a clear set of expectations on everything that is important to you.

- When you want them to work (should they be on slack, or on chat?)
- How you want them to communicate (do you prefer email, asana, etc?)
- When projects should be completed
- What to do if they have questions or run into issues

When getting started with projects, create clear project scopes, provide guidelines, and set deadlines for completion. Show them what it should look like when done.

The clearer the instructions, the better your results will be.

## 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.

## Create & Update SOPs

SOPs (or Standard Operating Procedures) are the backbone of efficient work. These documents clearly define how a process should be completed.

Start by writing a basic, documented SOP for each task you'd like your freelancer to complete.

This can be as simple as a google doc with instructions and steps.

If a task comes out different than you originally expected, go back to the SOP and adjust it so that it doesn't happen again, provided they continue following the instructions.

## Use Short Screencast Videos To Help Explain Tasks

Want to speed up your communication?

Shoot a quick screencast video to explain how you'd like a task done with software like [Loom](#) or [Soapbox](#).

These softwares allow you to easily show your freelancer what you mean, and is perfect for explaining clearly what you'd like done!

## 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 small, time-sucking things off your plate and see how the freelancers work with more responsibility.

## Schedule Weekly 1-on-1s For Feedback

Set a schedule for 1-on-1s to make sure you're giving consistent feedback.

During the 1-on-1 you can:

- Ask them about how they are doing personally and show them that you care about them
- Get updates on project status
- Give feedback on work done
- Clarify goals
- Help remove any roadblocks they have

This also gives you a chance to review their work in stages to avoid being disappointed once the project is complete.

A 15-30 min 1-on-1 meeting performed consistently can make a massive difference in your success outsourcing!

## 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.

Ask them about their life, their family, and what they want to accomplish. Show an interest in them as a person and establish rapport.

Building strong relationships protects your business over everything else.

## Be Honest With Freelancers & Get Explanations

If you don't understand something a freelancer is doing, ask them to explain.

For example, if you're working with developers and don't understand the terminology, tell them upfront. Ask them to give you 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.

# Resolving Issues

When working with freelancers, you'll inevitably run into issues from time to time, but that's no reason to worry. Follow this simple advice to resolve problems quickly and get back on track!

## Don't Settle For Subpar Work

If your team is not performing at the level that you want, and you've given consistent feedback, don't be afraid to part ways.

Let go of the low performers, bring in new talent, and reset expectations with everyone.

## Don't Assume, Always Verify

As a business owner, it is easy to get upset and frustrated when something goes wrong. 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.

## Don't Force A Freelancer To Stay

If someone wants to quit, in general it's best to just let them go. Convincing someone to stay rarely works out and usually ends up in a bigger mess.

## Reset Expectations If Necessary

If a VA / freelancer who has done great work starts going downhill, do the following to reset:

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

# Scaling Up With Freelancers

## Maximize Productivity By Giving Each Full Time Employee A Freelancer To Work With

Do you have full time employees? Give them all a personal virtual assistant to maximize their productivity.

Your full time employees are doing work at their salary that should be done by less expensive labor. By giving them each a freelancer to delegate lower level tasks, this allows your business to skyrocket productivity without skyrocketing costs.

This also trains them to practice delegation, which everyone needs help with!

## Tap Into Freelancers For Knowledge & Ideas

Ask freelancers about their systems and processes they have created throughout building their freelance business.

The good ones will have ideas for you to implement, and it will make it a lot easier for your business.

## Create A Career Path / Incentivized Structure

All great freelancers are looking to grow their business, just like you.

By creating a clear path for them to grow within your business, or an incentive structure, it will help motivate them to perform.

When your business is small, it will be hard to define this path, but realize that it will be vital for keeping top talent onboard long term and will keep them focused on growing your business.

## Keep People Focused On Their Strengths

Don't try to teach people to be good at their weaknesses. From a business side, this is a bad investment because it's often too difficult to execute.

Instead, focus on maximizing people's strengths and have them avoid doing things they are not good at.

## Become Your Freelancer's Favorite Client

Think of creative ways to make yourself their favorite client, and they will perform even better for you.

- Ask them who their favorite client is and why
- Make strong communication a priority
- Respect their time.
- Honor your word
- Build a personal relationship with them

## Give Positive Feedback & Motivate Freelancers

Keep freelancers you hire motivated with the following:

- Tell them you appreciate them
- Share their wins publicly
- Point out something awesome they did in the past month

# What's Next?

Ready to get started hiring freelancers and scaling up your business?

[Click here to join FreeUp.](#)

Have any questions?

[Book a call here](#) or just shoot us an email at [support@freeup.net](mailto:support@freeup.net)