

54 Tips from Outsourcing Pros

By John Jonas, Creator of OnlineJobs.ph

All of the following pointers come straight from the experience of *successful outsourcers*.

Whether you are just starting out or you're currently managing a dozen Filipino employees, you may benefit from some of this hard-earned knowledge. The links all lead to recorded success story interviews hosted by OnlineJobs.ph creator, John Jonas.

“Outsourcing is a business, it’s not immoral or unethical. It’s buying low and selling high to make a profit. Scott’s employees feel they are getting paid well for their work and his clients feel they are getting a good deal. That’s good business.” (John Jonas with [Scott Smith 12:45](#))

The Hiring Process

Qualities To Look For

- **Consider hiring a Filipino worker as a long-term investment. The more you put into it, the more you will get back over time. This is especially important when you train.**
- **Look for someone with a decent internet connection.** Because their work is internet-based and internet quality varies in the Philippines, Tim Fahndrich looks primarily for a Filipino worker with a GOOD INTERNET CONNECTION. Then he narrows his search by looking for skills that meet the job requirements. ([Tim Fahndrich 10:45](#)) Remember that almost all potential employees will have some internet connection issues- consider paying for a better connection.

- **Look for candidates with good/advanced English proficiency.** Sometimes it's more important to be able to communicate well than to have a professional specialist who doesn't understand what you want ([Dean Soto 13:50](#), [Scott Yarnall 11:00](#)). John Jonas says be careful not to rule out the masses- some jobs require better English than others, and you can get away with hiring technical people with less impressive English skills (as long as you can decently communicate with them).
- Hint: You can use the “advanced search” tool on OnlineJobs.ph to find employees with “advanced” English skills. ([Scott Yarnall 11:00](#))
- **Look for someone who wants FULL-TIME employment.** Several of our experienced outsourcers (including John) strongly recommend hiring Filipino workers who are looking for full-time work as employees (as opposed to part-time or freelance workers). In their experience, if an employee is part-time, they are either out looking for another part-time job or they are currently working one. This commonly decreases their work quality. A full-time employee becomes an investment in time and training, and eventually they learn to fill in the gaps in your business (as opposed to a contract worker, who finishes a task and disappears). And, considering the way salaries work in the Philippines, it's much more economical to find a full-time person who only works for you. ([Tim Fahndrich 7:20](#), [John Jonas with Chris Johnstone 16:15](#), [David Ostiguy 11:27](#), [Eric Genesoto 11:35](#))

*Thoughts on “previous experience:”

- Some employers like to hire employees using the “clean slate” philosophy: Rather than hiring someone with experience, they hire someone with great understanding and communication skills. Then you can teach and train them to fit into your ideals and your system. Sometimes it's better to have someone who follows instructions and has good communication than someone who has experience in a certain task. ([Evan and George 3:40](#))
- On the other hand, some employers would rather hire someone who's experienced and can get “straight to work.” Evaluate your needs and hire accordingly. ([Eric Genesoto 16:00](#))

Methods

- **Expect to have some employee turnover until you find the perfect fit for your business.** Hiring often includes a “learning curve,” just like it would in the States or anywhere else. ([Evan and George 9:45](#))

- Where to find them: Our pro outsourcers have had success finding workers with OnlineJobs.ph, BestJobs.ph, Odesk and the Philippines Craigslist. Each hiring site has its advantages.
- **Encourage your applicants to ask YOU questions-** this will help clarify the job expectations and weed out less qualified or more intimidated candidates. ([David Ostiguy 6:55](#))

To hire, find a lot of different potential candidates, and send them all an identical email.

- Prepare a list of questions for Filipino workers that will help you understand their abilities and facilitate the process of elimination (or send them a simple task to do). Send the same email to a large pool of applicants and eliminate those who are not prompt to respond or those who did not follow directions. ([David Solomon 2:11](#), [Tim Fahndrich 2:40](#), [Derral 6:00](#), [Evan and George 10:48](#), [Scott Yarnall 11:33](#)).
- **Hint: You can't "cherry pick" Filipino workers.** Response rate can be as low as 10%-15%. Contact the masses and you'll have a better response and a larger pool to pick from. ([Evan and George 13:05](#))
- **Ask your project manager to interview potential candidates-** they literally speak the same language, so he may get a better idea of a Filipino worker's character and work ethic. ([Derral 33:55](#))

OR, to save time, create an ad on OnlineJobs.ph and let Filipino workers come to you. Then filter them using the methods above. ([Eric Genesoto](#))

- **Hint:** Don't use your personal Skype account for business interviews. ([Evan and George 10:48](#))
- **Hint:** Don't inundate Filipino workers with information when you email them about hiring. If you give email them 2 pages of detailed job requirements, it will scare them off. To them, it means, "you need to be perfect at everything right now." ([David Solomon, 21:05](#))

Tips

- **When looking at qualifications, expect applicants to exaggerate.** Learn to expect it. When they say, "professional," it means they have some experience to where they're comfortable with the task. You can always train them more extensively. ([David Ostiguy 6:00](#))
- **Network to find new employees.** Chris Johnstone uses his current employees' connections to find additional, dependable VAs. ([Chris Johnstone, 13:05](#))

- Hiring specific positions:
 - If you need to hire a programmer, look for how many years of experience they have. Programming experience and proficiency are usually directly related. The more experience they have, the better they are. ([John Jonas with David Solomon 13:20](#))
 - A good way to test a programmer's skills: give them an error page from a test site to see if they can fix it- if they have basic skills, they should be able to accomplish the task without any trouble. ([Derral 16:06](#))

Take Action And Get To Work

- **“It doesn't matter how good you can do it, if it doesn't get done...WHO CARES!”** It's not possible for you to complete every detailed task in a successful internet business. There's not that much time in the day. Learn to delegate and hire more employees as you need them. The sooner you delegate/hire, the sooner you'll have more time to focus on growing your business. ([Marvin Webster 1:35](#), [Evan and George 19:45](#))
- **Begin by making a sale** and focus your business and outsourcing around what you did to make that sale (other details will follow). ([Scott Yarnall 3:00](#))
- **DON'T personally get caught up in tweaking** and tools on Wordpress (or any other minor aspect of your business). It wastes your personal time and resources- which delays your sales. Spend your time selling, and delegate Wordpress and monotonous tasks to your VAs, even if you can do it better. Teach them. ([John Jonas and Scott Smith, 4:35](#))
- **If your business is internet-based, don't take on any jobs from clients that you can't outsource.** If your business offers a service that you can't outsource or delegate, you can't “replace yourself.” ([Eric Genesoto 6:50](#))

Management

- **Go into outsourcing with realistic expectations.** You're hiring a human, just like you would stateside. Both you and they will make mistakes. But with clear communication and lots of encouragement, their employment can be a very profitable investment. ([Tim Fahndrich 18:10](#))

Start Slowly

- **Don't hire someone to do everything.** To begin, hire someone to create/manage 1 task. Once they become proficient at that 1 thing, you can give them an additional task to learn about and manage and so on. It's better to have *two team members* who are each really good at the 1 or 2 things they do than *one team member* who's a jack of all trades: master of none. For maximum productivity, keep your "specialized" employees in their "specialized" fields (ie: one employee to do SEO, one to do video marketing, one to do social media etc...) ([Scott Smith 3:30/14:30](#), [Chris Johnstone 9:24](#), [David Ostiguy 11:10](#), [Derral 13:00](#))

Communication Is The Key

- **Ask your Filipino employees to send you a daily report** of what they accomplished. That way you can keep track of their progress without micromanaging. Like Ronald Reagan said, "Trust, but verify." ([David Ostiguy 10:10](#), [Evan and George 24:14](#))
- **Understand the basics of what you're asking your employees to do.** You don't have to be a pro at every little detail that you outsource (like wordpress, SEO, etc...). But you're a much more effective leader when you have a good idea of what you're asking your VAs to do. ([Scott Smith 8:20](#))
- **When your employees are new, give them step-by-step instructions and clearly spell their tasks out for them.** Be excruciatingly detailed. Especially when your employees are new, make sure they have all of the information they need to accomplish their tasks. This keeps them on-task and keeps them from "shying away" from tasks and disappearing altogether. ([David Solomon, 7:15](#), [John Jonas and Scott Smith 30:40](#), [Chris Johnstone 9:24](#))

- **Be open to learning from your VA.** They can have great ideas on how to improve proficiency and better your business. Listen to their suggestions. ([Evan and George 7:50](#))

Find A System That Works For You

- **Find a system that works for you.** Experiment with different ways to keep track of projects and communicate with your VAs. ([David Solomon, 14:50](#))
- “Basecamp” is a system that works for both Tim Fahndrich and Dean Soto. Google tools, Camtasia, Gotomeeting and Evernote are also used by some of our best outsourcers. On the other hand, some have found that email is the only tool they need to manage their team. ([Tim Fahndrich 4:20/9:05](#), [Dean Soto 21:30](#), [David Solomon 7:15](#))
- **Use Jing to communicate.** It’s an essential managing tool used by almost all of our pros. Its screenshots and videos can help outline your trainings and clarify your expectations. Use it liberally. ([Tim Fahndrich 9:05](#), [Derral 36:38](#), [Eric Genesoto 16:30](#))
- **Gauge their productivity by daily email communication, rather than forcing them to track and report hours. If you are satisfied with their productivity level, that’s enough!** If you insist on tracking hours, use Tracklabor.com. ([John Jonas and Chris Johnstone 7:20](#), [John Jonas with Scott Yarnall 13:20](#))

Keep Them Busy

- **Keep your employees busy-** testing new projects/methods and other things. If something isn’t working, let them test other ways to do it. It gives them a sense of accomplishment and it keeps them busy. If you don’t give them enough work, they can get used to the slow pace and the quality of their work may begin to wane. Let them finish a project before starting something else so they have a sense of worth. ([John Jonas with Derral 22:30](#), [Eric Genesoto 14:58](#))
- **Have projects ready in advanced for your employees-** they finish before you know it. Outsourcing pro David Solomon is always two projects ahead of his employees so he always has something for them to do. That way, they don’t get bored and you get a maximum ROI. ([David Solomon, 23:30](#))
- **Map out what you want to get done before you even hire your VA.** Have a checklist of tasks and ask them to send you a daily report of what they’re working on, what they need help with and if they need more tasks. The

most successful and productive employees are willing to communicate in that way. ([Tim Fahndrich 15:15](#))

- **Use your employee's downtime to generate passive income.** If an employee isn't busy enough to fill their work days, give them tasks to generate passive income. Use affiliate marketing, generating through AdSense, etc... Find small and simple ways to build passive income (that will generate and multiply in the future). This also keeps them from looking for other work or worrying that they don't have a stable job. ([Derral 19:00](#))

Project Managers

- **Don't try to hire a project manager off the bat. After you have a few Filipino employees, single one out to train as a project manager. THEN TRAIN THEM WELL.** Give them clear instructions on what to do and how to do it. It will really help grow your business in the long run. ([Scott Smith 6:33](#), [Chris Johnstone 15:00](#), [Derral 28:15](#))

TREAT THEM WELL ***this is the most common advice from outsourcing pros.***

- **Relationships are the most important investment.** Marvin Webster explains that relationships are the foundation of a good business. It doesn't all have to be professional- ask them about their families, if they like their work etc... Take time to chat with them on Skype about things other than work. ([Marvin Webster 4:25](#), [Derral 31:40](#), [Eric Genesoto 17:30](#))
- **Be liberal with compliments.** Show your gratitude: if your employees do good work, give lots of verbal praise and reward with bonuses. You don't necessarily need to get caught up in the pay raise race. Give praise liberally and it will pay off. ([Scott Smith 33:40](#), [Chris Johnstone 20:00](#), [Derral 31:40](#))

Other Thoughts:

- Tim Fahndrich has employees work the "night shift." They are required to be on Skype during regular U.S. business hours and he asks them to do their work during that time. That way, they don't lose precious communication time; questions and concerns can be addressed immediately. ([Tim Fahndrich 4:25](#))
- **NEVER give out the names of your employees.** You don't want to risk

- anyone taking them from you. ([John Jonas with Dean Soto 8:25](#))
- **When outsourcing customer service, be sure to take mediums of communication into consideration.** The internet connection is not always dependable in the Philippines, and that can fragment phone calls. Consider offering an email option for clients to touch base with your VAs. Then ask them to give you at least 24 hours to respond. ([Eric Genesoto 9:50](#))

When to let them go

- **Give your employees realistic deadlines for their projects** (work it out with them so they aren't scared away or intimidated). Marvin Webster uses "The 3 Strikes Rule:" if they fail to meet deadline more than three times, their productivity may not be worth your investment. Evan and George use a similar approach. ([Evan and George 18:18](#), [Marvin Webster 16:00](#))

Payment

Give bonuses/ raises based on performance. Monitor your employee's work and compensate them fairly.

- John Jonas' experience suggests that if you overpay people, it builds extreme loyalty. ([David Solomon 24:15](#))
- **Watch the exchange rate in the Philippines.** Sometimes it goes down and it becomes more difficult for your employee's family to live on your agreed amount. Be sure to check on the exchange rate on occasion and take it into consideration. ([David Solomon, 25:40](#))
- Use [EasyPay](#) from OnlineJobs.ph. There's no wait time, the exchange rate is the best and there are no additional fees.
- **Don't prepay for work.** Though most Filipinos are honest by nature, it's not worth the chance of getting burned. ([John Jonas with David Ostiguy 10:10](#))
- **Pay your employees on time;** their livelihoods depend on it. They have bills that are due just like you. ([Eric Genesoto 18:05](#))
- Don't forget to pay the 13th month. It's a month's worth of salary bonus that should be paid at the beginning of December. If your employee hasn't worked for you for a full year, it should be pro-rated. You should even pay 13th month to employees who no longer work for you (prorated to whatever time they did work for you).



Business Ideas

- Buy your employee a generator so the continuous power/internet outages don't interfere with their work. ([Derral 35:40](#))
 - Use your people to generate leads and market to them. ([David Ostiguy 4:05](#))
 - Save time and manage Wordpress using MOWSEO- it gives you at-a-glance access to all of your pages and posts so you can keep track of them all. It also uses icons to let you know whether tasks are done and/or if there's a major problem with a post or publication. It also lets you know if each post/page has been SEO-ed correctly. ([Evan and George 23:00](#))
 - There are so many ways to make money online, build your confidence by finding an internet entrepreneur you can trust who gives you tools to succeed with certain methods. ([Scott Yarnall 4:20](#))
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[OnlineJobs.ph](#) is the world's largest and safest online database to find and hire rockstar Filipino workers. Grow your business and increase your freetime; post a job or search over 500,000 to find the right-fit worker for your business.