

The HiveDesk Guide to Hiring and Managing Remote Workers





As Internet connections become faster and as online communication becomes easier, more organizations – large and small – are able to outsource projects to remote workers. Managed properly, employers are seeing great results from their remote workers.

To get started outsourcing work for your organization, look at opportunities where others have had success with outsourcing: call centers, virtual assistants, transcription, online teaching, remote tech support, and freelance writing. And, read this paper to better understand the benefits of outsourcing and how to hire and manage your remote workers based on what we've learned about outsourcing here at HiveDesk.

Benefits of Outsourcing

Outsourcing projects to remote workers has many benefits, such as:

- **Reducing time to market** — When you bring on extra talent, you can make things happen faster.
- **Saving money** — Access to remote workers leverages different wages paid around the globe for similar type work so you get highly skilled workers for less cost than you might pay locally.
- **Avoiding layoffs** — When you just hire people to complete the projects you need done, you don't have to hire full-time employees that stay on the payroll with nothing to do once a project is completed.
- **Improving quality** — Some organizations see quality improvements when they contract work out through new service level agreements created for new projects.
- **Accessing talent** — By looking beyond your in-house skills and into a global market, you may find a larger talent pool than you'd find locally.
- **Scaling production** — Outsourcing workers helps you manage increases or decreases of workflow across your organization.

How to Hire Remote Workers

When you're hiring remote workers, it helps to look certain things in the candidates you're interviewing. Based on our experience in hiring, we find that it helps to look for the following traits:

- **Time Management Skills** – Because your contractors will be working without your direct supervision, they need to be able to demonstrate that they can manage themselves in order to complete the work you are giving them on deadline.
- **Ability to Take Initiative (And Ask Questions Too)** – Chances are that your workers will be working at different times than you. You want to know that they're not holding up work while they are waiting for instructions from you. At the same time, if they aren't sure what to do, you'd rather have them stop and ask the right questions rather than waste 12 hours that you're paying for going down the wrong path.
- **Goal Orientation** – Make sure each member of your remote team understands your overall goals and how their work feeds into achieving them. Understanding goals helps everyone to work better with each other and you.
- **Reliable Results** – You need to know that you can trust your workers to produce consistent and reliable results. Look at examples of past work that they've done and ask how they completed assignments. Make reference calls yourself to their former employers to ask about their work quality and ability to hit deadlines.

Hiring the remote workers is challenging. Do the work upfront to ensure that you are hiring the best employees for your particular projects. If work quality is not where you need it to be, handle it immediately. Give constructive criticism with examples of what is wrong and how to improve it.

How to Manage Your Remote Team

Managing a remote team is a challenge especially when you have never met the team in person. While every manager has his or her own style of management, when it comes to managing workers remotely, there are a few tips that all managers can use for achieving productivity:

- **Plan your project in advance** - Know what needs to be done and what each worker will be doing to complete the project. If you are managing multiple workers, have an idea ahead of time as to how everyone's work will come together effectively at deadline time.
- **Start new workers on simpler tasks** - You have a good idea of what your experienced workers can do for you, but you don't know what new workers can do no matter what their credentials look like. Start your new workers on simple tasks. By checking their work regularly, you'll spot small problems before they become big problems.
- **Let everyone know expectations up front** - Put your expectations in writing. Don't worry about putting in too much detail. It's better to err on too much information than not enough.
- **Reach out and ask how it's going** - Don't assume that your workers are going to come to you if they have a question. You're the manager and you are paying for the work your workers are doing, so make sure you're getting your money's worth. Check in through e-mail or chat to see how things are going. You might be surprised to learn that your directions were unclear or that there's an issue.
- **Say "thank you"** - As part of completing your project, remember to say "thank you" to your team. You may want to work with them again on another project. They'll remember you as someone who gave them good direction and paid them on time and they'll be eager to work with you again.

How to Pay Your Remote Workers

Remote workers may charge for their work by the hour or on a monthly retainer basis. With hourly workers, you may be charged on a sliding scale with one hourly rate for administrative work and a higher hourly rate for high-end skills like website maintenance or database management.

For most work, the range in hourly pay is largely based on experience level and the tasks performed. You'll want to negotiate the pay rate with your workers based on a couple of factors:



- Is this a one-time project like the creation of a logo or brochure?
- Are you hiring someone to be part of your team long-term?
- What needs to get done?
- Does your employee have his/her own equipment or do you need to provide it?
- What references can your worker provide?
- What other projects like yours has this worker completed? Can you see examples?

Before you start some projects, a new worker may require partial payment up front before getting started. After that, you'll most likely be paying your employees off of time sheets or the invoices that they submit to you. Invoices should contain:

- Worker's name, contact information, and the date
- Amount of hours worked for you and the tasks performed
- Amount of dollars per hour charged
- Terms of payment, i.e., 14 days within receipt of invoice
- How to pay, i.e., check, direct deposit, or PayPal

Once fair pay rates are established and work is performed on time and at the expected level, paying your outsourced workers should become a turnkey process. If you are happy with your worker, pay them on time. Nothing destroys the employer/employee relationship faster than nonpayment for work completed.

What Remote Workers Want You To Know

Recently, one of our HiveDesk customers wrote to us to let us know that she got her HiveDesk account so that she could show her boss how hard she is working. This is more common than you might think. Remote workers want you to know that just because they are not in regular staff meetings or having one-on-one meetings with you, they are still working hard to do the job they were hired to do.

Summary

With HiveDesk, it's easy to manage your remote team because you can monitor what each member of your team is doing, keep track of the time that they are working for you, and get everyone paid on time.



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