

Lesson 1 – Welcome to How to Outsource 101

Over the next 9 days you'll receive information about outsourcing. My goal is to help you create a more profitable and less stressful business. Sounds good doesn't it?

So, what are we waiting for? Let's get started. We both know that the best place to start is at the beginning, of course. Today we're going to find out exactly what outsourcing is.

Outsourcing is the act of contracting out business tasks to someone else for completion. Outsourcing is a way for business owners, like you, to:

- Get more done in your business.
- Save time and money.
- And more...

There's a common misconception about outsourcing that needs to be cleared up while we're on the subject. Many think that outsourcing involves sending work to people in other countries who work for pennies and perform the work below standard. That's not what we're talking about here. There are ways to outsource work to those who are professionals in their respective fields and will work to give you above par results – wherever they live.

There are a variety of tasks that you can outsource in your online business and we're going to discuss those later in the course, but for now start thinking about everything you do in your business. Do you handle it all yourself? If so, you're working yourself way too hard. Or as Rich Schefren says "You're working for a lunatic".

Stop spinning your wheels and stop living for your business. If you're feeling overworked and underpaid, then you need to sit down with your boss (yourself) and give yourself a good talking to.

Believe it or not, those who do every single thing in their business are actually stalling their business from growth. It's time to create a lucrative business without working yourself so hard.

Stick around and I'll show you how.

Tomorrow, we'll cover... "The Benefits of Outsourcing"

Lesson 2 - The Benefits of Outsourcing – Why Do It?

Yesterday we determined what outsourcing is (and even what it's not). Today, let's go over five of the many benefits of outsourcing in your business.

- * You'll get more accomplished.
- * You can save time.
- * Something we all want -- save money.
- * You'll be able to focus on your strengths as a business owner.
- * And, most importantly, you'll grow your business.

Now, let's look at each of these benefits a bit more in depth. First (this one is pretty obvious) by outsourcing you will get more done in your business. Let's face it there are only 24 hours in a day, but when you enlist the help of others you can actually add hours to your day. Yes, we've now figured out how to add more time to your day. (shhh... don't tell your competition)

That brings me to the next benefit of outsourcing. You can save time by outsourcing in your business. You'll not only save time just by getting more done with the help of assistants, but also because you aren't wasting your valuable time learning how to tackle tasks that you don't have to do.

Think about that for a minute, is there something you need to do in your business but you have to take the time to learn how to do it before you can implement it? Instead of spending hours learning something you may only use once or twice in your business, let someone else do it that already knows how.

Now the next benefit is saving money. Now, you might be wondering how paying someone to do something for you equates to saving money, but trust me it does. In the long run, your time is valuable. Let's say you value your time at \$50 an hour and it will take you 2 hours to complete a task, but you could easily hire someone for \$20 an hour to do the same task in half the time, you've just saved yourself \$30.

Another way that you can save money when outsourcing is by buying less software. For instance, if you outsource your graphics, you no longer need to purchase a

high-end graphics program. Outsource your bookkeeping and suddenly you don't need to buy Quickbooks or TurboTax.

The fourth benefit we are going to discuss is focus. By outsourcing tasks in your business, you will be able to then focus on the activities you are best at. Is there one aspect of your business that you excel at? Focus your efforts where they are most beneficial to your business and get help with the other areas and activities you are best at. Is there one aspect of your business that you excel at? Focus your efforts where they are most beneficial to your business and get help with the other areas.

Our final benefit is directly involved in the growth and profitability of your business. If there is an area of your business that you lack strength in or don't enjoy doing you tend to put it off, even if you know it needs to be done. Instead, hire someone who specializes in that area and let their light shine. This will bring more to the table when it comes to your business that might not have been there before they joined your team.

**** Take Action****

1. If you haven't already, calculate your hourly rate here:
<http://www.loraleehutton.com/are-you-charging-enough/>
2. What would you save by outsourcing? Write down 3-5 things

Lesson 3 – What to Outsource?

Outsourcing to Get Up & Running One of the most common outsourcing questions asked by those interested in it is “What can I outsource?”

As a business owner there are a multitude of tasks that can be outsourced and each business is different. Today let’s talk about tasks that get and keep your business “Up & Running” that can easily be outsourced to an assistant.

Here are just a few:

- Website Design & Maintenance
- Customer Service
- Bookkeeping
- Content Creation
- Secretarial Services

These are only a few of the activities that can be outsourced to someone else so that you can concentrate on other areas of your business. In order to determine which things you might be able to outsource to keep your business running smooth, make a list of the tasks that you do every day that eat up your time.

One of the most popular tasks to outsource is customer service. It can be a very liberating feeling to be able to get away from your business and know that everything is running smoothly. After all, you started your business to live a certain lifestyle, not to feel trapped to your computer every second of every day. So, make that happen.

If you’re just beginning a project make a list of all the jobs that will need to be done in order to launch it and choose from them which things you will choose to do and which you will outsource to someone else.

**** Take Action****

1. Use the list you started on Day 1 of this course & add it to this list. Start creating your own "Outsourcing Wishlist"
2. (Bonus points) If you dare - Keep notes of everything you do today (including family time). It's fun and somewhat enlightening.

Lesson 4 – What's Outsourcing Going to Cost me?

When it comes to outsourcing, probably the most asked question is “How much is it going to cost?” While it's impossible to give you an exact amount that getting help in your business will cost, it is possible to give you an idea.

First, know that every single business is different when it comes to the costs associated with outsourcing. Due to the fact that not every business owner will use the same services, need the same amount of help or require the same tasks -- there is no set price for outsourcing.

There are however, generally two types of costs involved with outsourcing and depending on the type of work completed and the level of expertise of your contractors, you may find yourself paying one or maybe even both of the following ways.

- * Hourly – Many bookkeepers and virtual assistants charge an hourly rate for their services.

- * Set Fee – Normally when you get into things like web design, graphic work, and the more specialized services, many contractors will bill you a set fee for work performed.

As for an actual amount per hour, this too will vary with experience and skill set, but to give you a ballpark idea, you can find bookkeepers who charge from \$15 per hour all the way up to \$75 an hour.

(Having owned an accounting company that offered bookkeeping services I've seen the wild fluctuation of price points. And often the quality of service is not the main reason for a price change - in this case "you get what you pay for" isn't always true.)

A third type of fee is percentage-based. This can usually be negotiated once you've worked closely with your contractors for a period of time and trust them. Also, you've got to have a successful established business or a proven track record in order to attract a contractor to this type of arrangement.

Before you even begin to outsource anything, you'll need to determine how much you can afford to pay and go from there. Even baby steps are progress.

**** Take Action****

1. Take a break. Or...
2. Reach out and get an estimate from someone who could be your very first team member.

You're doing great! See you tomorrow, we'll be covering... "Can You Afford to Outsource?"

Day 5 - But, I Can't Afford to Outsource.

If I had a dollar for every time I heard, "But I can't afford to outsource." I'd be rich.

My reply to this question is always "Yes, you can. What you can't afford to do is NOT outsource or to outsource ineffectively."

Even if you start out small there are ways you can start to relieve the overload you are feeling from doing everything in your business yourself.

There is no magic amount of money or number of tasks or projects one must outsource in order to feel some relief. Even if you only outsource the writing of one article or blog post each month, you're freeing up your own time. You have to figure out what takes up the most of your time that is not productive, pass it on to someone else and then focus on tasks that will make you money.

Some people will tell you to outsource those things you hate doing in your business. I agree with this to some extent, but not entirely and we'll talk about that later in this course. But what I do agree with is that if you are doing something that needs to be done in order for your business to grow and it's taking you forever to do it, when it would take someone else half the time, then yes, absolutely outsource it.

**** Take Action****

1. Crunch some numbers:

Focus on a Revenue Generating task for 1 more hour per day than you are currently, where would you be in 1 months time?

(\$/hr)_____ X _____(days you work per month) = _____

See you tomorrow, we'll be covering... "Paying Your Assistants"

Day 6 - Paying Your Assistants

A few days ago we discussed how your assistants may charge you when you outsource tasks to them. Some choose hourly while others charge a set fee for their services. No matter which way is used, there is still the question of how you actually get the money to them.

Since most of the help you will receive in your business will be conducted via the Internet, the question of how you'll pay for the services is a frequent one. There are a few ways that contractors may require payment from their clients.

Here are the most requested ones:

- PayPal
- Check or Money Order
- Credit Card

The majority of assistants with online businesses conduct their billing via the help of PayPal and you'll see that sending payment is as easy as clicking a button in your own PayPal account. They will invoice you via their account and you'll simply click the "Pay" button next to their invoice.

Paypal is usually the preferred method, especially if you hire contractors who live outside your own country.

That's it, that's all there is to it. Now, that was easy wasn't it?

**** Take Action****

1. Do you have an active PayPal Accounts? (sounds silly, but you'd be surprised how many clients I've worked with who have funny issues with theirs. Take time to fix anything that might not be right with yours today, or schedule it into your calendar.

p.s. A real person will answer the phone at PayPal.

Day 7 - Finding the Right Person for the Job

After the question about being able to afford outsourcing the next most common question about outsourcing is probably “Where can I find someone who is qualified to help me?”

Here are a few places to look for help:

- Elance.com, Rentacoder.com, Guru.com – These are sites where you can have freelancers bid on work that you need done.
- Google – You can easily search for someone to help you with a specific task or you can even search the words “virtual assistant”. This however is not always the best method.
- Recommendations – Ask mentors, partners, and others in your line of work who they recommend.
- Word of Mouth – As you’re talking with other like-minded business owners, take note when they talk about service providers they’ve used in their own business. If someone has had a bad experience with a company, it’s almost certain you’re going to hear about it and you can make a mental note to not contact them.
- Websites & Freelance Directories – There are several websites online that list service providers via directories or forums. Take the time to search places like Shelancers.com, HireMyMom and VA4Hire.com to find the perfect person for the jobs that you need done.
- Craigslist.com, Kijiji.com or online classifieds: Some people find it overwhelming to post in online classifieds. They worry about the quality of replies, or the volume. But my friends and colleagues have had great success with this approach & so have I. If it's your style, try it

** Take Action **

1. Look at 3-5 of these resources (set a timer for 10 or 15 minutes)
2. Add 1-3 more items to your WishList

Tomorrow, we'll cover... "All the Cool Kids Are Doing It – So I Should, Too"

Lesson 8 - Don't Outsource Just for the Sake of Outsourcing

Remember a few days ago when I told you that I didn't completely agree with those who say that you should outsource everything that you hate doing? Well today we're going to talk about why that is. We'll also cover the cases when you shouldn't outsource.

Yes, I know that sounds a bit contradictory when I told you that you can't afford to not outsource, but let me explain.

It seems that everyone is talking about outsourcing these days, but that doesn't mean that you should jump on the outsourcing bandwagon just for the sake of saying that you have assistants.

When you start considering outsourcing in your business, just as with anything else you do, you can't just wing it. You must have a plan of action and outsource for effectiveness.

For instance, if there is something in your business that isn't making you money and you give it to an assistant to complete knowing that there are no real benefits to doing it, then maybe it's not the right thing to be outsourcing.

Instead, evaluate your business. Maybe that particular task or project needs to be canned altogether. If so, don't outsource it just to keep from doing it -- hoping that someday it will make money for you.

On the flipside of that, if you've got a money-maker on your hands but don't have the time to devote to it for it to make the money, definitely get some help with it. There's nothing worse than sitting idle on a money-machine that you can't make money with due to inactivity.

Another common mistake that I see people make is to outsource a task that could be automated instead.

For instance, I mentioned outsourcing your article marketing efforts.

Did you know that there is a service that will submit your articles for you?

Or, voicemail that's automatically transcribed and sent to your phone by SMS text message or email? (like the service I use called eVoice.com (<http://www.jdoqocy.com/2s65cy63y5LRTOUSNRLNMTPPNMV>) . Or automatically syncing your files & documents in one place where you and your assistant have easy access (I use Sugarsync (<http://loraleehutton.com/likes/sugarsync>) for this). Or better yet, keeping all of your passwords in one "locker" with LastPass (<https://lastpass.com/f?1039636>)

There are a lot more tips & tools that I use to automate, on my website at <http://LoraleeHutton.com> (but don't rush over there now - take action on these few things below first)

So, from today's lesson, if you remember nothing else, remember this:

Don't Outsource Just for the Sake of Outsourcing. Have a plan.

Day 9 - Review

Can you believe we're already at Lesson 9? Where does the time go?! Let's recap what we've learned.

In our final lesson today.....

Outsourcing Review

What Outsourcing Really Is – A means to getting more done and growing your business without overworking yourself. And you started your wishlist.

Benefits - There are a huge number of reasons outsourcing makes sense and the benefits of doing it efficiently are endless in terms of business growth. And you calculated your real hourly rate.

What Types of Tasks to Outsource – From getting started to traffic generating tasks, you're now armed with a list of things you can get help with. And you wrote a list of what you did in a day.

Costs & Paying Your Assistants – Every business is different; therefore costs and how you pay your help will also be different. Find the ones that fit best with your business, your budget, and your personality.

Don't Just Do It – Outsourcing should be done with a plan in mind and clear benefits outlined before hand. You left the “all the cool kids are doing it” thought process in high school – and that's where it should stay, especially when it comes to business and outsourcing. And you beefed up your Outsourcing Wishlist

If you have other questions or just want to share your own outsourcing experiences, please feel free to drop me a line at the email address listed below.

I may drop by with additional tips in the future, so stick around.

As entrepreneurs we need ongoing support. I often have workshops and programs that can help, like:



14 Day Product Challenge - Accountability, tools & a safe place to create a product for your business in 2 weeks (twice per year).

Mastermind with Loralee - an affordable mastermind with 10 other business owners. Runs twice per year - email me for more details. Everyone is hand selected (no public sales page).

AskLoralee.com - a place to ask questions and get answers on the technical business tasks we must complete as solopreneurs

Workshops - periodically I release workshops to help you finish a specific task in your business (like finishing your website, creating an opt in freebie, bookkeeping, etc)

Visit <http://loraleehutton.com/shop> for a list of current offerings