

Outsourcing: The good, the bad, and the ugly



While there may be a lot of negativity these days associated with the "new" threat of outsourcing and its supposed ability to take down a nation, the truth is, outsourcing has been around a very long time.

Outsourcing is the simple, age-old desire to get someone else to do something for you. You're reaching outside of your business, your community, your tribe, your nation, to get the assistance you need...from an outsider.

The ancients delegated tasks to outsiders quite frequently. From construction, to farming, to navigating areas unknown, outsourcing has played a very key role in the formation of all nations to a degree.

Get out your history books and take a look. Even Lewis and Clark mastered the idea of outsourcing. Case in point - Sacagawea. She was brought on board as an interpreter to assist in Lewis and Clark's expedition, greatly aiding the explorers on their trek westward. While your business isn't looking to find sturdy horses to cross the Rocky Mountains, cajoling potential hostiles along the way, you still have a need to navigate around the pitfalls (seen and unseen) to achieve success for your business.

When done right, outsourcing is a sure-fire way to assist in the growth and profits for your business. But outsourcing has to be handled correctly to achieve ultimate success.

Outsourcing gone wrong

Language barriers:

If the outsourcing firm you are dealing with does not have an intermediary that clearly speaks your native tongue, communications directly with non-natives for your business needs can often times lead to an unpleasant and frustrating experience. On both sides of the line, accents, word choices, and phraseology are going to be very different, invariably causing misunderstandings that ultimately delay or derail your project.

Irresponsible behavior:

If handled incorrectly, outsourcing can lead to the reduction of employees at a business instead of enhancing employment. This is counter-productive; outsourcing should be an aid to existing employees that helps you reach the goals your business is trying to achieve. Outsourcing the mundane-but-necessary tasks keeps your projects on track and allows your employees to focus on more strategic projects.

Loss of insider knowledge:

While this can be overcome to a degree, direct employees will always have a greater understanding of the business functions compared to an outsider.

Outsourcing gone right

Reduced costs:

It's always going to be cheaper to outsource. This is the primary reason businesses embrace the very idea. When done right, outsourcing gives great support to a business - a win-win for leadership, and employees alike. An extra set of qualified hands are always going to assist you with your ultimate business goals - a quality outcome and increased revenue.

Proven expertise:

Good outsourcing firms have a team of experts - the very best at what they do. To be one of the best, they have to keep fine-tuning their skills to leave their competition in the dust. By outsourcing to such a firm, your business will gain access to this team of experts, helping your business outshine your competition.

Good quality service:

The good firms have that all-important intermediary who can effectively chew-the-fat with you - fully understanding your business needs. By having this "buffer" in place between you and the expert team dedicated to your project and its success, you can rest easy. You know your requirements are being fully communicated.

Keep in mind: good outsourcing firms thrive on their reputation. Ensuring that you get quality service is top of mind, because the next time your business has an outsourcing need - you're going to think of them.