[ПW1] 12 Tips for Doing Business as an Agency from an Experienced Agency Owner

Have you ever thought of ~~creating your own agency~~managing your own business? You might start with establishing an agency on Upwork. I have already come that way and I am here to tell you about the ~~On my way of establishing the IT company [пW2]I faced some~~ major challenges and ~~came up with the~~ practical solutions of running ~~the~~ this business ~~more~~ effectively. ~~I'd really like to share my experience with you and hope it will help you to start your own Agency.~~The following 12 tips of agency business I have uncovered through years of work will give you a clear roadmap you can use for your own business.

~~Here are some of the most frequent questions I've been asking about.~~

~~Should I create an Agency at all?[пW3]~~**1. Make sure you want it.**
First of all, I should say it is not the path for everyone. An ~~A~~agency is the first step in establishing your own company and, like any business, it requires ~~a lot of~~much time and dedication. Moreover, it brings its own risks and difficulties, ~~with~~ and you might have less confidence in the future. Another challenge is responsibility.[пW4] Sometimes you are just not ready for such amount of responsibility. You will be responsible both for your employees, as you will need to provide work and money for them, and their work, as you will have to make sure the clients receive timely and quality services. So, before establishing an agency, ~~you should~~ decide for yourself whether you have enough courage to start your own business and ~~be~~ persevere[пW5]~~ant~~ till the end.

2.Get prepared for hard work~~How to have more free time earning more money?~~

Some ~~~people think that ~~your own~~ business brings more money and more free time. It may become true in case of money, but ~~less likely you will have~~ you will unlikely have a lot of spare time. As your ~~A~~agency grows and ~~there are~~employs more people, ~~– in it~~ you will need to dedicate more energy and time to run all the processes. Of course, there are some good news,~~;~~ you can manage your time more freely, as you do not have a direct commitments ~~for~~to working hours. ~~, but s~~[пW6]Still, you'll spend ~~most of the~~much time ~~for communicating~~on with clients, negotiat~~ing~~ion of contracts, ~~result~~presenting outcomes ~~delivery~~ and ~~optimization of~~ optimizing working processes ~~work~~.

~~How to start?~~**3. Find a partner**

Don't start on your own. ~~For a start, you need to F~~find at least one partner to create ~~the a~~new ~~a~~Agency. ~~, which~~It is really easy to do and ~~. A~~all steps are described at Upwork. You may ~~and you can~~ invite any other freelancer or ~~a~~ colleague from outside of Upwork for a job, either ~~exclusive~~ full-time or ~~a~~ part-time. It should be noted that all the funds and deposits come to the agency owner's account. It means ~~it won't be automatically transferred to your freelancer's accounts. So~~ you should think over the ~~scheme~~[пW7] way of distributing the costs among ~~your employees~~you and your partner from the very beginning.

~~How to have more free time earning more money?~~

~~Some people think that your own business brings more money and more free time. It may become true in case of money, but less likely you will have a lot of spare time. As your Agency grows and there are more people in it you need to dedicate more energy and time to run all the processes. Of course, there are some good news, you can manage your time more freely as you do not have direct commitments for working hours, but still, you'll spend most of the time for communication with clients, negotiation of contracts, result delivery and optimization of work.~~

4. Delegate business development from the very beginning ~~How to have more free time earning more money?~~

To ensure a balanced flow of new orders is ~~T~~the biggest challenge ~~was~~ of doing business as an agency. ~~to ens.ure a balanced flow of new orders. For this, y~~You need to find an appropriate number of projects for your employees, ~~for them~~so that they do not ~~to~~ overwork ~~and~~ but, at the same time~~.~~ ~~to~~ bring a profit for your company. ~~As our~~My experience shows~~,~~ it's better to find a person who will be responsible for business development from the start. In the beginning, I tried to manage all ~~the~~ directions, internal work and search for new clients~~,~~ and we ended up having ~~that's why we have~~ ~~amplitudes~~ [ПW8]~~at work,~~ either a lot of work or no projects at all. ~~So the earlier the better to find a person who will look for new projects.~~
~~Responsibility is another thing you'll be challenged with. Sometimes you are just not ready for such amount of responsibility. On one side you are responsible for your employees, as you need to provide work and money for them, respond their organizational questions and at the same time be responsible towards your clients for the job being made qualitatively and on time.~~[ПW9]
~~Who and how applies for jobs in your team? How long it takes to find a contract?~~

~~As I mentioned before, it was me who was responsible for all the projects. Now we have A~~a Business Development manager ~~who is~~ search~~es~~ing for ~~them. If you do this~~projects consistently. For our specialist,~~ ~~ it usually takes up to 2 weeks to find a new contract. ~~We have a special role in our agency, which is called the~~Before you hire a Staffing Manager, A business Development manager may also ~~ Staffing Manager. This person can apply~~[ПW10]~~ assign different freelancers for a~~the job. He can write to the client ~~and~~or recommend a programist~~mer~~ or ~~to~~ apply directly from ~~programist~~his account ~~and offer services. From~~In my experience, the second way works better, as clients prefer direct communication with the executor. ~~Meanwhile, for honest communication, we try to write on behalf of the company.~~So the earlier you find a person to delegate these tasks the better.

5. Test when hiring

~~Can I find Sales, Content, and Marketing Assistant at Upwork?~~

You can find all the professionals at Upwork,~~ but remember that the ones with the best profiles are not necessarily the best performers. To check ~~this~~the skills~~, you can~~ test several applicants ~~and give~~giving them a piece of work or delegate small projects before commiting to

long-term cooperation.~~, so you can choose the best one based on the results.~~~~so it's not a problem to hire a freelancer for any of these positions~~. ~~However,~~

I would also advise to ~~hire~~ing a full-time Sales or Marketing Assistant, as this person should be integrated into all the company processes and ~~fill~~ feel the team spirit to better promote and sell your services. ~~Finding a Content writer or programmist is actually the same process at Upwork, since you are looking for a good professional. As we noticed while searching for the candidates, the one with the best cover letter is not necessarily the best performer.~~ ~~To check this, you can test several applicants and give them a piece of work, so you can choose the best one based on the results.~~

6. Let your employees work for their own reputation

~~How do you work with your team members?~~

~~Our~~ The main values ~~in the~~or our company are honesty, transparency, and openness. All ~~of our~~ freelancers registered in our agency have their own accounts~~, as well they are registered in our agency~~. It means, they are usually introduced to ~~the~~ client~~s~~[ПW11] and can easily communicate with ~~him~~them. Of course, this helps a freelancer build a strong profile and makes him more likely to leave the agency one day. On the other hand, when people work using their own accounts they have more motivation to get better results. ~~Sometimes people ask me, what if we add a freelancer to our company, find him great contracts, upgrade the rate of his account and then he'll suddenly leave our company.~~Thus, I ~~say,~~think there is nothing to do with this ~~-~~, ~~at least~~ [ПW12]~~take~~ it should be taken for granted. ~~Actually, when a person works from his own account he has more motivation to get better results not only for a company but himself.~~

7. Make legal payments ~~How do you pay your team members?~~

Do not risk your business violating the law – establish contractual agreements with people on your team and make official payments. Our team members are individual entrepreneurs, so we pay them directly to their accounts. There are two ways we send the salary, either from our company registered in the USA or from ~~the~~ an individual entrepreneur account.

~~Do your team members know contract conditions? Do they communicate directly with the client?~~ 8. Take the burden of client-performer communication off the agency's shoulders

~~All our~~If you make sure team members speak English fluently, ~~so~~ they can communicate directly with the client ~~and they usually do~~. No need to burden a project manager or yourself with these responsibilities. In our agency, Our Project Manager does not have to manage all the communication between client and freelancer, which means she has more time to look into the requirements and monitor the completion of the projects~~We have a project manager, whose main work to keep in focus some of the projects and find out the requirements, but she does not manage all the communication between client and freelancer.~~ ~~The contract details are not a secret for our team members as the conditions are open and can be found in the profile.~~[ПW13]

9. Foster communication in the team ~~How to make your team responsible and~~

~~result-oriented?~~

First~~ly~~, <ins>you should</ins>[ПW14] be a good example ~~for them~~<ins>of openness to communication</ins>. Secondly, you should discuss the tasks, because some things can be obvious for you, but not for other people. ~~It is really important to communicate with your team as the better results may appear.~~ [ПW15]You can also establish some rules ~~, e.g.~~<ins>about</ins> how ~~we~~ <ins>to</ins> communicate with ~~the~~ <ins>a</ins> client, what steps ~~we~~ <ins>to</ins> take when ~~we~~ verify<ins>ing</ins> ~~our~~ work<ins>,</ins> etc. Moreover, ~~in our company, we~~<ins>it is important to</ins> have one<ins>-</ins>on<ins>-</ins>one meetings with every member of ~~our~~ <ins>the</ins> team ~~, which we try to organise~~ at least on<ins>c</ins>e per months~~.~~ ~~We~~<ins>to</ins> receive feedback regarding the projects and ~~our work as a company~~<ins>an agency</ins>, as well <ins>as</ins> ~~we~~ give <ins>feedback regarding the member's work</ins>~~our own recommendations to the member, discuss mistakes or mistreatments.~~

~~Who and how applies for jobs in your team? How long it takes to find a contract?~~

~~As I mentioned before, it was me who was responsible for all the projects. Now we have a Business Development manager who is searching for them. If you do this consistently, it usually takes up to 2 weeks to find a new contract. We have a special role in our agency, which is called the Staffing Manager. This person can apply different freelancers for a job. He can write to the client and recommend a programist or apply directly from programist account and offer services. From my experience, the second way works better, as clients prefer direct communication with the executer. Meanwhile, for honest communication, we try to write on behalf of the company.~~

10. Become a pro in writing proposals ~~How to write a winning proposal?~~

A lot of tips on how to write successful proposal are written on <ins>the very</ins> Upwork blog. I just can ~~summarise some of~~<ins>mention</ins> the <ins>most</ins> important ones: try to customize your proposal, read carefully the job post and requirements, omit grammatical mistakes. If you can answer ~~the~~ client's questions or give some advice to ~~the client~~<ins>him</ins>, you can certainly do this to make your text more unique. To <ins>see what methods actually work, we</ins> ~~track the responses,~~ we have a spreadsheet where we record all the applications and then analyze <ins>the responses</ins> determining what proposal ~~which one was~~<ins>turned out</ins> successful~~. and what methods actually work~~.

11. Be wise when dealing with 'difficult' customers. ~~What to do if the customer is difficult?~~

~~Actually, there is nothing to do with the customer, as~~ ~~Y~~<ins>y</ins>ou ~~can not~~<ins>cannot</ins> change <ins>people,</ins> ~~b~~<ins>the person. B</ins>ut you can always reconsider your own attitude toward<ins>s</ins> ~~this~~ <ins>a</ins> problem. We should admit not all of ~~them~~ <ins>customers</ins> are bad, right? ~~If you consider another way, maybe the problem is not with them.~~
~~Of course, the bad customer does happen, in such case my advice is to~~ <ins>Still, if you have to deal with a 'difficult' customer,</ins> try not to be emotional. If the client argues with you, try to stay calm and ask yourself what ~~I~~<ins>you</ins> want to achieve ~~from~~ <ins>with</ins> this conversation. ~~Do I want to argue or I want to~~ <ins>Be</ins> settle<ins>d</ins> ~~to this~~ resolve a conflict in a ~~good~~ way <ins>that will be good</ins> ~~for~~ both ~~of us?~~<ins>for you and the client.</ins>
~~In case~~[ПW16]~~,~~ <ins>If</ins> we ~~fill~~ <ins>feel</ins>[ПW17]that it's hard or almost impossible to work with a client, we try to close the contract little by little, ~~but~~ not ~~harshly~~ cut<ins>ting</ins> off all the deals with the customer <ins>harshly</ins>.

12. Develop a working ethics and philosophy ~~Give some advice to beginner agency owner?~~

~~I have some principles in my work. My favorite~~The major ethical principle for me ~~one ~~is to be honest as, s~~.~~ Sooner or later, the truth ~~anyway ~~will come out anyway. ~~So it is better to be honest from the start as people always appreciate it.~~ [ПW18] Some principles I recommend you to install in your work is to d~~D~~o all the job you have promised to do, be professional, always grow in your professional field, upgrade the level of your services. ~~Communication is the key to successful work.~~ [ПW19] ~~Good comments from the clients are not usually about great code or solutions, qualitative communication is what clients value the most.~~ Commit to excellent communication with your clients – this is something they value more than a great code or solution. ~~Even if you make some~~Recognize your mistakes. ~~, the solution doesn't work in a proper way, y~~You can always explain the situation to the client and ~~in 100% cases~~it is likely that a customer will understand ~~and won't be offended~~. ~~It is also important to manage expectations. If you promised that work would be done by a certain day and then realized it wouldn't, it always better to write to your customer and ask for more time.~~ [ПW20] Respect your clients. ~~If~~Be ~~you are ~~a good leader to your team. ~~never criticize your client, especially in front of your team. Be a good example for them, respect your client and your coworkers will respect you in turn. Moreover taking~~and take responsibility for ~~your team gives you an advantage~~it, as the client consider you ~~to gain the reputation of a reliable partner,~~ who can handle any difficult situation.

Please, share what tip you find the most helpful? Has there been anything you have never thought about?[ПW21]~~**Don't be afraid of the obstacles on your way and good luck in creating your agency!**~~