Chalene: Pssst, Hey there. It's Chalene. This is kind of embarrassing, but I noticed that you haven't yet had a chance to rate the show or to give it a review, and so I just wanted to let you know that I totally know that you value the show and I swear I don't take it personal, I know you're super busy, but it would be awesome if you could do it today, like before we even get started. Okay cool. Thanks. Bye.

Radio Announcer: Welcome to Build Your Tribe with your host Chalene Johnson.

Chalene: Hey there. Welcome to Build Your Tribe. My name is Chalene Johnson and I am your host. I'm a New York Times best selling author. I'm a mother. I'm a wife. I'm the co-founder of Smart Success an academy I founded with my husband to teach entrepreneurs how to organize their lives and their businesses, as well as the founder of the Marketing Impact Academy.

It's a old school mind set that you've got to be working 60+ hours a week in your business. It's an old school mind set to assume that you're saving money by learning how to do some of these things, by trying to figure it out yourself, or by thinking that because you have kind of figured it out that you should be doing it. That's what I call hustling.

Don't get me wrong. I think if you don't have kids, and if you are 20-something, and you're starting your first business and you're just so in to it that you want to work 60 hours a week. Dude! Go for it! But, if relationships are more important to you than money. If you want to live this life, like you want to be an entrepreneur because you actually want to do cool things and enjoy the people that you love and be able to really live in the fruits of your labor, well then you've got to figure out how to be a smarter business person. Right?! Hello! #Duh.

Specifically, how do you do that, and how do you do that in an online world where there's so many great places to outsource and delegate your work. I do think that almost everyone, probably 90% of you, do need to figure out that there are at least a minimum number of projects and tasks that you should be outsourcing that is going to save you tons of time and it's going to give you an advantage. Because the thing that you're really good at isn't the thing that you've kind of figured out - it's the thing that you totally do better than anybody else. Well, assuming that you are a lifer, you've subscribed to the Chalene show, you listen on the weekends, and you are a regular interacter, you add this as part of your daily routine. You wake up in the morning, you check you see if there's a new episode, you listen, you make a few notes and then you implement. You make these changes to your business.

That's what makes somebody a lifer. There's listeners and then there's lifers. Lifers take their life to the next level. They don't just listen and go "Well that was kind of entertaining. That was kind of a interesting perspective, I should think about that." No, lifers go "Okay, got it. Taking a few notes. Going to schedule some time for me to implement this."

Today I promised you that I would talk specifically about how to find a good person online, because it ain't easy. After spending, probably over the last 4-5 years, probably $100,000 at least I would guess, it's an estimate, off the top of my head, but I would think we're probably pretty close to $100,000 in paying for consultants, through Elance, and oDesk and Fiverr, and 99 Designs, Virtual Staff Finders. All of the fees that we've paid to consultants on a virtual staff basis, I can tell you we've made some mistakes and we've figured out how to do it really well, in a way that's less painful. It's easier. So it's exciting for us to outsource. It's easier for us to outsource, but we have had to learn the hard way.

Today what I wanted to do was share with you ... You know once you find these site, it can be kind of confusing, and how do you know if you're really getting a good person. How do you know if the person who you've hired temporarily actually has the skills that they say they have?

Today I'm talking about hiring freelancers online. Where you can use one of these platforms, like Elance or like Fiverr, where people ... Think about these platforms, in the past you've thought about them perhaps as hiring someone overseas. The first thing I want you to know is that is not necessarily the case. Although I have found with certain skills they do tend to kind of collectively be located in one geographical location. I just want you to know that these websites offer amazingly talented freelancers from all over the globe, including people who might live just down the street from you.

Over half of the freelancers that we hire are actually in the United States or Canada. There are certain jobs where I specifically try to select candidates who are from those regions because the nature of the culture and the language, etc., it just makes it a lot easier if it's someone who's from the United States or from Canada.

I've made a lot of mistakes and I've wasted a lot of time. I can't tell you that I've wasted a lot of money - I don't feel that I have. I've certainly wasted a lot of time by hiring poor freelancers. Freelancers who didn't exactly get me the work that I asked for, so I had to pay to have it redone. In which case, I'm here to tell you, I still don't think I wasted money, because I still got it done for less than what I would have had to pay to hire someone full time or to pay a freelancer outside of one of these resources. But I definitely wasted time.

In the years that we've been doing this, I can't tell you I've ever been burned, like flat out burned, where I didn't get the work done. I've had work done for me that I wasn't satisfied with or I've hired the wrong freelancer, or I've hired an amazing freelancer and then they've just disappeared. Today, I want to give you my best tips so that when you're on one of these sites, you know what to look for.

I'm going to start with my biggest tip first. That's this: Invite freelancers to your job specifically.

In other words, rather than posting up a job and hoping that people, freelancers, are there looking for work, I want you to look for the perfect freelancer and invite them and encourage them and recruit them to take a look at your job posting and give you a proposal. Now think about this, and this is going to be the overriding theme in every piece of advice you're about to hear from me, think about this the same way you would hiring someone in real life.

I know this is real life, but I mean like in-person real life. The best candidate for the job that you have even, let's say in your office, that person is not looking for a job. They already have a job, because they are amazing. So it's recruiting. It's finding the best people. Because the best people are already really busy with other jobs. They're not sitting at their computer hitting refresh, refresh, refresh for a new job proposal to come through. Because they're so good they're getting repeat business. People love them, they keep coming back to them, and they refer their friends to them. The best freelancers are the ones you have to go out and find them.

How do you find them? Well you've got to do some investigating. This is going to save you time in the long run, and it's going to get you a better quality of work. First you take a look at other people's proposals. You look at freelancers. You look at their job history. Most specifically, I want you to look at their rating as it relates to, and it's kind of different on all of the sites, but basically you want to look at their rating that refers to or indicates how often this person gets repeat business. You want someone who gets between 40-50% at a minimum repeat business. You know you're dealing with someone who's great.

Even if they have all 5 star reviews but they're not getting much repeat business, that should be a red flat for you. Here's why... The rating, or their score, is really not that great of a measure of how good they are. Here's why, because on all of these sites people know that if you give them a negative review, well then now you have conflict on your hands. If I hire someone to do some work for me and I'm not totally happy with it, am I really going to write them a review, an honest review that says yeah it was okay, it wasn't great? I guess I got what I paid for, and I didn't pay very much so I didn't get very much.

You're not going to write that because now you've got conflict. If you do that, this is the truth, if you do that then that freelancer comes back to you and says well now I'm going to write a negative review about you because I did exactly what you told me to, and if you wanted something else then we should have communicated and then they give you a negative review. Then it's harder for you to get people to work for you.

The reviews are just one way to evaluate if you're hiring a good freelancer, but it's not the end all. It doesn't always tell the complete picture. Of course, I still want you to look at the reviews but more important than that number ... Obviously you want someone who's got mainly 5 stars, maybe a few 4 stars, but look at trends. Look at when did they start getting ... if they did receive a few negative reviews was that when they first signed on, or are they recent. Has their work diminished in quality or productivity or in meeting their deadlines, in just recent jobs or recent postings. Then review what people have written. If someone gives a freelancer a 5 star rating and then when they write a description of what it was like to work with that freelancer, if they write things like "Good" "Did good work" "Great guy" that kind of thing, it's so brief you can almost read more into what they didn't say than you can in what they did say.

When in doubt, ask if you can speak with a former client. Now a lot of times you'll need to do that within the platform. Meaning, once you have an account on Elance or on Fiverr, etc. you'll probably have to use that form of communication and speak directly on those platforms. This is really important because all of these platforms have very specific guidelines, and both their freelancers as well as the people who are doing the hiring, like myself, you have to make sure you adhere to those. If you are in violation and they think that you're trying to go around the system and avoid paying fees, or avoid using their platform, and just using it ... in other words, to hire someone and then taking the payment off of Elance or off of Fiverr, or off of 99 Designs ... Well they're going to kick you out of the community. That's really important, so honor those people who make their living on those platforms by making sure your communication happens there. Then pay very specific attention to the types of jobs and the types of things that people are saying.

Once you think you've found a really great freelancer and you want to invite them to apply to one of your jobs, that might take a while. You're going to have to entice them. It's just like hiring someone. It's just like the real world. If you throw up a job proposal and think that you're going to get the best qualified person hitting refresh on their computer waiting for a job, you're wrong. Those people are already busy. They're already great to work with. They already have repeat business.

So then how do you get them to look at your proposal? The same way you would get someone to take notice and be interested in working for your company in real life. Tell them what specifically it was about their profile and about the work that they do that you really like. I mean think about it, our work feels like our art so when someone specifically notices little nuances and you send them an inbox and said hey "I looked at your profile, I've checked out your work, I actually read through many of the reviews that people wrote for you and I just have to tell you I can tell you are the person who I need for this project. I need someone just like you. You're very talented. I can see that you're busy. I can see that you value you're time and that you're talented. We would love to have you take a look at our proposal."

Then also give them a sense of is this a one-off. Because the best elancers, the best freelancers on Elance, they are just like you. They don't want to waste time getting to know a new client every five minutes. So you want to tell them, hey for this first job proposal, it might be small and it might seem like a simple project, but if this works out the way I hope it does we'll have a ton of work for you. We can keep you busy for the next three months, or the next four years, whatever it is, so that they have an idea of assessing what type of relationship could this be.

Okay, hypothetically speaking, let's assume that you don't take that route and instead what you've decided to do is to simply post your job, which I've done in the past. You post your job for, say, podcast editing ... This is a true story ... and what you find is that there's tons of people that are interested in doing the work for you. You've listed that you just want one podcast show edited. Number one: That's what I recommend you do. Even if you have fifty future episodes, or maybe ten that are already done, I would just assign this work in small steps first, like baby steps. Rather than giving everything to one freelancer, I might say "This is a job for one edit to a podcast. However, this is something that could turn into eight episodes a week for a period of X months." So they have an idea, they know up front, that what I'm trying to figure out is are you our dude? Are you the girl who we know can handle this job?

Then once you post that job, let's say instead of going out to recruit the best you decide to do a job posting. You're going to get rates that range from like a $1/hr to $100/hr and you're like, why is this person wanting to charge $100 more for this project, are they that much better than this person with the lower price? That's where I really think you need a keen eye, #1 a keen eye and some intuition for what you are about to get into. As they say, you get what you pay for, but not always. I think you have to be slow and methodical and real about this process.

I never sort according to what people have bid the job at, so I don't sort from lowest to highest. I just go through and I read the reviews. I read their proposals. I look at that first. I don't even look at the price first. Because I know roughly what I want to spend and I'll probably end up somewhere in the middle, but I have hired people at the very very lowest end, and at the highest end, and I think if you hire the right person, and you know what you're getting into - that's the key. I always look at that first and foremost before I look at price. Now there's certain things where it's like, I just automatically rule that person out because they're way outside of budget for this particular job, but within my budget I've hired people on the low end and the high end.

Read their job proposal. Here's a big clue for me. Anytime we hired someone who I went back and looked at the way they wrote their proposal for my job. I could tell in retrospect that a lot of it was cut and paste. In other words they're just cut and paste and replying to as many jobs as possible. They didn't take my job that seriously. They are on here to make a ton of money. It's probably someone who's trying to represent themselves as one individual. But most likely it's a ton of people who are working under one account and so the work is kind of shoddy because the person who you thought you were hiring isn't the person you end up hiring.

I always read their proposals back to me very carefully. I want to read and see were they listening? Did they pick up on the nuances? Did they explain the word back to me? Did they sell themselves to me? That's my first indicator. Then I go back and look at their reviews. Then I do this, I schedule a face-to-face Skype with them. Unless, of course, it's just like a one-off job, like quick I need somebody in the next hour do some research for me on the subject of happiness and neuroscience. That might just be a one-off job. In that instance it doesn't make sense for me to a Skype or to spend a lot of time looking at reviews. In that instance I just know that I'm probably going to get what I paid for and I'll go near the higher end of the spectrum.

But when it's the type of work that you can see yourself using this person as almost a part of your virtual staff, then schedule a face-to-face. You know from looking in a person's eyes if they get it. You know if a person's a good person. If you can trust them. You're intuition will tell you if this is the right fit for you. If somebody says, well I don't have Skype connected to my camera or my computer, blah-blah-blah, for me that's just a red flag and I ... Now, in the past they would offer to Skype with me and I would be like I don't want to Skype with them. I don't want to have to put on lip gloss or anything to meet this person who I just think of as a virtual faceless nameless freelancer, I didn't want to Skype with them. Now I realize this is a person and I need them to care about the work and so I need to care about them. Now I always schedule a Skype.

When it comes to writing your job posting, be as specific as possible. Now you don't have to put in all the fluffy words like "I am looking for someone who's incredibly devoted and passionate about fitness." What you do want to be is specific as possible. State exactly what you want with as much detail as possible.

I know in the beginning when I first started doing this, I was like I don't even know how to describe this. What I would do is look at other people's job posting and I would copy and paste certain sentences or I would use that as inspiration to write a very detailed job posting for myself. Ironically in preparing for this podcast, it's the first time I ever did some online research and hired someone on Elance to take a look at how to find and select a really good freelancer using one of these virtual work platforms.

Would it have been really smart for me to do that research before I starting hiring freelancers online? Yeah, I probably could have saved myself a lot of time and money. More specifically a lot of time. But we didn't do that, we learned the hard way. Now I'm looking at this mound of research and thinking to myself "Man I wish I had read some of these articles before I started working and hiring virtual staff members."

In reading all of this content though, there's one very significant piece of advice that I don't see anywhere and I'm going to give it to you now because this has been a golden nugget for us. Here it is: Most all of these articles that I'm reading say "Be sure to hire someone who's got a lot of experience, a lot of reviews, and an established track record on that particular site." I'm going to go against that and tell you, not necessarily. Because some of the very best freelancers that we have found, we were their first. We were their first.

Here's why I think it's important. When I have actually read what someone wrote as a job proposal and they've said things like "This is the first time I've ever applied to Elance." "Please don't discount me because I don't have any experience here" and they list for me other things that they've done and I can tell that they're really excited about this particular job. I can tell that there's something about them that I connect with. I like them. To me that is more important than their experience on this particular platform. Don't you agree?

Well, if that's your hunch, schedule a Skype. Because you might just find the very best person and it was just meant to be, like they were on there that day and you were the first job posting they ever ... and that was just ... It's like a God thing, it was meant to be and they end up being amazing. Now you still have to go through the same protocol, meaning check out their references, ask to see their portfolio, and ... Oftentimes even when you're looking at someone's portfolio you might not actually be looking at their work.

This is a funny story. One time we were hiring to do some photo editing for fitness photos. We said we want someone who can create pings, I think that's what it's called, where you do a cut out of the image and then you can place it on different backgrounds and different colors, etc. We said we want someone who specifically has edited fitness photos before and you can show us your work. So this freelancer sent us back their portfolio, and, yeah, hi, you know what I'm about to say don't you? Guess who's photos were in their portfolio? Mine. And that freelancer hadn't done the work. They hadn't done that work. That was the work that they had basically stolen it from somebody else online and that was another freelancer's work. They were trying to pretend it was theirs.

Here's the rule of thumb as it stands for me. When someone says "here's my work" I always say "okay show me an example" and I will send them a file, like let's say it's a podcast, so I'll say ... because if they want the work and I'm going to give them a ton of work, then they'll do that. I only want people on my team who will go the extra mile, because I'm going to go the extra mile. I'm going to give you a bonus. I'm going to take care of you. You're going to really like working for me and I'm going to really like working with you. We tend to hire people who go above and beyond because they're just that kind of person. You don't want to work with someone who's like, yeah I don't have time to show you what I'm capable of, do you?

Don't be afraid to say "Well here I would like to give you a sample and I will pay you if this works out well, but I'd like to see a sample of what you can do before we go much further." A lot of times you'll make the mistake of doing a job posting, spending a lot of time looking through freelancers and then you're like "Oh I think this is the right one. I think this is the person we should go with" and then you put all of your eggs in one basket. Instead of doing that, what I think is a better investment of both your time and your money is award that same job to three freelancers. Your top three. Then the one who ends up being the best is the one you can continue to give work to. I think in the long run you'll still save time and money if you do this. But the only way to do that is to make that first project something that's very small.

Let's say that I have 500 photos all of which need to be squared and add a watermark to them. Rather than giving that job assignment to one freelancer, I will say okay we would like for someone to take these 10 photos and clean them up for us and add a watermark. Keep in mind that if this works out we have hundreds of photos and can keep you very busy. This first project is just to assess your style of work, if you like working with us, and to find the very best freelancer who will be interested in working with us on a long term basis. Then you have three people do it at once. It just will save you time in finding the right person and in the long run you'll still save money.

That's it. That's it for today. Thank you so much for leaving your review. It means a lot to me. I'm going to ask you right now, if you believe that this content has been valuable to you, you can give me the ultimate compliment, it's a virtual high five, it's like my tip jar, by going to iTunes or wherever you downloaded this podcast for your android phone, go back, not to the podcast app, go back to that website, like iTunes, and you'll actually leave a review and a rating. Now in your rating, tell people what they can expect from this show. That will be super helpful to other people who are looking to save time. I don't want people to listen if it's going to be a big waste of their time, if their looking for something other than what we're talking about, so let them know what they can expect.

Today I hope I've kept my promise to you to be brief, to be bright, make it fun, and then it's done. It's done y'all. It's done.

This episode has been sponsored by CourageousConfidenceClub.com. It's a club that's I've created specifically to help people who struggle with confidence and insecurities in social settings and just standing up for themselves, being yourself and feeling good about it. All of us could benefit from having more confidence. I'd love for you to just experience a taste of it. So please be my guest by going to ChaleneJohnson.com/Confidencetips. Now if you don't feel like writing that web address down, or remembering to go there later, all you have to do is, while you're listening from your phone, send me a text message. The number is 949-565-4337 and that is for US residence. Then just send me the word Confidence and I will send you access to this video. This video will help you to eliminate self-doubt and just feel more confident in any situation, whether it's work or personal or just your social interactions. Everyone of us can benefit from having more confidence.

There you'll submit your email address and I will immediately send to your inbox my latest training video where I teach you step by step how to feel more confident in just about any social setting. I think you'll find this incredibly useful whether it's business or personal, or just in your everyday interactions. Confidence is something that makes life easier. It helps you to raise more confident self-efficient children. It allows us to speak our mind, to stand up for ourselves, to do the things that otherwise we are paralyzed by fear and we just allow our own thoughts to stop us. By learning how to overcome self-doubt and fear of success, you can become that confident person that others are attracted to. The person you want to be, the person you deserve to be, the person you know is inside of you.

Thank you for checking out my free tools by going to ChaleneJohnson.com/ConfidenceTips.