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## Right People

With the current hot job market and low unemployment rate, what I'm talking about may be easier said than done. That doesn't mean it's impossible though! Here are five tips from my decades of firsthand experience plus the experiences of ...

**Richard Roppa-Roberts** • Apr. 11, 2022



Y'all, I'm not gonna lie: March was a rough month. Between business travel and some health issues slowing me down, my to-do list was growing longer by the hour, and I wasn't in any shape to tackle it.

It's safe to say we've all been there. None of us are immune to the complicating factor

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there is.

Most clients I work with start out with these beliefs, or similar. They're trying to wear a hundred different hats and truly believe they're making the best choice by doing so. And maybe it works for a little while. Or at least it works well enough. But eventually, something is going to happen that turns the whole system sideways, and if you don't have help in place already, your business will suffer.

On the other hand, some of my clients aren't newly in business and they do have staff in place. When life comes crashing in, they often learn a different lesson: It's not enough to just have bodies in seats. The people you bring into your business need to be highly-skilled, capable, independent, and critical thinkers, and able to act on your behalf when you can't. Without that, you might as well not have a team at all.

With the current [hot job market and low unemployment rate](#), what I'm talking about may be easier said than done. That doesn't mean it's impossible though! Here are five tips from my decades of firsthand experience plus the experiences of hundreds of business owners I've worked with.

### **Decide what you want to delegate**

**Pro tip:** You can delegate more than you think. The first exercise I often ask people to do is to sit down and think long and hard about what you absolutely have to do when it comes to your business and what someone else could do (assuming it's the right person, with the right skills)

- Do you need help with administrative tasks such as preparing a meeting agenda, managing your inbox, managing your calendar, or filing documents?
- Do you need help coordinating travel such as reserving flights and hotels, booking reservations, or setting up itineraries?

- Do you need help with personal tasks like making sure you're eating?

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everything you're doing on a daily basis for about a week. Then examine which of those tasks you could give away. It might surprise you how much work you're doing that isn't the best fit for your skills and expertise.

### Think through your budget and logistics

This is going to be highly personalized based on your business, but one thing I've seen over and over again is that business owners have a limiting belief that they simply can't afford help (or quality help). But what they don't realize until later is that hiring the right person is an investment that will pay dividends once your new hire is onboarded and working at their full potential.

When determining a realistic budget for this role, you'll also need to think about things like:

- Whether the person will be full or part-time
- Whether they'll be an independent contractor employee ([as defined by federal law](#))
- What types of systems you'll need in place (payroll, workers' comp insurance, etc.)
- If you'll need to provide benefits and how you'll administrate them

Before you start hyperventilating here, remember that there are lots of professionals who can help you out with this. From joining a subscription service like Legal Zoom or Rocket Lawyer for boilerplate documents to a [business coach](#), all the way to hiring a [full-service consulting firm](#) to hold your hand the entire way, you *don't have to go it alone* even while you're trying to set up your business so that you don't have to go it alone!

Practically speaking, once you've determined what type of work you want to hire for, you'll need to think about how much you can afford to pay for it. The old adage "you

get what you pay for” is true. It’s also true, in my experience, that the better quality

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(whether part-time, full-time, or contract) that can lighten your load, it’s vital that you hire someone you can give the wheel to and relax.

There are different ways this can manifest, depending on the type of help you need:

- It might be a very experienced personal assistant who you only need to give directions to once and then things are just done
- It might be an outside firm with a great reputation that you can trust to turn over a certain piece of your business to with very little direction needed
- It might mean hiring someone without a lot of experience but who can be trained in your way of doing things, with the personality needed to act like an owner themselves and embrace the responsibility you give them

The common thread is to hire people with the right attitude: not simply the ability to do things, but the desire to do things the way your business needs them done every time, whether you’re there or not.

This isn’t something I can tell you how to do exactly. Most of us have a “know it when I see it” type of experience with these kinds of hires. A few common clues could include:

- Someone who brings ideas and suggestions to you
- Someone who asks questions for insight before just doing a task
- Someone who follows up to keep you on-task or provide updates, as opposed to the person you never hear from unless you poke them
- Most important, someone who will push back sometimes and make you rethink your thoughts on a particular issue. Having a person that will help you mold ideas might be just the right thing for your firm. I have learned through experience that some of the best ideas are not from me, but rather from the people I surround myself with.

While you may not know these things about someone before hiring them, you can

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