



Comparing offshoring firms can sometimes feel like splitting hairs. It can be hard to know what to look for (and what to avoid) when choosing an offshore business to work with, especially if you are new to offshoring.

To help you make sure your selection process is less based on 'vibe' and more objective, we have created a list of 10 crucial questions to ask an offshoring firm you're looking to partner with. Not all offshoring firms are built equal and these questions have been designed to help you save time, separate the good guys from the dodgy ones and find the right firm for you.

We hope this checklist helps you to establish some important criteria and a thorough selection approach, so you make a great decision, with complete confidence.

OFFSHORING CHECKLIST



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Do you specialise in my industry?

If you partner with an offshoring firm that doesn't specialise in your industry, there's a strong chance that they won't have the in-depth knowledge and insight it takes to source, select and support a team member who is the right fit for your business. Industry specialist firms typically have more thorough and tailored onboarding programs for new team members, which sets your offshoring relationship up for success.



What's your recruitment process?

Many firms have weak recruitment processes, which reduces the chance that you'll have a high-quality offshore teammate in your business. Hiring is one of the hardest and most important things to get right in business; make sure your offshoring partner takes it as seriously as they should.



Do you offer a pooled approach or a dedicated team member approach?

A pooled approach means that multiple people will share the work that you delegate to your offshore team (i.e. you won't be able to choose who you work with), while a dedicated approach means that you'll work with the same person who will become part of your business. If you are hiring someone to work in your back office, avoid a pooled approach at all costs! The benefits of offshoring come from the training you offer your teammate and the relationship you build - these two things are only possible in the dedicated team member approach.



What does your 'on-the-ground support' look like?

It's one thing to hire a team member, but what support will they have around them? Things to look for here include weekly 1:1s with a supervisor, people dedicated to the performance and well-being of your team member and how big the training team is. All of these factors contribute to your team member feeling happy, fulfilled and supported. To make sure your team member and business are properly supported, you should be looking to partner with a firm where a supervisor or manager looks after no more than 25 team members.



What training do you provide my team member with before they start in our business?

If you want your team member to be able to execute tasks from Day 1, they'll likely need some general training before they commence, as well as custom training on some of your specific business processes. The more they can learn before they begin with you, the greater the chance that they'll 'hit the ground running'. A great offshoring firm will give you the option of training your own new team mate or else leaving the full-onboarding & upskilling process to them. It should be as "hands on" or "hands off" as you want.



What ongoing training opportunities will my team member have access to?

If an offshoring partner isn't providing ongoing job-specific training to a team member, your business will need to spend the time and resources delivering this. But don't just narrow your focus to 'job-specific' learning; we have found that training in areas such as communications skills, first aid and mental wellbeing are highly valued by employees and can make your business a more attractive place to work.

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What cybersecurity measures do you have in place?

The threat of cybersecurity is becoming an increasingly significant, the risks to your clients and your business can be even greater with one or more team members based overseas. To reduce these risks, as a minimum, you should ensure that your offshoring partner has rigorous office security and supervision protocols, specialist protection and surveillance software, a secure server, a password management tool and comprehensive ongoing cybersecurity training in place for your team member. If your new team member will be working from home this introduces another layer of risk, so make sure you also understand the exact cybersecurity measures that will be in place.



How will you ensure that our business is happy with your service and constantly supported?

A lot of outsourcing firms talk up a big game at the start, sell you the world and unfortunately go missing once they've got your business. As with any teammate, issues are going to pop up with your team member in the future, small and big, and it's important that you can jump on these quickly to minimise the impact on your business. Make sure any firm you partner with has rigorous processes in place to make sure things are working with your business and clear and timely communication avenues available so you can solve issues swiftly and effectively.



What other job perks will my team member receive?

A happy, healthy and comfortable team member performs at their best and stays around for longer. Like at home, the best team members demand high-quality employment packages. Other than a healthy salary, make sure any offshoring firm you choose to partner with offers additional job perks. Common examples of these include free private health insurance for themselves and a dependent, personal trainers and in-house nutritionists, monthly awards, regular team lunches and weekend team activities. If your offshoring partner firm doesn't offer these things, other competitor firms will.



What's the notice period if I no longer need your services?

Don't let an unfair lock-in contract tie you to a firm that isn't meeting your expectations. A 30 or 60-day notice period reduces your risk and shows that your offshoring partner firm has confidence in the quality of their service. Also, be sure to read the fine print and make sure there are no hidden costs associated with ending your offshoring relationship.

