



Become A
Blogger 2.0

Learning with Leslie
Podcast Interview Episode 132

**How To Outsource
Your Blog
Like A Boss**

- With Chris Ducker

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Introductions

[Intro by Guy Kawasaki, Gideon Shalwick, and Farnoosh Brock]

Hello, hello, hello and welcome to another episode of Learning with Leslie, the podcast where you learn, I learn, we all learn about how to build an online business with a blog. No, I'm not talking about one of those blogs that will fall by the wayside when Google has a mood swing (*laughs*). I'm talking about one that will thrive no matter what gets thrown at it.

I'm your host, Leslie Samuel from becomeablogger.com where we're changing the world one blog at a time. As usual, I have another exciting interview for you today. I'm on the line with my good friend, Chris Ducker from chrisducker.com who has been working the virtual way so much that it has become his expertise.

He has mastered the art of managing outsourced people so that he can live the life he's always wanted -- more stress free and more time to spend with his wife and kids. With that, he's been named as the "Virtual Business Guru," "Outsourcing Evangelist," the "King of Kings in Outsourcing," (I love that one, man) and probably a lot more. He's gone a long way in his business. He has a passion to achieve his goal of becoming the "Virtual CEO" and that is probably what has brought him to where he is now.

Today, we're going to be talking about outsourcing and how you as a blogger can do it the right way. That's what we're going to talk about today.

From UK to Hong Kong

LESLIE: Chris, man, how are you doing today?

CHRIS: I'm good, man. That was quite an intro. I'm very, very impressed. Right out of the gate. I think I'm going to retire from podcasting. I can't be that. I can't be any better than that.

LESLIE: No, you can't do that. You can't retire. We got to keep this thing going man. This thing is too much fun.

CHRIS: I hear you, man. I hear you.

LESLIE: We've met in Las Vegas at New Media Expo. We were friends online from before that but, we kind of connected in Vegas and hit it off almost immediately... Not almost immediately but, immediately and to come full circle and be able to do this podcast and this interview is just a privilege. So, thank you for joining me on here, man.

CHRIS: No, it's all my pleasure.

LESLIE: Awesome.

CHRIS: I have some research here on you and I'm a bit confused. So, you're going to have to help me out on here because it's just seems like, okay, so I'm listening to you right now and you sound obviously, like you're from the UK.

And then, I'm looking at this and I'm seeing things about Hong Kong, I'm seeing stuff about the Philippines and you're living... Clarify everything for me. In terms of this living all over the world, what is that history like?

CHRIS: It's full of fantastic memories and experiences that we talked about and enjoyed and remembered for a long, long time. You mentioned Hong Kong there. I worked in and out of Hong Kong for about four years or so in the mid to late 90s. I was involved to a certain degree with a film industry over there. Man, those three or five years or so in the mid-90s were probably some of my most fondest memories and experiences came out of my trips between London and Hong Kong. I look back on that area with a lot of very fond memories. It's just funny you dig it up. Not many people do. They just go from London to the Philippines.

LESLIE: I'm even more interested now. In the film industry, were you like the Hong Kong movie star or something of that sort? What were you doing?

CHRIS: No, I'm nowhere talented. Close to that. Back in the UK, I was in the publishing business for a long time working for one of the large publishers in London called Hemming. They did everything from monthly magazines to the British Medical Journal, all that sort of stuff. As a sideline, as a sort of a first entrepreneurial type push, I started publishing my own magazine or Hong Kong film because I was a big Kung Fu and Hong Kong movie fan so, I thought, well, there's nothing else like it in the UK. I'm going to go for it and see what I can do.

Within a four year period, we developed a great following. We did a feature-length documentary that I filmed entirely on location in Hong Kong, interviewed a ton of stars, hung out with guys like Jackie Chan and Jet Li and all those super cool guys back in that era before they became huge names in the US, you can't get near them now.

I think, literally, the first time I met Jackie was just as he did *Rumble in the Bronx* which was his big breakthrough film I think in '94 or '95 and then, with Jet, he did *Romeo Must Die* with a Aaliyah. I was actually kind of like his UK rep for a while. If you wanted interview set up and if you wanted to sort of get to him as a fan, you had to go through me. So, that was kind of cool.

LESLIE: Oh, you see? I knew interesting things would come out of this. I had absolutely no idea. So, let me ask you this. You look at all those experiences back there and you have the challenge right now of coming up with one sentence as to what you got from there from that time in your life that you are applying today in your business. What would that be?

I know, I just spring that on you right there, right?

CHRIS: Yes, you did. I would say be humble. The Chinese are quite conservative. They are very kind of traditionally rooted. There were a lot of instances where if that humble-ness wasn't there, we probably wouldn't have got to hangout with the directors and the actresses and the movie stars and the producers. I actually sat, and I can't remember the guy's name now, and that's terrible but, it was many years ago, I actually sat in an editing suite with the guy that helped Bruce Lee edit *The Way of the Dragon* in '71 or whatever it was.

LESLIE: Oh wow.

CHRIS: The guy was like, he must have been probably 60 or something at that time and obviously, he can't speak a word of English so, we had an interpreter. My Cantonese was pigeon at the best of times and so, yes, just be humble.

You can get a bit of an ego, that's cool. I think we've all got a little bit of an ego. Anybody that does anything that puts themselves out there a little bit we've all got a little bit of an ego but, just keeping in check and understand regardless of how fantastic you think you are, there are way more fantastic people out there than you ever... it really is the case.

Starting life in the Philippines

LESLIE: Awesome. That's a good tip. All right, sweet. Philippines, fill me in.

CHRIS: Right, what do you want to know? [*Laughs*]

LESLIE: I want to know how did you end up in the Philippines? I mean, UK, now Hong Kong, Philippines. How did you get there?

CHRIS: Well, I went to the Philippines the first time when I was actually working in and out of Hong Kong. It was on the way back from Hong Kong to London, I stopped over in Manila for, I think four nights it was and we just hung out with a buddy over there and I just really liked that. I thought it was just a great place, a great city, Makati, which is the capital of Manila, and Manila being the capital of the country.

An opportunity presented itself where I was going to come over to the Philippines and work with one of the banks over here and train their telemarketing staff. That's basically how I got over here initially. I have been involved in the sales and marketing, particularly the telemarketing side of the sales world for pretty much my entire career.

And so, I came over and I did a couple of jobs in that particular industry for a couple of the different banks and then, started going out and setting up call centers for other companies who wanted the presence here as a consultant and get some additional consulting work and things like that for companies over in the United States.

Then, I got tired of working for other people and decided it was time to break free, start making myself some real money. That's when I set up the **Live 2 Sell Group** which was in 2006 and then, really exploding it properly in 2008.



LESLIE: Oh wow, so that's been going on for a while. So, what is the Live 2 Sell Group all about?

CHRIS: It's a call center. It's an outsource call center. We do lead generation and mostly outbound calling, lead gen, appointment setting, database cleansing but, we also do a certain amount of customer service and stuff like that as well.

It was out of that business and the combination of us kind of really building our online presence quite quickly out of the gate with that in 2008 because we're a local firm for a while and then, we decided to go International.

And so, if you want to go International, you can't rely on the local market. You got to pitch yourself out hard to everybody else out there and that's when the Internet came into play obviously.

By the end of the second year, it has been running really properly, well actually into the first year going into the beginning of 2009 and further into the year. We started getting all these emails from people. They were saying things like, "I want to get a virtual assistant like in the **Four-Hour Work Week.**"

I'm like, "What the hell is this Four-Hour Work Week thing?"

The birth of Virtual Staff Finder

CHRIS: At first, we weren't involved in the VA game. I'd actually worked with VAs on and off for a number of years but, we didn't provide virtual assistants or anything back in 2008 or 2009. I think it was very early on in 2010. The light bulb went off and I hit myself around the head with a hammer and said, "Hold on Chris, wait a minute. You're just answering these emails and saying, 'We don't do that. Go to Elance or go to oDesk,' or whatever." There must be a way to make money here.



The entrepreneurial mindset kicks in and I sat down and spoke with a load of people that were in the market for VAs and that's where [Virtual Staff Finder](#) was born because we were solving a problem. There was an issue between finding really good quality, full time people here in the Philippines that weren't freelancing on the side and things like that, like a real team member and that's exactly what we decided to do.

We started Virtual Staff Finder. We've just celebrated our third birthday and we've helped now, I believe, about 1400 VAs here in the Philippines get hired with people overseas. It's a noble cause at the same time.

LESLIE: That is awesome. So, Virtual Staff Finder. Basically, someone can come to Virtual Staff Finder and they can tell you what they are looking for and you go out and do the work of finding a VA for them, right?

CHRIS: Exactly. It's a match-making service. It's what it is.

LESLIE: Match-making service, all right.

CHRIS: Without the romance.

The new book, 'Virtual Freedom'

LESLIE: Without the romance [laughs]. Well, you know. Anyhow...

Obviously, you've gotten into this outsourcing thing pretty heavily. I see that you wrote a few books on it, The Definitive Guide to Outsourcing to the Philippines, Business Growth and Outsourcing Lifestyle, Saving the Day the Virtual Way... Oh, I like that, " Saving the Day the Virtual Way." That has a nice ring to it.

CHRIS: Like that? Have you seen the cover of the book?

LESLIE: I haven't seen it. I'm just looking at my notes here.

CHRIS: You got to see the cover of the book.

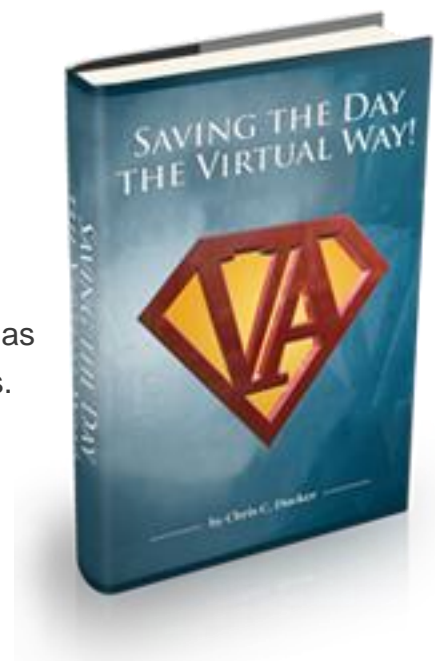
LESLIE: Well, if I got to see it then, everybody that's listening has to see it too. So, I'll put that cover of the book in the show notes. Anyone that's interested, this is going to be Episode 132, becomeablogger.com/episode132 and you will be able to see how awesome the cover of that book is.

CHRIS: It was a really cool idea. I had no idea. I just gave it to one of my VAs and said, "Here put a cool cover together for that." He came up with that idea and I was like, "Oh my God! He's a Genius." You got to check it out.

LESLIE: That is... Oh! I love it. I had to do a Google Search really quick. I just love it. I'm not even going to give it away. I'm just going to say, "Okay, you got to check it out at becomeablogger.com/episode132 and you got to see it." That is pretty awesome. Sweet. Okay, let's move on then.

You're working on one right now? Tell us about the one you're working on right now?

CHRIS: All those other books are eBooks. They are all for free. You can get them on my site for free but, just literally recently, I finish the full manuscript for my first traditionally published



book. I got a book offer thrown at me at the end of last year and to cut the long story short, I signed it. It's been a dream of mine to write a traditionally published book for many, many years.

I don't think I've really been as experienced and as full freight in the industry up until this point, really to do that. There's a lot of people that write books on subjects that they claim to be real experts but, you can see that they're just literally skating around the edges of the rink. They're not going to go in and start trying to do any of those sexy turns and things like that.

I do the sexy turns and flips and somersaults and all the rest of it with this book but, yes, it's called "Virtual Freedom." I haven't held back at all. Everything from how to find, how to hire, how to train, how to manage, how to motivate, how to build a proper virtual team of people with different roles as opposed to hire for the role not just for the task.

The difference between project-based outsourcing and team-building outsourcing... The whole kit and caboodle. I was actually contracted to do 45,000 words but, I ended up giving a manuscript of almost 40% more than that. It's a big chunk of a book.

LESLIE: Wow. What I like about what I have heard about it so far in terms of what you said is in there is, a lot of people, myself included read the Four-Hour Work Week and thought to themselves, "This is what I want to do." It has a good section in there about outsourcing.

But, since then, there really has not been anything that really dives into outsourcing in those steps and I think this is going to be a great way of doing it.

And, what is awesome is that you're on this interview right now and you are going to start to break down some of those things right now so that, people that are listening, they can actually leave here and get an outsourcer, start working with their VA to have some productivity.

I want to shift gears and I want to go into some of the how-to first.

CHRIS: Let's do it. Let's do it. Forget the Hong Kong movie stuff. This is way more fun. Let's do it.

How to outsource the right way

LESLIE: There you go. All right, sweet. So, let's start at the beginning.

I am a blogger. The person that's listening to this is most likely a blogger, maybe just getting started, maybe they have some experience and they are making some money but, they know

that they need to be more efficient, they need to find an outsourcer and get that outsourcer to help them to multiply their efforts.

How do I find an outsourcer?

Finding the right outsourcer

CHRIS: Okay, so the first thing you got to understand, and this is one of the biggest mistakes that people make right out the gate is that there are two very different types of outsourcing.

The first one is outsourcing on a task by task or a project by project basis. So, it happens, it finishes and that's that.

The other one is where you're really talking about building a team of people. That's why they call it team building outsourcing.

Let's look at the first one real quick. The first one is where you need a logo designed, or a landing page developed or some transcription work done or podcast or blogging, branding in particular for Facebook pages and Google+ pages, YouTube channels... that sort of type of thing.

Once you've done that, you've done it. It's a one-time job. So, you're better off hiring those types of people on a project by project basis rather than hiring them full time and then, thinking to yourself, "Oh my God, I got to find more work," that sort of type of thing.

That's the first thing. That's the first kind of outsourcing model that's out there. You can go to places like Elance, oDesk, and Freelancer, and all those other sites out there that help you do just that. They will put you in connection with these freelancers and these VAs all around the world, not just in the Philippines and you'll be able to get that work done at a decent price relatively quickly.

The second type of outsourcing is the one that I'm more excited about. It's the one that turns me on more. That is because it's about building teams. That's about hiring for the role not for the task. That's another mistake that a lot of people make, they think they can hire one person for one task and then, get them doing lots of other tasks. What that ends up doing is turning into what I call a "Super VA."

The super VA, honestly speaking, does not exist. You might be able to find the odd VA here and there that can handle maybe a little bit of graphic design work if they're a web developer or

maybe they can do a little bit of video editing if they are a graphic designer or something like that, right?

But, ultimately, you've got to hire for the role, not for the task. If you're not ready to hire for a role full time, that's cool. You just go back to the project by project basis. It's not rocket science. If there's enough work on the table to hire somebody either part-time which is basically 20 hours a week, or full time 40 hours a week, then you hire for the team building aspect in mind which is exactly what you have done with your two VAs, right?

LESLIE: Yes, definitely. I have two actually that are working 20 hours a week and one is more of a general VA that does some of my administrative duties and then, the other one is a technical assistant that deals with all the tech stuff so that, I don't have to do it.

CHRIS: Right, exactly. So, you figured out what exactly what roles you needed to fill. You understood the fact that, you know, you can't get one person to do both of those roles. You hire two people on a part-time basis feeling that void in both angles. That's exactly the right mindset to follow.

That's really how, in terms of a blogging standpoint, you got to look at some of the things that you could end up outsourcing from a blogging perspective and there's a lot of things in mind but, ultimately, it's about understanding that first step of, "Do I need to hire somebody full time or even part time? Or, can I just get this one person to do this one job for me?"

Determining what tasks and roles to outsource in your business

LESLIE: Now, that selecting that person for that role, that's not an easy process. When I think about the process that I went through in order to find the people that I have right now, it was extremely extensive.

What are some of the steps that you recommend for someone to take?

CHRIS: Well, the first thing you're going to try to figure out is what are you going to outsource? You can't start thinking about the types of people you need unless you know the types of tasks they're going to be handling for you.

The easiest way to get over this is doing an exercise that I have done now, I don't know, hundreds of times through podcasts and blog posts and also live on stages when I present but, ultimately, it's called my three lists to freedom exercise.

What you do is you get a piece of paper, a white board or an iPad or whatever you use to make your notes and you just draw two lines down creating three columns.

On the first column, you create a list of all the things that you just don't like doing. This is the stuff that you procrastinate forever about. You leave it right to the last moment and then, you rush it because you just...It doesn't turn you on. It doesn't get you going at all. That's the first column.



The second column is a list of all the things that you can't do. As entrepreneurs and bloggers do come on to the realm of entrepreneurs as far as I'm concerned, as entrepreneurs are very strange breed. We believe that ultimately, we are the masters of our own Universe. There's no Kryptonite out there, right? We can do everything.

The word "recharge" only actually applies to our cellphone. It doesn't apply to us. It doesn't apply to anything to do with our business, just about the phone.

But, really what it comes down to that second column is a list of all things you can't do. You go to soul search a little bit. Say to yourself, "Am I a coder? No, I'm not. Then, why the hell am I trying to re-code this landing page? Get someone else to do it."

"Am I a graphic designer? No, I'm not. Then, why am I messing around with this logo for my new Powerpoint presentation? I'll get someone else to do it."

That's the second list is a list of all the things that you can't do. Someone else, believe me, someone else out there can do it way better for you. Once you start weighing up the cost of your time compared to what you would end up paying them, it's a no-brainer as far as I'm concerned nine times out of ten. That's your second column.

The third and the final column is by far, the single most important list of the three lists that you create here and that is because it's a list of all the things that you feel as the boss, as your business owner that you shouldn't be actually doing.

This is a really important one because it genuinely gets you to engage your head with your heart. You're not just focusing on pure gut here. You know that there are certain tasks that you can do, that you like doing that you can do well. But, should you be doing them? Should you be doing them as a business owner?

If the answer to that question is "no," then that's where these types of tasks go in this particular list. So, they're your three lists to freedom. You put them together. You look at them and they ultimately become your blueprint or your roadmap for the **beginning of your outsourcing journey**.

LESLIE: All right, so you make those three lists. I just realized like halfway through what you were saying that I wasn't taking notes and that's just not right. So, the first list was what? The task what?

CHRIS: The first list is a list of all the things you don't like doing.

LESLIE: You don't like doing. The second is the tasks that you can't do even if you want to do it.

CHRIS: Correct.

LESLIE: And then, the third is a task that you shouldn't do as an entrepreneur.

CHRIS: Absolutely.

Types of roles to outsource

LESLIE: I have that list and what do I do next? What do I do with this list?

CHRIS: You're going to start grouping them. You're going to start grouping those tasks together into individual roles. So, there's four or five main roles in the VA world. The first one is a general VA or a GVA. That type of person is going to be handling things like your email filtering. They'll handle your calendar. They'll schedule appointments. Maybe, your VA might help hook up with your podcast schedule and things like that.

They might handle travel for you, maybe they'll keep your [Dropbox](#) up to date and then, organize. They will create some spreadsheets for you. By the way, the GVA role? With that about the single most important one ever. Like every entrepreneur on the planet should have a general VA, everybody. There's no exceptions. Even Richard Branson needs one. So, Dick, if you're listening in, you need to call me because I'll hook you up. Because I know he listens to podcasts and you never know, Learning with Leslie.

LESLIE: You just never know.

CHRIS: Why would he not want to learn with Leslie? Why not?

LESLIE: I don't see why not. This **general VA**, do you recommend then, if I am just getting started, this is the first place I should look in terms of getting a virtual assistant?

CHRIS: Yes, without a doubt. There are so many tasks. Time is almost a valuable commodity as an entrepreneur and there are so many tasks that we need to do on a day to day basis in today's marketplace that suck out time dry. Social Media is a perfect example. You got to be in it to win it.



I don't like Facebook. I'm very vocal about it. I think it's a noisy horrible place but, the fact of the matter is if I want to build a community, if I want to get the leads that come from Facebook and all of that, there's a billion people on that s*cker. I'd be mad from a business standpoint to not be active on it, right?

So, there are certain things that general VA can do for you. How about this? How about checking your voicemails on your Skype account? Transcribing those voicemails and sending them to you as you sleep through the night so that, when you wake up in the morning, you don't have to log in to Skype and listen to all these messages. You can scan them real quick via an email.

These are little things that they do for you. They are an utter God send and the list honestly goes on and on and on. Scheduling your tweets, putting together your Facebook status updates for you, updating your Pinterest boards, promoting your Facebook pages, commenting on blogs for you... The list honestly goes on and on.

GVA is where it's all about right there.

LESLIE: That's actually the first VA that I hired. My VA right now has been with me, man, over two years now. She has been a Godsend.

CHRIS: Talk about the top three or four tasks that that person does for you on a day-to-day basis.

LESLIE: Day-to-day basis... Email, that's huge. Transcribing my podcast episodes, that's another thing that she does on a weekly basis. She also... Man, she does everything. The biggest thing is email, managing my Facebook account for my Biology blog, she does a lot with that and the list goes... Almost everything you said here actually, except for this whole

checking voice mail thing, almost everything else, no scheduling tweets and pins but, Facebook yes. She does.

CHRIS: Right. I mean, you'd have a serious amount of work on your hands to deal with day to day without her being around.

LESLIE: No, I wouldn't be able to do it. I can't do it. I tried it before and it didn't work.

CHRIS: Right so. There you go.

LESLIE: Okay, so that's your GVA.

CHRIS: Your GVA is without a doubt is kind of like the silver bullet to the American... form London, you know what I mean? It's what's it's all about.

So, the second one is a **web developer**. A lot of people may not need this person on a day to day basis so, that's cool. If you need them 2-3 days a week then, just hire them part time. If you need them just every three months then, you hire them on a recurring project basis.

But, that's the other type of VAs, your web developers. They'll do things like keeping all of your Wordpress plugins up to date. They'll do backups of your site regularly. They'll make sure that everything is looking okay on the back ends of your C-panel. They're going to help you out with setting up email accounts and yes, a general VA might be able to do some of this stuff as well but, I like to really separate my roles. That's really what I'm all about. They'll build landing pages for you, all that sort of stuff. So, that's your web developer.

The next one is an SEO and I've started to use the slash here, **SEO / Web Marketer** because SEO has changed a lot over the last couple of years as we know. We got to be careful that we don't delve into any kind of black hat SEO tactics and things like that nowadays.

Really having a web marketing VA at your arsenal is a major thing. It's all about content, content marketing but, honestly speaking, I don't believe that I should be promoting my content. That's not a good use of my time. I'll create it. I love creating my content.

But, I'm not going to be sitting on Facebook and Twitter and wasting my time tweeting links out to it and things like that and all that sort of stuff. My time is way more important than that. I can get my general VA to handle that stuff and I can get my web marketer to handle that stuff as well more specifically.

So, a lot of that, the more SEO type stuff, internal link building on your site, all that sort of stuff that might have been a little bit more hard core a couple years ago now are starting to delve more towards social. That person now will also handle all of my email newsletter marketing and stuff like that, as well. That's that one.

Then, you go to **content writer**. So, if you're doing a lot of niche site stuff or if you're just doing a lot of content for your business blog or whatever, they can help create that content for you. They're also a dab hand because they're writers. They're a dab hand at transcription, blog commenting, keyword research, stuff like that and then, finally, you come into the new kid on the block sort of type thing and that's your **video editor, your audio editor, your mobile app developer**, that sort of type of thing. There are two or three other roles that are really starting to shake the virtual world, slowly but surely the last eighteen months or so.

How to train your VAs

LESLIE: Okay, awesome. So, those are the different types of VA. We have general VA, web developer, SEO / Web marketer, content writer, and video/audio editor, etc.

Let's say, I have decided I need a general VA. I'm going to go ahead and hire a general VA and maybe she's working for me 20 hours a week, maybe it's just ten, whatever I decide to go with.



How do you go about making sure that that person is doing what you want them to do and it's really helping your business? In other words, do you provide them with training? How do you do your instructions? How do you do all of that? What's your take on that?

CHRIS: I love these questions because you're asking, you know [*laughs*]. This is the stuff that I like because you're asking for your audience.

LESLIE: Definitely.

CHRIS: But, I'm giggling on the inside a little bit, that's all because you're great at all this stuff yourself. So, okay.

First and foremost, how do you train them? Straight out the gate, I want to say, "No VA is going to come to you fully trained in exactly the way that you want them to perform for you." They

might know how to do this task and that task. They might know how to put this report together and that report together but, ultimately, every entrepreneur on the planet is very, very different in the way that we want things done.

Out of the gate, you got to spend some quality time with them, showing them exactly how you like things done. For me, that means video. That means screen capture.

You're going to use something like [Jing](#) to capture the short five-minute video clips which are great because you can show them how you want your YouTube channel updated or how you want your blog post laid out in the Wordpress dashboard or something on those lines. You show them really quick in a five-minute video. They have the ability to replay that video four or five times if they have to to get your instructions properly.

But, you know what else you're doing? With every video you create, you're creating and you're adding to an encyclopedia of internal training just the way you want it done video by video by video which means that if you continue to grow your virtual team, you don't need to go through all that training again. You can just prompt them off to one of those videos in that Dropbox folder and it works really, really well.

So, video is what it's all about when it comes to training. If not, obviously, a combination of radio and audio is absolutely fine as well. But, I have found without a doubt, video is the best way to be able to train VAs because genuinely, you can get your point across in a visual format. They can follow. They can see what you want and how you want it done and it just cuts out a lot of mistakes straight out the gate.

LESLIE: Okay, so let me ask this question about that specifically because I have done both video and also written. With new media, with the stuff that we're doing online, things are changing so quickly. How do you keep that updated?

If you have an article that's written in [Evernote](#) or in Dropbox, or whatever the case might be, you can easily go in there and tweak a few things if certain things change. What do you do when you're focusing more on video for training?

CHRIS: I got to re-shoot. There's no doubt about it. If you do a video on how you want your email newsletter put together in Aweber and then, Aweber 12 months later, they decide to change the database or rather the dashboard, you got to re-shoot. There's no two ways around it.

Yes, there's pros and cons but, honestly, from what I have seen across the board, video is the best way to train your VA.

LESLIE: Okay, sweet. So, that's for a general VA and many of the other things. But, if you're hiring someone that is doing something that you absolutely can't do, how do you do that?

CHRIS: It's a tough one. I think it comes down to communication above and beyond everything else because ultimately, if you're not a coder and you've hired a web developer to code a landing page for you, I don't know whether you're any good at PHP or whatever, I look at a page of codes and I start vomiting.

LESLIE: *[Laughs]*

CHRIS: It's like... Take me to a happy place. I wouldn't know what the hell all that means but, I know what I want. I know what I want the final outcome to be, right?

So, it's about communication. I found that particularly when you're working in a time-sensitive environment, where maybe you're working on one particular project or one particular task that you need done in a short space of time, just being available for the VA is sometimes enough for them to be able to fire a quick question via Skype or email or something and just give that initial feedback.

Also, we are visual creatures, right? If you don't want to shoot a video but, you want to show a rough layout on how you want, for instance, a landing page or a home page on a blog to look like, draw it out. Take a photo with your phone and upload it at Dropbox. At least, they've got some kind of idea rather than just saying, you know, pointing at another website and saying, "I want that."

Because you know what they're going to do, they're going to copy it line by line by line of code and then, you could have either copyright issues or it's not going to look the way you want it to look ultimately and all that sort of stuff.

So, I think communication is key and even though they're going to know that you don't really know what they are doing, as long as the communication is there and you're a nice person to work for, I think you'll find that the chances of yourself getting screwed over in some capacity are going to be pretty slim because particularly, here in the Philippines, people here, they genuinely love to work people overseas. They need it. They need the job. They need the work.

And so, if you're a nice person they work for and the communication lines are wide open, you'll be just fine.

LESLIE: You are very much into outsourcing specifically in the Philippines. I am also. Why Philippines?

CHRIS: My view has changed over the last couple of years. I think it's because (a), I was drafting the book even without the deal that I got for Virtual Freedom and I wanted to make sure that the book was very unbiased read in regards to where you should be building your virtual team.

Obviously, I mentioned the Philippines. That's a given. I've lived here for 13 years but, I believe the best place to find people is where you're going to find the right people for the job. That's really my... My mindset has shifted quite a bit the last 18 or 24 months or so.

I have VAs in the US. I have VAs in the UK. I haven't worked with anybody in Australia. Yes, it's not because I don't like Aussies. They're very nice people but, I haven't come across anybody that could handle something for me but, the Philippines in general, there are two or three major things that it's got going for it.

First and foremost, the financial side of it. You will pay a Filipino GVA about 1/3 of what you will pay somebody in the United States to do the same role, maybe even a quarter depending on experience levels and things like that. They will get the job done just as well, sometimes better as well based on my experience.

The second thing is, and we're talking about communication a minute ago, here in the Philippines, the Philippines, I think is like the third or the fourth largest English speaking country in the world. So, literally, the entire education system is in English. Everything.

They actually have a class at high school to teach Filipino dialects because they do, all the other class is in English. Not a lot of people know this. Everything is in English here.

My son who is five years old, born and raised here in the Philippines can hardly speak a word of Filipino because all of his kindergarten and preschool stuff has been in English. Now, he's actually at, believe it or not, a Filipino class once a week so, he'll try and pick up individual phrases here and there.

So, the English communication levels of Filipinos is huge compared to some other countries where English could be construed as a second language, right? That's the other thing.

Thirdly, very God-fearing hardworking people. I have yet to come across a Filipino that is not hardworking and very loyal to an employer who genuinely pays them properly and looks after them well. I hear all these horror stories and stuff but, if you're going to treat your virtual

assistant in the Philippines like crap, yes, they are going to quit. Of course, they are going to quit.

But, if you treat an employee in America like crap, they quit on you there as well. There's no difference. So, really just paying them what you feel is fair and worth and what they're worth rather is very important. I hate it when I see this so-called 'gurus' on the Internet which we'll remain nameless but, you know who you are if you listen to this, you cannot find a Filipino virtual assistant that is going to bring any value in your business for \$1.50 an hour. Stop putting that on the Internet. It can't happen. You're not going to find a Filipino VA that are going to handle your Social Media, build your websites, create your SEO strategy and implement it, do all your video editing, tie your shoe laces, make a coffee and pick up your dry cleaners... it's not going to happen!

That's a super VA. They don't exist. Stop telling people you can get this stuff. I hate that. Just paying people what they are genuinely worth, being a good guy. Believe me, Filipinos will work with you for a long, long time.

I have about 280 Filipino employees throughout the course of my three companies here. I can tell you right now, hand on my heart, I would not be where I am today, I would not have enjoyed the level of the success that I have if that had not been for my Filipino employees. Plain and simple.

Tools to use for virtual assistants

LESLIE: Okay, so there's so much we could get into and we're kind of running out of time. I want to end on this. What kind of tools do you use or what types of tools should the average bloggers that's getting into virtual assistance and all that stuff for managing the virtual assistants and communicating and those types of things. What are your top tools that you recommend?

CHRIS: A good way to start out is by keeping things very simple beginning. I think like Skype and Dropbox are very, very important. Obviously, Dropbox from a file sharing standpoint. It's just super easy, right? It's very easy to get set up and it's very quick and reliable. Try and keep everything online as you possibly can meaning "in the cloud."

Things like the Google Calendar, the GCal using Gmail if you want them to filter through your Gmail and things like that. Dropbox is great. Skype for communication is good because you can just type in that very quick, one line message that you might want answered.

But, there's a lot more. You could start getting a little bit sexy and bring it up just a notch or two, start talking about project management systems. Project management systems we really rely to manage and work with your VA within that web-based portal, right?

That actually is a good thing because it will cut down on email and every entrepreneur on the planet wants to have less email. There's no doubt about that. It also enables things to be discussed in a general environment. So, if you have one particular project that you're working on, everybody can stay super focused and productive on that.

So, a couple of really good ones that are out there [Basecamp](#) is very, very strong. [Asana](#) which is brilliant. I use that with all of my employees and it's 100% free. I love it. [Huddle.com](#) is another really good one as well and there's four or five more out there that you can potentially use but, a project management system is kind of really taking it up a notch.

Two or three months in, boom! Let's take it up, let's give it a little bit more focus and a little bit more streamlined.

Then, you know, things that the training tools and stuff, we talked about Jing, you can even send them across a website like [Mind Tools](#) which can kind of help them upgrade their own personal skills in terms of the professional side of things and stuff like that, as well. [Udemy](#) is another really good source for training materials. There's just so many different things out there... [Evernote](#), [Lastpass](#), [42:19], there's a whole lot of different stuff that's out there, some really, really good tools that makes life so much easier.

LESLIE: Man, thank you so much. A lot of those tools are tools that I use. I use Basecamp and I use Evernote and Dropbox, Lastpass, yes, a number of them.

Anyhow, Chris, thank you so much. I know that my audience got a ton of value from this so, I really appreciate you coming on here.

CHRIS: That was a pleasure man. It was really good to hang out.

LESLIE: Awesome. Hey guys, you want to check out what Chris is up to? Head on over to [ChrisDucker.com](#) where you can consume his content, learn more about his virtual lifestyle. You can listen to his podcast and you're going to get a lot of value from that. As usual, thank you for listening to this episode. I hope you got a ton of value and if you're enjoying it, I'd appreciate it if you can hop over to iTunes and leave an honest review. That helps with additional visibility for the podcast and makes it so that people can find this message. This is a good message – Changing the world one blog at a time.

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