

Stop Sending Jobs Overseas!

What you can do to stop the flow of U.S. Jobs to third world call centers

Make outsourcing work for you!

by Douglas T. Duncan

For over 35 years I've made my way in the world as a financial advisor, a stock broker with one of Wall Street's premier brokerage firms. Among the skills I needed to succeed was the ability to observe and understand economic trends and developments.

My observations have lead me to the following facts. The global economy is upon us. Today's businesses are challenged, like never before, to cut costs and improve their bottom line. Outsourcing is a necessary evil for survival of almost any business in today's environment. Far too many jobs are being moved to third world countries where labor is cheap, and it seems that we just can't compete. U.S. and Canadian based Telephone Answering Services and Call Centers (TAS/CC) have the potential to both suffer and benefit from these economic trends.

Some might consider these facts a hopeless reality, accepting the inevitable, and sinking into the same kind of complacent acceptance that's pushed so many manufacturing jobs overseas. It's my goal in writing this article to suggest an alternative. We are engaged in a war - not one of bombs and bullets, but one that is lethal to our economy, our communities, and our standard of living. If this threat is ignored, it will eat away at our workers ability to keep their jobs and seriously damage our economy and our way of life.

It's not news to any one of us that many corporations have chosen to outsource large numbers of jobs to third world nations where workers are paid incredibly low wages. Jobs that were traditionally performed here at home by our friends and neighbors are now routinely moved away from our shores. Not only does this affect the North American worker who has been put out of work, but it has affected our economy by moving those wages out of our own economic spending cycle. Further, this has begun to multiply the damage caused by these trends, and could potentially deal a crippling blow to our economy. The buying power of the North American workers will continue to be effected by this outward flow of earnings, until it cycles back to slow down the business potential of even the companies that started the cycle when they moved the economic cash flow overseas.

What can we do? How can we compete when the playing field is just not level? Let's review some of the things we do know, and then focus on the positive to find solutions that will work for us.

Almost every one of us has experienced the off-shore customer service agent or outbound telemarketer that simply can't cut it. Let's face it folks, no matter what *60 Minutes* has shown us, these people can't speak or think in our language and culture. The man who called my home claiming his name was "Susan" was himself a victim of the crook he paid to train him and give him an "American persona." When I asked "Susan" how he could expect me to trust him and his sales pitch, which began with a lie as basic as his name, he couldn't begin to understand my point. He was like a robot that spoke! When my responses didn't fit his programmed response list, his brain circuitry simply went into overload. There is a huge gap that is not being filled by this overseas labor force, and I am positive that if the North American Teleservices industry focuses its' efforts properly, we can fill this gap. We can not only keep jobs here in our own country, but also benefit greatly from the reality that is outsourcing, and the opportunities it offers.

Yes, I said opportunity. We can benefit from this business revolution that has come our way. With the proper tools, we can deliver the better solution to answer the need for outsourced labor in North American businesses.

Recently, my company, Almond Hill Enterprises, issued a press release stating that we have adopted a corporate policy in which our resellers' will be prohibited from employing low cost offshore labor when using the TurboSchedule™ Virtual Front Office Solution. It's our goal to insure that only those who pay fair wages to their employees have access to this technology.

By limiting the use of this patented application, my company is attempting to tilt the playing field back to a more level position. It's now up to the TAS/CC owners and managers to get out there and compete. Market your people's talent, language skills, culture and way of life. Point out to the business people in your communities that you can help them reap big savings through outsourcing, and that they can do it by using employees their clients and customers can relate to. Show off our tools, and your excellent workers. Focus on the ability of your staff to help businesses grow, and deliver superb service by using their neighbors as part of a modern, efficient and highly skilled workforce employing the latest in technology.

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