

Improve the quality of bids you receive

Buyers often get frustrated when they don't get quality bids for their project listing. We've done some research and we quickly realised that the quality of bids they receive is directly driven by how good their project brief is. We have asked one of our top rated bidders to give us some Tips as to what constitutes good bid. Emily Cagle is a marketing and communications consultant and has won a high proportion of the bids she's placed largely because she's been selective in which projects to bid for.

As a provider on Peopleperhour.com, I read dozens of job listings per week but often the project description isn't terribly clear, so it's hard to fathom exactly what the buyer is looking for.

While this might present a challenge to the service provider, the main victim of the vaguely worded project listing is the buyer themselves, who not only risks receiving dozens of irrelevant bids, but might even go so far as to accept a bid from a provider who has a false notion of what is required.

Make the title count

The first step to attracting quality bids is to make the most of your listing's exposure in the 'Latest Posts' section on the front page of Peopleperhour.com. This feed only displays the first 30 characters of the project title, so it's wise to keep your title below this mark and get straight to the point. For example, rather than writing 'Help needed with sales letter for accountancy firm', you could write 'Sales letter (accountancy)'.

Be specific

When it comes to the project description, bidders will find it much easier to price up a project if you are explicit about what's involved. So, for a web design project, for example, aim to explain how many pages are needed, what functionality the site must have, whether you will need a logo and so on.

Outline required skills

If you have any specific skills requirements, such as being able to work with a particular piece of software, you should list them and state whether they are essential or preferred. It is also worth mentioning what industry your company operates in, as this can attract bidders with useful experience. For example, an accountant who already understands the typical transactions of a firm in your sector might be better placed to give industry specific tax advice.

Sell yourself

To attract strong bids, you should also consider giving some details about your company's achievements and reputation. Just as with any job, people may be more inclined to apply if the company has an appealing profile.

Set a realistic budget

It is also important to be as realistic as possible about your project's budget. If your budget range is very low, you may not attract the standard of provider you are looking for, and if it is unnecessarily high, you might find people bid higher than they otherwise would. If you have time, research what constitutes a realistic budget before submitting your listing. Alternatively, choose the 'Prefer not to disclose' option and judge what constitutes a reasonable price based on the bids you receive.

Clarify with bidders

Finally, remember that all bids come with a private message board that allows you follow up with providers and ask for more information, so if a bid looks great, but doesn't answer those last minute questions that have arisen since you posted the project, ask them! A good provider will be happy to discuss your requirements in more detail before asking you to accept their bid.

– Emily Cagle is a marketing and communications consultant