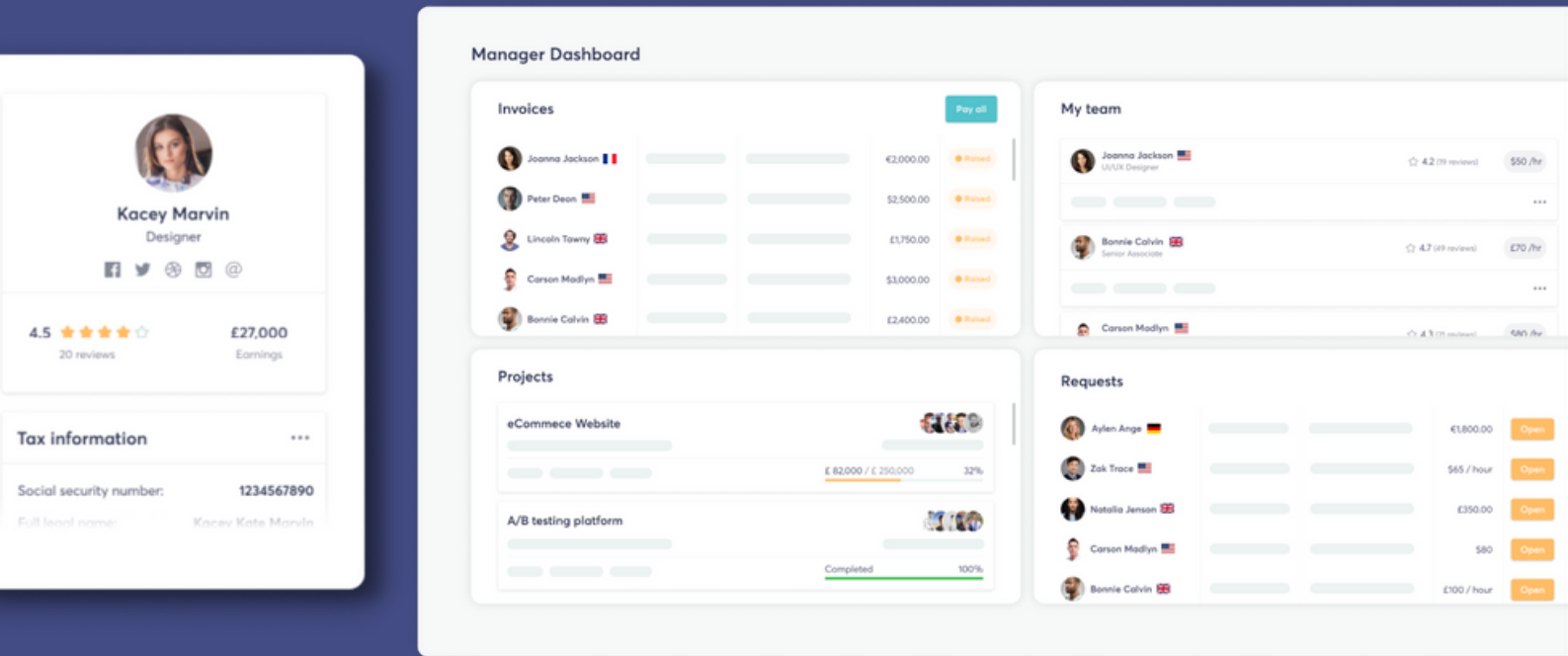


# COMPLETE GUIDE TO



# MANAGING FREELANCERS

- ✓ First things first:  
The brief
- ✓ The 3 aspects of  
freelancer  
management
- ✓ How TalentDesk  
can help

After hiring the best freelancers and onboarding them well, now it's time to get them started on the work you hired them for. But as with any other worker, a freelancer's output depends largely on how well they're managed.

Many managers count on figuring this out as they go – but this results in missed deadlines, derailed projects and extra expenses incurred along the way. A far better (and easier) alternative is to have the right processes in place for managing freelancers.

This guide gives you all the insights you will need to do that, without having to make the inevitable mistakes first! Let's dive in.

## FIRST THINGS FIRST: THE BRIEF

Good freelancer management begins with a great brief. And this is where many managers make their first mistake. They assume that since a freelancer has already been told of the requirements while signing on, they'll know exactly what to do. While a contract or an agreement will cover the basics of the requirement, a brief needs to be much more detailed about your project goals.

One simple way to make the brief crystal clear is by setting SMART goals first. SMART goals are:



A good brief largely answers these 4 crucial questions – What, How, When and Who. And it does so while keeping SMART parameters in mind. As an example, let's say you are updating your company branding and have hired a great freelance designer to do the job. Let us see some of the crucial details your brief should cover.

"A platform that takes away the long hours of managing freelancers so that you can spend the time on doing more strategic tasks"

Ndy Macaulay,  
People Operations Specialist at Mindvalley 



### 1) What?

Tell your freelancer what you need to achieve, in as specific terms as you possibly can. Just telling them you want to 'update your branding' is too broad a directive and can be misinterpreted. Instead specify:

- What are you looking for from the rebranded assets?
- In what ways should it be different from your existing assets?
- Why are you changing your brand strategy?

## 2) How?

Discuss how you are looking to meet your goals – and how the freelancer can help you do so. In this scenario, you might need your freelancers' help in:

- ✓ Creating a new logo
- ✓ Redesigning the website as per the new branding
- ✓ Creating a certain number of social media posts

## 3) When?

Go on to set SMART timelines with your freelancer. Here, you might want to discuss:

- ✓ The order of priority for the requirements discussed above in our example
- ✓ When do they need to submit each of them?
- ✓ When are you looking to go live with the new branding?
- ✓ How many months do you need their help for recurring tasks like creating social media posts?

Of course, don't forget to make your deadlines realistic and achievable. In this example, it's unrealistic to expect a complete brand overhaul in a week – so always discuss the timelines with your freelancers before solidifying them.

## 4) Who?

Here's where you discuss the target audience this project is catering to. If your brand caters to C-Suite executives, the asset designs will look a lot different than if you were catering to say, college students.

These are the basic points a brief should cover. But don't forget – the more background and context you provide, the better the quality of your freelancer's work will be. Take the time to think about any other detail that you might add in, to help them work well. Here's some more information you can include:

- ✓ Details about your brand. Understanding your brand better will help the freelancer make the designs uniquely yours.
- ✓ Limitations and restrictions. Telling your freelancers what you don't want can be just as valuable as telling them what you do want! Also, your brand guidelines might restrict the use of certain colors, patterns and so on – all of which your freelancer would need to know.
- ✓ Details about your competitors. Understanding what your competitors are doing right and what they are missing out on can help your freelancer create something that will truly set you apart in the market.

## THE 3 ASPECTS OF FREELANCER MANAGEMENT

The brief is just the beginning! Freelancer management is an ongoing process – and here are the 3 things you will need to keep in mind.

### 1) Communication

Once they understand what they need to do, freelancers will largely work on their own. However, do keep an open line of communication so they feel comfortable coming to you with questions, doubts and concerns through the duration of the project.

But communication with freelancers can quickly get overwhelming without a proper process. For instance, if you work with multiple freelancers, across different time zones and they all use a different communication platform to ask questions and leave updates, you may find a large part of your day taken up with this alone. Here are a few considerations that can help you can streamline this process:

**Only 35% of executives say they have technology for contingent workforce management (Source: SAP Fieldglass)**

#### ✓ Whom do they reach out to?

Consider whether it would be better for your freelancers to have a single point of contact or whether it would make it easier to have multiple stakeholders of the project offering their inputs. The former can help streamline all feedback and make it less confusing for the freelancer. The latter can help reduce the rounds of iterations and give your freelancers access to more guidance from various sources. Both options have their pros and cons – so choose whatever you feel works best for your team and project.

#### ✓ What platforms should they use?

Communicating via various inboxes, collaboration platforms and messaging apps can lead to a lot of confusion. This is especially true if your freelancer is talking to multiple stakeholders – and they're all using different channels to give them scattered directives and feedback. Having one comprehensive platform is an easy way to streamline this. Create a group and ensure that all communication happens there so that it's easy for your freelancer to keep track – and nobody ends up giving contradictory feedback.

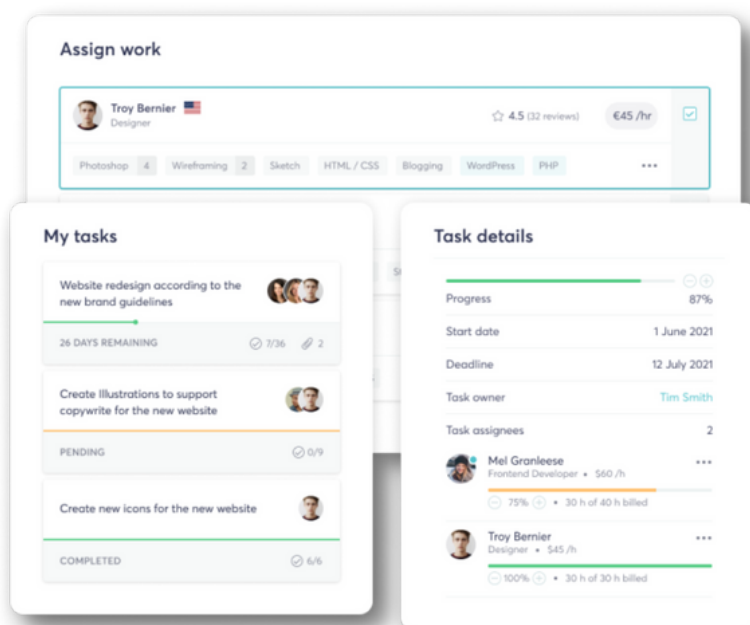
✓ Is your communication secure?

You might need to share a lot of sensitive information and proprietary data with your freelancers in order for them to do their job. While the freelancers themselves would be under an NDA (which is a part of the onboarding process), the way you share this information can leave your data at risk. Ensure the communication platform you choose has best-in-class security features to keep your data protected at every stage.

2) Project management

Another important part of freelancer management is managing the logistical aspects of the project well. This enables freelancers to work well individually and as a team. This becomes incredibly important when you have more than one project running parallelly, and have multiple freelancers working on each. The sheer amount of details and data you juggle in that case is immense – and it's not feasible to track them all manually.

Opt for a tool that tracks information in a cohesive, organized way – and allows you to pull up any information about any project, no matter which stage it is at. A great software, combined with a good project management process will:



**Give you visibility on assigned tasks and responsibilities:** It will enable you to keep track of which freelancer is in charge of which part of the project, what they are working on right now and when they are due to turn in their work.

**Manage deadlines and dependencies:** It will enable you to track progress, spot any issues that might impact the overall project timeline and manage dependencies. A valuable step to add in here, is to break up each freelancer's work into several milestones. This will let you monitor progress more effectively rather than depending on one final, all-important deadline. In case one milestone is not met for some reason, you can rework the timelines, and notify other freelancers whose work might be affected because of this. A good software will also allow freelancers to mark their vacation days and other periods of unavailability. This again, gives you early visibility on affected timelines and lets you manage dependencies.

**Managing budgets:** It's difficult to keep track of project spends when you are working with multiple freelancers, getting different kinds of tasks done and juggling deadlines. Any unforeseen delays and disruptions can have an impact on your budget too. Instead of trying to manage this through a spreadsheet, a good software will free up your time by automating this process.

### 3) Feedback

The third aspect of freelancer management is to offer the right guidance and feedback. Too many freelancers state that they have no idea how the project is going and whether they are on the right track at all until the very end – and maybe not even then.

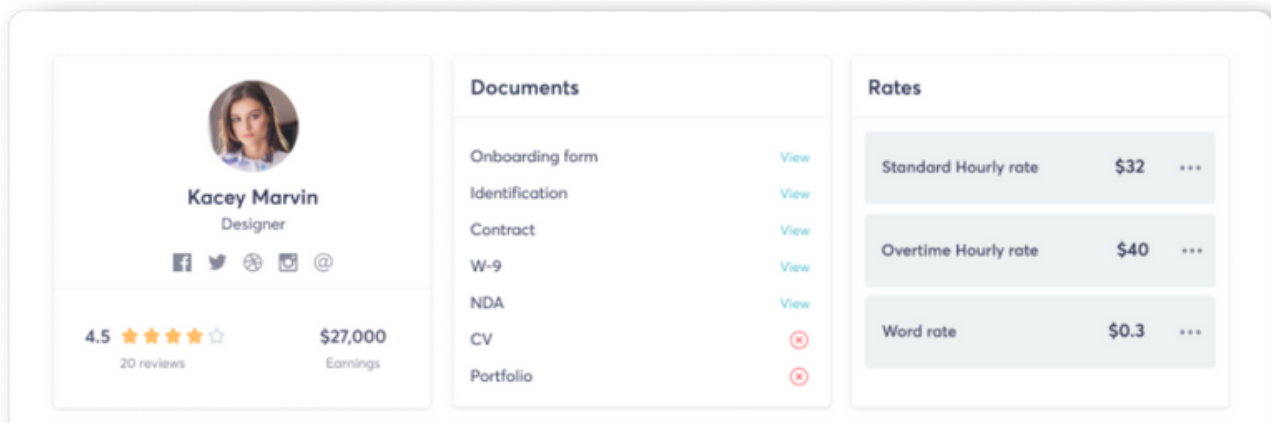
So as a freelancer completes a project milestone and submits a task, don't forget to let them know how they are doing, what they are missing and any potential ways they need to change gears. Any freelancer would appreciate this kind of feedback early on, rather than if they were asked to make major changes at the end, after they've already worked on the entire task. Of course, this also works to your advantage, because it allows you to spot and rectify issues early. In contrast, a freelancer having to redo their part of the project might mean missed deadlines for you.

You might also want to set aside a little time for an end-of-project feedback round with your freelancers. Tell them how they performed, what you loved about their work and pass on any words of appreciation from your directors or clients. Also let them know how they could have done better. These insights are extremely valuable for freelancers and it helps you build a better relationship with them. Moreover, you are essentially equipping them to do a more flawless task for you, the next time around!

## HOW TALENTDESK CAN HELP YOU

With close to two decades of experience in the freelancer management space, TalentDesk is a platform that makes every aspect of working with freelancers seamless and simple. Apart from helping you find, hire, onboard and pay freelancers, TalentDesk’s features and capabilities make it the ideal platform for managing freelancers as well. See what they are:

**Information sharing features:** This allows you to upload your brief document as well as any other raw files, data and images onto a single central platform. This means you are able to keep track of what you have shared with your freelancers – and they know exactly where to find them without having to sift through various apps and inboxes.

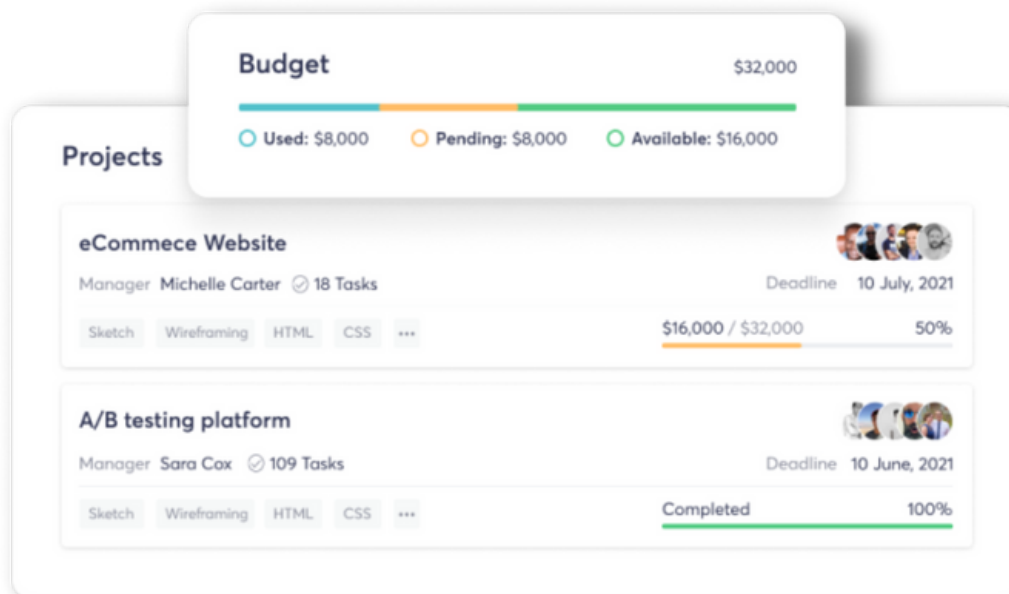


**Security features:** Our top-of-the-line security features ensure that any information you share through our platform remains secure. This means you and your freelancers can safely upload proprietary data and confidential assets without a second thought.

**Communication features:** Our software also works as a central communication platform. You can create project-specific groups where your freelancers and internal stakeholders can communicate, collaborate, ask questions, share feedback and more.

**Project management features:** This gives you a wide overview of each project, while also allowing you to get a more zoomed-in look at the granular details. It makes it easy for you to allocate work, monitor progress, track milestones and manage deadlines through a single dashboard. If you are already using other tools for any of these requirements, you can integrate them with TalentDesk and still manage all these tasks through a single platform.

**Budget tracking:** Our budget tracking features lets you keep a strict eye on your project spends, monitor how much of your budget you are allocating to each freelancer, and whether or not there are any overruns.



**Time tracking:** This feature lets your freelancers log the time they spent on each deliverable. This eliminates the need for updating timesheets manually through a separate tool. It also proves useful when you need to cross check that data during the payment process.

Where to find us?

-  [Website: https://www.talentdesk.io/](https://www.talentdesk.io/)
-  [Instagram: @talentdesk.io](#)
-  [LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/talentdesk-io/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/talentdesk-io/)
-  [Twitter: @talentdeskio](#)