

## Title:

Engineering Job News: Tips To Survive Offshore Outsourcing

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## Summary:

The cheap labor costs of Southeast Asia are like a siren call to more and more US employers seeking to lower support costs and improve profits. The increasingly common trend toward outsourcing labor to countries such as India, Malaysia, and Pakistan means jobs are leaking to a part of the world where workers fresh out of college or technical school will work for pennies on the dollar compared to American workers. For the American workers, that means the bar for entry-level po...

## Keywords:

## Article Body:

The cheap labor costs of Southeast Asia are like a siren call to more and more US employers seeking to lower support costs and improve profits. The increasingly common trend toward outsourcing labor to countries such as India, Malaysia, and Pakistan means jobs are leaking to a part of the world where workers fresh out of college or technical school will work for pennies on the dollar compared to American workers. For the American workers, that means the bar for entry-level positions is rising or the same positions are disappearing off the map completely. What can you do to avoid losing out to offshore outsourcing??

Don't become a target.

What should you do if you find yourself facing joblessness due to outsourcing? Many would say make yourself indispensable, but is anyone ever really so valuable that they are indispensable? What makes someone indispensable in a company that has 1500 employees? Few things, but some key skills can give you an edge. Skills such as bilingualism, abilities with key or rare equipment, skills with software that is either so cutting-edge or so old that only a few can manipulate it well & skills that will make you stand out in an ocean of other employees.

Move up the ladder rapidly.

Another way to deal with outsourcing is avoidance. Jobs that are outsource-able are not key positions in the first place. Therefore, the key is to rapidly move out of entry-level positions into positions that are less likely to be outsourced. Look around you. If you are in a company in an entry-level position that has 50 to 100 other people doing the exact same tasks you are doing, you may very well be in a Danger Zone for having your position outsourced. Make it your mission to get out of that huge fish barrel of low-skilled fish and into a position that can only effectively be done on home turf as rapidly as possible. Get promoted, get higher training or education, or go for a position that is more specialized.

Go smaller.

Consider changing jobs to a company that is smaller or more niche-oriented. Smaller companies generally do not outsource due to decreased cost effectiveness and often because they have a closer relationship with their customers. While offshore outsourcing may save dollars and improve stock prices, it often has detrimental effects on customer relations. Small companies cannot afford to lose customers because of poor customer service or language barriers and are therefore less likely to outsource offshore.

Go where the jobs are.

Displaced garment and textile workers in the Carolinas and other Southern states were left jobless almost overnight in the nineties when their employers moved operations to Central America or Asia. Those who did not have transferable skills or were unwilling to relocate were left floundering. Workers who thrived were the ones who learned new skills that were in demand or who were willing to move to areas where their current skills were needed.

Stay on the cutting edge of your field.

Work that is outsourced is generally grunt work that requires a labor force that is broadly skilled in the most common tasks, works with the most common applications, or can handle minimal communication coupled with heavy, repetitive-type work. There is always demand for skilled professionals who can work easily with the latest and greatest technology, who do not fear risk-taking and enjoy the challenge of development and innovation.

Will offshore outsourcing suddenly cease? Not a chance as long as the American consumer continues to demand high-end technology for rock-bottom prices. The race to maintain market share while maintaining profits, demands cheaper and

cheaper labor costs. Offshore outsourcing is a solution to that problem. It behooves American engineering and information technology workers not to be a part of the problem to begin with by pursuing education and training that sets them above their offshore labor competitors and takes them out of the fish barrel of low-end, low paid support type positions. America has always been the leader in innovation and development and engineers who concentrate on those areas will always have a place in this economy.