

# Grow Your Business with a VA

---

Growing your business is a challenge. Grow too fast with employees and premises and you take on a lot of overhead which you then need to sustain. Try to take it slow and you run the risk of being overtaken by your competitors and going 'stale'. It is a balancing act but when you have more tasks to do than time to do them and need help, an affordable resource can be on hand- fast, and you have no ongoing commitment either! Read on for a win-win way to grow your business without the red tape of employment.

## 1. Understand What a Virtual Assistant Can Do

A Virtual Assistant (VA) is usually an executive level professional who works virtually (probably from home) for a variety of business clients. They provide support to each client on an as needed basis, for which the client pays by the hour. Not all VAs are alike. Some specialize in certain niche areas such as marketing or book-keeping. Some have skills that others may not such as Audio Typing and Website Design. The key to a successful relationship is to anticipate the kind of tasks that you plan to outsource then find a VA who can do them all.

## 2. Do Your Research

It takes time to find a Virtual Assistant (VA) who will suit all your needs. Once you find one that does, the delegation of your work will be easy! The best way to find a reliable and accurate person is personal recommendation. If you know someone who uses a VA, start there. If not, look through the business cards you collected at recent networking events to see if you met one! If there are no VAs within your contact circle, then you can easily find a VA with an internet search. The Alliance of UK Virtual Assistants is one directory of British VAs sorted by location and skill-set.

## 3. Lead the Way

A good Virtual Assistant (VA) will complete the admin tasks that you delegate effectively, within budget and to a deadline, but they won't run your business for you. The key to a successful client-VA relationship is open communication on both sides and clear direction from the client. The VA needs to know exactly what you expect and by when so they can manage their own work schedule. Then, you let them get on with it! A great VA will bring suggestions to the table once they understand your business, but ultimately the buck stops with you.

## 4. Top Secret!

Confidentiality issues can put people off using a Virtual Assistant (VA). Your VA is a professional in their own right and understands that business secrets need to be kept. Ask your VA to sign a confidentiality agreement if you are worried, or they may already have one as part of their Terms & Conditions. If your VA is assisting several local businesses, be assured that anything you say to your VA is private and a professional VAs will not discuss their clients with other clients or anyone else – they have more pressing tasks to manage!

## 5. Money, Money, Money

To keep control of your costs you can establish a weekly budget, so you can be confident that you won't be presented with a large bill. Sometimes tasks take longer than you might expect, but your VA can also save you time through intimate knowledge of the various office packages. If you instruct your VA to work up to 4 hours for example, they can stop when the limit is reached and you can decide whether to take over the job or allow your VA to finish, but at least you are aware of the budget.

## 6. Front Loaded

Expect your early days with your new Virtual Assistant (VA) to be front loaded - both on your costs and on the time it takes you to effectively delegate the task. At the start of the VA-Client relationship, your VA will need to become familiar with your business, what you expect and get to know you. The time it takes to do early jobs may be more time than it would take you - but don't worry! Once a VA is up to speed with your preferences, you will reap the results.

## 7. Proper Planning Prevents 'Piss Poor' Performance!

The importance of planning is a major consideration. Your Virtual Assistant (VA) is a specialist in organization, planning and execution so use their talents. Rather than seeing your VA as someone to do all the paperwork and nothing else, bring them into your confidence, share your business strategy and let them help you to create a proper plan to get things done in a logical order with the right message and all the 't's' crossed. They may have some valuable input. As VAs, the better our clients do, the better we do!

## 8. Virtual Reality

Face-to-face time can be good. Typically, virtual means that work is done remotely, however, if you can get special face-to-face time, it can be useful in building the relationship. Technically a VA could work from another country, but it still helps if we can meet up with our clients from time to time – even if it is just for a coffee. Having face time with your VA can help speed up the bonding, establishing trust a little quicker, which is all good for your business. Your VA can be like your right hand!

## 9. Use a Plug. Don't Pull the Plug on your Business

Answering phone calls is a priority in business. If you don't answer your phone or you let calls roll to voicemail, it is like running a tap and watching the water go to waste straight down the sink. Water- like your incoming calls, is a commodity. Those calls could mean business. If your VA offers a telephone answering service, use it!

## 10. Food For Thought

To get the best from your Virtual Assistant, ask for feedback. Remember, communication is a two way street and by having an open discussion from time to time, you can find ways to streamline unproductive habits or nip

any possible niggles in the bud. A good VA will regularly seek feedback to ensure that the service they are providing meets the needs of the clients, but chip in first if you have something to say! As businesses grow, they evolve and it's important for both client and VA to adapt to make sure that the business needs come foremost.

## Conclusion

These tips should help to provide a framework within which to start a Client-VA relationship, but there are no set rules. Each business and each VA are different which is why it is so important to choose carefully. The good thing about using a VA is that they are there as little or as often as you need, and if your needs grow, the support can grow too. Many VAs chose the role for the variety and flexibility it offers which they cannot get in employment, so you are getting an **executive level professional** for a fraction of the cost!

## Resources to Locate Virtual Assistants

[Virtual Assistants](#)

[International Virtual Assistants Organization](#)

[Virtual Assistant Organization](#)

Source

<http://www.top10tips.co.uk/uk/small-business/business-development/grow-without-the-red-tape.php>