

Buyers Guide To Working With A Virtual Assistant

What is a Virtual Assistant?

A Virtual Assistant (or VA) is a self employed professional providing administrative, secretarial and creative services on a remote basis.

Working from their own fully equipped offices, VAs work with a variety of different clients helping them in their businesses on an ad hoc, regular or project basis.

By partnering with their own VA, individuals and businesses can make more money by focussing on what they do best and growing their business.

How can a VA help me?

VAs offer a wide variety of services to clients and some of these include:

Basic VA skills

- Diary management – arrange all your appointments
- Telephone answering – never miss important calls
- Travel arrangements – arrange all your travel requirements
- Event management – manage all the arrangements
- Research – internet research
- Lifestyle management – PA for your personal life
- Typing – manuals, books, guide and anything else you need typed

More specialist skills

- Online Business Manager – specialist who manages online businesses
- HR, legal or medical support – specific administrative support in relevant area

What are the benefits of using a VA?

- Cost effective solution as you only pay for the time worked on your tasks
- Professional partner to help your business grow
- Office support without employee related issues
- Additional help for routine and project work when you need it
- Ability to achieve better work / life balance
- Highly experienced team of staff
- No need to provide office space or equipment
- Tailor made solution to individual business requirements
- High quality of work to agreed deadlines
- No office maintenance costs

What questions should I ask?

In order to choose the right VA for you and your requirements, you should ask the following questions:

How do they charge?

Each VA runs their own business so has determined their own prices. Find out if they charge hourly, project or only work with clients on a regular basis.

How do they add value to your business?

Do you want a VA to just work on the tasks you delegate or someone who acts more of a partner and proactively works with you.

What makes them different?

Why should you use them? Do they have experience working with your industry and are the expert?

What is their specialty?

Do they have specialist skills that you need? Where do their strengths lie – there is no point working with someone who doesn't have the experience you need.

What other clients do they work with?

Remember that VAs are business owners in their own right and will work with a number of different clients. Do they have the capacity to work with you and produce the results you want?

What support network do they have in place?

What happens to your work in an emergency? Do they have a team of people they can call upon to support you if necessary?

Where can I find a great VA?

There are a number of sources to find VAs and I recommend:

UK Association of Virtual Assistants (www.ukava.co.uk) – has listings by county

VA Success Group (www.vasuccessgroup.co.uk) – we are starting to train the future VAs and have a pool of people we recommend

By asking these questions, you will be able to find a great partner for your business who can work with you to delegate necessary tasks. Take some time now to find the right VA for you.

About the Author

Emma Walker is the owner of [CKPA Office Solutions](http://www.ckpaoffice.com), a UK based Virtual Assistant and Online Business Manager company.

She is also Co-Founder of [VA Success Group](http://www.vasuccessgroup.co.uk), a company devoted to helping Virtual Assistants build and grow successful VA businesses. If you'd like to receive invaluable tips and advice on creating your perfect VA business, visit <http://vasuccessgroup.co.uk/virtual-assistant-freebies/>