



What is a Virtual Assistant (VA)?

The term "Virtual Assistant" is becoming more and more familiar within mainstream America. However, there are very different definitions attached to it and many different business models associated with it.

A *true* Virtual Assistant **as defined by the highest standards in this field** is a business owner whose business it is to partner with successful professionals through a long-term business relationship. A VA provides a vast range of services (*not* just one area of expertise – i.e. graphics design, bookkeeping) and she plays an important role in the day to day operations of YOUR business. A business relationship is formed (across the miles) and it's based on a foundation of professional respect, trust and productive interaction. A VA works to support your business goals and *together* you bring those goals into realization.

Virtual Assistance is a fee-based service with fees ranging from \$30 - \$75 an hour depending on the level of her skill set and/or the longevity of her expertise. Business is conducted in a "virtual" environment because your VA's geographical location is different than yours. Meaning, she is not located and does not conduct business near or in your office.

This is an extremely intelligent, efficient and productive way of doing business in today's global economy. This kind of support works incredibly well with professionals who have an open mind for finding ways to work smarter not harder and who want to take advantage of technology and innovative thinking to take their professional and personal life to the next level. It's the perfect solution when you don't want the headaches associated with having employees but need the best in administrative support.

Beware of those with the label of a VA but do not adhere to these standards. Many are putting up a sign (web site) who have 1 or 2 years of experience (some not even in administrative assistance) and do NOT possess the skill level, range of expertise, formal training or professionalism necessary for running a successful VA business. Follow this checklist and these standards and you will be sure to find a *true* VA.

Checklist for selecting a VA:

- ✓ Is the VA running a real business – will she be accessible when you need her?
- ✓ Does she have 3 verifiable professional references in Administrative Assistance?
- ✓ Does she have the skill level suitable for your business requirements?
- ✓ Does she have the personality and level of professionalism suitable for your business?
- ✓ Does she have the technology and work environment suitable for conducting business?
- ✓ Does she have the software you use or is she familiar with remote access programs?
- ✓ Does she have a business agreement defining her role as a VA for tax purposes?