

So you want to be a VA?

Becoming a VA is serious business. Because it is just that – a business. If you're not sure that you want the stress and the responsibility of owning your own business then becoming a Virtual Assistant is probably not for you.

- ✓ To be a successful VA you need the following:
- ✓ An idea of what your practice is able to offer
- ✓ Competent experience and knowledge in your area of expertise
- ✓ A plan or a strategy to make your business successful
- ✓ The financial resources to support you and your business during its start-up phase
- ✓ A complete and honest assessment of yourself. Do you have what it takes to succeed?
- ✓ Drive, energy and ambition
- ✓ The ability to think originally, creatively, critically and analytically
- ✓ The ability to deal with all kinds of different personalities. You are emotionally stable, social, considerate optimistic and tactful
- ✓ Superior verbal and written skills. You must be able to communicate effectively with everyone from your banker to the potential referral or client in the line-up at the grocery store.
- ✓ All-encompassing knowledge of your service.

If you're still reading then maybe you have what it takes to operate a successful practice as a Virtual Assistant.

To start you must research: The VA industry, your geographical area, the internet, the legal issues, insurance etc. Here are some resources that I have discovered along the way – hopefully they will shorten the time you need to spend on your own research:

VA Education and Accreditation

<http://www.assistu.com>

<http://www.VirtualAssistanceU.com> A Virtual learning campus dedicated to establishing "leading edge" virtual assistant practices through dynamic curriculum, small classes and diversified participant experience levels. Virtual classroom settings, linking real people around the world.

<http://www.work-the-web.com/vacos.htm> This page lists all kinds of VA Certification programs as well as information on training programs and other organizations supporting the VA industry.

<http://www.vacertification.com> An independent evaluation authority for the Virtual Assistant industry

VA Associations

<http://www.cvac.ca> Canadian Virtual Assistant Connection

<http://www.ivaa.org> International Virtual Assistants Association

 Executive Assistance
Business Solutions Inc.

21 Moore Place Barrie, Ontario L4N 6N6 705.730.0436

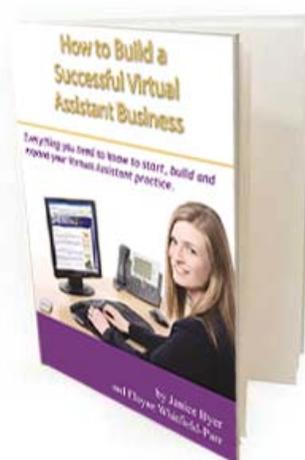
<http://www.iavoa.com> (IAVOA) - The purpose of IAVOA is to promote the use of Virtual Assistants worldwide. This site is a must for any VA, whether new to the industry or a veteran

And Finally...

- ✓ Do a search of virtual assistants and word processors in the major search engines. Each
- ✓ one can provide you ideas on how to make this kind of business successful.
- ✓ Be sure you have decided on an appropriate company name. Then put together a corporate identity (business card, letterhead, brochure etc.)
- ✓ Network, network, network! Every opportunity you get, present your 'one minute' presentation of who you are and what you do or give your literature to someone. Even if they may never need your services, they may know someone who does, or someone who knows someone who does. Attend your local networking meetings.
- ✓ Join business associations in your area.
- ✓ Sign up for online newsletters; they can be a wealth of information. Start with Virtual Tidbits by Janice Byer of Docu-Type Virtual Assistance and Web Design There are so many out there these days that are loaded with great ideas and tips.
- ✓ Pick up business magazines whenever you get a chance. These, too, are loaded with helpful information.
- ✓ Take a small business course; continually upgrade your skills either locally or online at one of the 'virtual' universities.

So, while it is certainly not easy and you will encounter some setbacks along the way and there will be days when you wonder what the heck you were thinking, there are so many benefits and the experience of owning your own business; being your own boss is so incredibly rewarding. I wish you all the best on your journey to becoming a VA – if that is what you truly want.

Buy the book used in Canadian College VA Course:



 Executive Assistance
Business Solutions Inc.

21 Moore Place Barrie, Ontario L4N 6N6 705.730.0436