

Explore the possibilities for you and your business

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& Associates

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Coaches and Virtual Assistants: A Winning Combination

In a virtual world where technology has paved the way for companies, clients and employees to work together while being thousands of miles apart, it's no wonder that these two very different - yet in some ways similar - professions found one another.

Working as independent contractors, Virtual Assistants can ensure that a Coach has access to all of the support benefits once enjoyed only by executives in the corner office of a major corporation. In addition to providing all around administrative support (from bookkeeping, document preparation to contact management) VA's also provide the unique ability to quickly become familiar not only with your business but also with the rest of your life. As business owners themselves, they understand that sometimes business and personal can be unintentionally intertwined: And, they will do all they can to help you balance both...sound familiar?

Not many people are aware that there is a difference between VA's and administrative assistants. VA's are much more than clerical workers; they view themselves as a client's equal. In other words, a VA can be your partner: the person you call for strategic planning and brainstorming sessions; someone who shares your ideas and future business goals; and best of all, they have the hands-on skills to help you reach your goals.

As stated by Pamela Richarde, a Personal & Business Coach who has been working with me for over a year, "Working with my VA as a virtual support system for my business is wonderful. On a weekly basis, we connect by phone in a management meeting with our company execs. The communication is really dynamic and amazingly efficient, allowing us to set up systems and processes effortlessly. The amount of detail, systems integration, problem solving and overall support has made a huge difference in doing business with our customers. The fact that I am in California, USA, and Michelle is in Ontario, Canada has had no effect on our ability to do good business together."

For coaches, one of the biggest benefits of using a VA is the freedom from the day-to-day hassles and financial burdens that tend to go along with running a business. A coach can maintain their privacy, eliminate payroll taxes, insurance and other benefits. VA's don't take up office space and are paid only for the time they actually work. And unless there's a binding contract, you may end the relationship with your VA at any time.

Lisa Martin, a Vancouver-based coach comments "If you're not good with the administrative side of running your business, then virtual assistants are perfect. My VA has allowed me the space to grow my business and do what I really love...Coach my clients."

Although the VA profession has grown tremendously within the past three years, people are still hesitant of the "non-physical" aspect of the relationship.

Control issues are the number one cause of failed VA/Client relationships. However in the majority of Coach/VA relationship, these issues are rare.

As a VA who has specialized in working with Coaches for the last five years, I find that Coaches have the wonderful capability of saying “enough is enough”. They recognize that in order to grow their business, delegating and giving up control is part of the process. Understandably so, they empower their own clients to do just that.

It is my belief that a Coach’s relationship with their clients inadvertently prepares them for a relationship with a VA. The same expectations Coaching clients have of their Coaches are very similar to the Coaches expectation of their VA; honesty, confidentiality, trust, the ability to listen, ask questions and to help find a solution.

About the Author:

Michelle Jamison, owner and operator of MJVA & Associates, has been specializing in supporting professional coaches with their practices for more than five years. During this time, she has assisted numerous coaches, coach training institutes and associations, making MJVA & Associates the leading provider of Virtual Assistant services to the professional coach.



Michelle lives in Ontario, Canada with her husband and two children.

For more information regarding her services visit www.mjva.ca
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Need a VA, here’s what to look for!

- A VA who is part of a community. A Virtual Assistant who is a member of an association, or organization is more apt to be current with skills and training. As well, this demonstrates a dedication to the profession. Organizations such as www.ivaa.org and www.canadianva.net offer referral services.
- Find a VA who specializes in working with your profession. This way you don’t have to reinvent the wheel.
- Make sure the prospective VA has client references and feel free contact them about their relationship with the VA.
- Find a VA who can meet all your requirements: a one-stop for your administrative needs.
- Professional image is important. Visit their website and ask for e-information. This will give you a clear indication of the skills they possess and what they can do for you.
- Flexibility. If you are on a budget, explain this to the VA. Most VA’s are very flexible in their fee structure.
- Contract. The majority of VA’s will ask you to sign a contract, which will define the terms of the relationship. This is not only for their protection but yours as well.