

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT ONBOARDING



A 13 STEP GUIDE TO HIRING
THE RIGHT VIRTUAL ASSISTANT

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A 13-Step Guide to Hiring the Right Virtual Assistant

- Special Report -

By: Your Name

I know a lot of marketers out there are excited about getting a virtual assistant. It's easy to see why. Depending on where you look, you can get somebody who is very motivated, very educated, and also very productive.

The best part? You don't have to spend an arm and a leg. In fact, in many cases, the right overseas-based virtual assistant costs a tiny fraction of what you would pay a full-time employee in the United States.

Think about that for a second. It should dawn on you that wages are just the beginning of your worries when it comes to paying a stateside employee.

First, you have to take care of their salary. Second, you have to pay payroll taxes as well as statutory expenses. And the kicker? Well, this is one expense many employers simply overlook.

The truth is, some employees end up turning around and suing their former employer for whatever reason. You have to factor in the insurance cost, not to mention the time and effort wasted in the case of a messy separation between your company and your ex-employee.

It is no wonder a lot of people are excited about getting a virtual assistant because they see this option as their magic ticket.

Sadly, most of these people are disappointed. They try one VA after another, and they can't seem to get the result they're looking for.

Here's the spoiler. I know that this is probably going to sting because it's not the kind of answer you've been looking for: it's your fault.

Why? You picked the wrong person. At the end of the day, that's really what it all boils down to.

And whose call is that? It's not the person who you hired. It's yours. You came in completely unprepared, and you expect this person to be the answer to all your problems.

That's not going to happen.

Just as it's a bad idea to look for a romantic partner without a clear idea of who you're looking for, it's also a bad idea to look for any random virtual assistant and give them vague instructions to pursue even vaguer business objectives.

That's just not going to lead to a happy ending. I hope that this much is obvious to you.

To avoid any further heartbreaks, headaches, and financial losses with virtual assistants, you should follow the 13-step guide below.

This really is a condensation of the many different fortunate and unfortunate experiences many stateside employers have when dealing with virtual assistants located halfway around the world.

Step #1: Be Clear About Your Objectives

I'm sorry to be the one to break this to you, but the only person that will truly know what your business objectives are is you. Don't outsource this to somebody else.

Don't assume they can read your mind or figure out what's important to you.

While it's true that the core purpose of any business (regardless of where it's located) is to make money, there are many steps to making money.

It's all about setting the right objectives. But if you are unclear about yours, and you end up chasing your tail, don't lay the blame on your virtual assistant.

Step #2: Itemize The Tasks That Are More Likely To Help You Achieve Your Objectives

Once you're clear about your priorities and understand what your ultimate objectives are, the next step is to break things down.

It's easy to say you want your company to rake in \$1 million this year. The question is, how is that going to happen?

This is where steps come in.

This is where tasks are involved.

You have to break down the ultimate goal into smaller sub-goals, which can then be further broken down into smaller tasks.

Step #3: Clearly Describe The Benefits Of The Tasks

It's very easy to breakdown processes into small, bite-sized pieces and think you've done a good job. Unfortunately, people who do things this way end up chasing their tail. They go around in circles and have little to show for all the time, effort, and money wasted.

Every single task you choose to pursue must lead to your objectives. That much must be viewed as a given. But beyond that, you should also look at the benefits you're getting from the task.

Please understand that there are different ways to get to the same goal.

By being clear about the benefits of the tasks, you start sorting which tasks are more important to your project.

Step #4: Describe The Tasks In Writing

It's tempting to think that you know what to do. After all, a lot of us have high opinions of our own competence.

This is all well and good. After all, a little self-confidence can go a long way. The problem is overconfidence.

If you think that you already know what you're doing, then you may think you don't need to write down the specific steps that you need to take to do something.

This is a big mistake. It may turn out that you're doing things the wrong way, or that you're taking too much time or burning up too much resources.

Describe what you're doing in writing.

You'd be surprised as to how inefficient you are. This is a good first step to making necessary changes that will help your business in the long run.

Step #5: Streamline Each Task's Operations

Now that you're clear about the things you do in performing a task, the next question that you should ask yourself is, "Is this the best way to do it?"

Of course, "the best" is partly defined as boosting productivity as well as reducing costs. None of this will come easy. Most times, you will have to go through trial and error.

But eventually, things will fall into place. In the end, you start to see patterns and the big picture will materialize.

But until then, you have to constantly go through your tasks and describe them in writing and try to make every piece as clear as possible.

Because the better you understand these steps, the easier it would be for you to identify ways of making the whole process more efficient and less time-consuming.

Step #6: Try Out The Task Yourself And Find The Most Efficient Solution

Let's get one thing clear. Streamlining an operation on paper is going to be different from actually doing it. Try out the tasks yourself. How do they do in the real world?

The good news is, the more you repeat a task, the higher the chance that you will find a shortcut.

Step #7: Try To Remove All Complexity From Each Task Step

Now that you have identified the most efficient way to do something, here comes the hard part. You have to remove complexity. You need to ask yourself, "In this task, how many steps require special knowledge?"

As much as possible, get rid of all complexity. Things must be reduced to black and white. Because if you're able to do that, you will take away the judgment calls that can only be made due to many years of experience.

I hope you can see where I'm going with this. You have to understand that if you pack so much discretion in your steps, you really are setting yourself up for disappointment.

Your virtual assistant cannot read your mind.

Your virtual assistant is probably not experienced in your specific industry. It would be unfair to blame the person because you failed to remove complexity and discretion points from the tasks you assigned to them.

Step #8: Write Step-By-Step Instructions With Clear Examples

Just because an operation is very clear to you doesn't mean that everybody else will find it equally clear. Also, just because the outcome you're looking for is plainly evident or even "common sense" to you doesn't mean that others would have the same view.

So, do yourself and them a big favor and provide clear examples with the instructions.

So, if you're describing decisions your virtual assistant needs to make, come up with clear examples of the outcome you're looking for or the scenarios that these discretionary choices need to be made under or that affect them.

Step #9: Make Sure Your Instructions Are Clear Regarding Deliverables

It's not enough that you laid out a step-by-step series of instructions. While this is a good thing, at the end of the day, you're paying the person not to go through the motions.

You're paying your virtual assistant to deliver results. This is going to be a problem if the results are badly defined or the deliverables are fuzzy. There is no room for confusion here.

If you want to get your money's worth from your virtual assistant, you need to be clear about what the deliverables are and give them examples.

This way, they can't wiggle out. This way, they can't explain themselves out of a sticky situation.

Step #10: Hit All The Major Freelancing Platforms And Post Your Ad

If you followed Steps #7 to #9 correctly, you should have a clear, tight and easy-to-understand series of instructions.

By reading these over and over again, you should also be able to quickly write a job ad that would enable you to get the right virtual assistant.

Take that job ad and post it to all the major freelancing platforms currently available on the internet.

Step #11: Try Out Several Contractors

Don't just hire one person!

- That person might be talking a good game.
- That person might have an amazing portfolio.
- That person might seem like a perfect fit.

But unfortunately, even the most perfect-looking candidates end up quitting or fail to do the job right.

I've hired many virtual assistants over the years, and I can't even begin to count the of times I hired somebody who seemed to be perfect, only to see that person drop the ball way too often.

This doesn't have to happen to you. Try out several contractors and pick out the best.

Step #12: Compare Contractors' Results

How exactly do you pick out "the best"? Well, you don't pay attention to their diploma. You don't pay attention to the experience they're talking about.

Instead, pay attention to their work.

- Can they do the job or not?
- Can they deliver based on your quality standards?
- Do they turn in work on time or even ahead of time?

This is crucial. Because when you compare contractors' results, you quickly identify the cream of the crop. Hire those people.

Step #13: Pick The Most Scalable Contractor

A "scalable" contractor is somebody who is willing to learn.

This is a person who is committed to increasing his or her work output and quality over an extended period of time.

In other words, this person acts as some sort of partner for your business because the more they step up their skills, the more value they can give to your company.

Keep the 13 Steps above in mind if you're sick and tired of hiring the wrong virtual assistant time and time again. By using the steps above, you can turbocharge your chances of hiring the right person the first time around.