



Virtual Assistance

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Creating Time the Virtual Way

© Danielle Keister

Time... As a small practice professional, it's the commodity you covet most, but never seem to have enough of.

If you had more time, you could complete all the administrative chores required to operate your business.

With enough time, you could do more marketing, more networking, more planning and systemizing.

If you had just a little more, you'd be a lot less hurried and stressed.

But how on earth do you create more time to do all the things necessary to run smoothly, build business, and create revenue?

A Creative Solution

The obvious answer is to increase your manpower. But hiring staff is not such an easy or affordable proposition for the small practice professional.

"Fortunately, says Danielle Keister, "there's an outsourcing alternative—Virtual Assistance."

"Ms. Keister's company, The Relief, is a successful Virtual Assistance practice that has been delivering expert, personalized office support services to the professional community since 1997.

And just what is a Virtual Assistant, you ask?

Ms. Keister defines a Virtual Assistant (or VA) as a professional service provider specializing in office support services who works from his or her own fully-equipped office utilizing computers and other technology to deliver services and communicate with clients.

"We primarily serve small to mid-sized business owners who have smaller workloads, need only occasional help, or who don't have the budget for space for in-house staff, much less the time to train and manage them."

"Today's technology allows us to serve clients anywhere—they can be across town or on the other side of the world."

Virtual Assistance to the Rescue

Virtual Assistants can provide just about any secretarial service you can think of: word processing, transcription, data entry, database management, spreadsheet creation, proofreading—you name it.

Ms. Keister's practice offers additional specialties such as legal support services, bookkeeping, web design, desktop publishing and writing services.

The savings can be huge compared to the cost of an actual employee because there are no payroll taxes or benefits to pay, no extra office space or equipment needs, and no training or management headaches.

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Not to mention that not all employee time is productive (think breaks, sick leave, vacations and other downtime). With Virtual Assistance, clients pay only for the time the VA spends working on their behalf.

That's 100% productive time—you can't get more efficient than that!

A Virtual Assistant can take on those time-consuming administrative chores and special projects, and give you more breathing room to grow, succeed and fall in love with your practice again.

And who are these saviors? What are their qualifications?

The Virtual Assistance profession has been around well over 10 years now, and has its own industry associations and certification programs.

Ms. Keister states "VAs come from a variety of business backgrounds, but the common denominator is that the best of us are overachievers with extensive administrative experience and superior skill sets and training."

*About the Author: Danielle Keister is founding member of the Virtual Assistance Chamber of Commerce. To hire a Virtual Assistant or for more information on Virtual Assistance, as well as to join the forum and download **FREE** business tools and resources, visit the VACOC website at <http://www.virtualassistantnetworking.com>. You may print this article for personal use or republish it online only if it is left unaltered and in its entirety, including bylines, links and author information. Contact the author for any other permissions.*

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She emphasizes that Virtual Assistants are not temps.

"We are highly skilled professionals who love what we do and in business to provide top-quality work to clients we are committed to."

A Simpatico Partnership

Although they can certainly assist with occasional projects, Virtual Assistants are more commonly interested in establishing long-term partnerships with their clients. As the VA gets to know the owner and learns about his or her business, anticipating their needs become more intuitive.

Ms. Keister states, "The ideal is to achieve a simpatico relationship where my support not only instills more efficiency and productivity, but is key to helping my clients create more time in both their business and personal lives."

"By taking on work they hate, they're too busy to do, or simply is not a smart use of their time, I allow them to concentrate on the roles they love most while growing their business and getting more out of life. I'm a collaborative partner with the same goal—their success."

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