



MODERN RULES FOR WORKING WITH A VIRTUAL ASSISTANT

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Modern Rules For Working With a Virtual Assistant

Virtual assistants are one of the relatively few industries that have benefited from the pandemic. While restaurants and exercise studios shuttered their doors, remote work grew by leaps and bounds.

One poll found that 70% of virtual assistants reported an increase in inbound inquiries, and 45% increased their hourly workload in 2020. Labor statistics showed a 41% increase in the hiring of virtual assistants through offshore agencies, and many agencies increased their staff to keep up with demand.

If you're exploring remote support, you have more options now. However, you may need guidance to sort through your choices. Brush up on the modern rules for working with a virtual assistant.

Hiring a Virtual Assistant:

1. Consult an agency. Hiring decisions can have a big impact on your business, so you may feel more comfortable using an agency if you lack experience. For a fee, they'll find appropriate candidates and conduct interviews.
2. Do it yourself. On the other hand, you can save money by managing the process yourself. Browse business publications and websites for tips on writing a job posting, interviewing online, and checking references.
3. Use online platforms. Many virtual assistants offer their services through companies like Upwork and Fiverr. You may need to sift through hundreds of applicants, but you can find help quickly when you need it.

4. Search locally. Your virtual assistant may live on another continent or down the street. Use local job boards and word of mouth if you want someone close to home.

5. Think ahead. However you hire, keep your future needs in mind. Look for candidates who may be able to take on more responsibility and help you grow your business.



Working With a Virtual Assistant:

1. Clarify expectations. Misunderstandings can arise among colleagues in the same office. Imagine what it's like working with someone without any face-to-face contact. Be specific about required tasks and goals. Set boundaries related to spending limits and confidential information.
2. Document procedures. How-to manuals and video tutorials can explain routine duties and complex assignments. Ask your virtual assistant to write up any new responsibilities to keep your library up to date.
3. Invest in tools. Technology will make collaboration easier. Shop for software that lets you edit documents and manage projects.



4. Communicate regularly. Staying in touch may require a more deliberate strategy when you don't run into each other in the hallways and breakroom. Schedule one-on-one meetings at least once a week. Discuss the best way to reach you with urgent and nonurgent communications.

5. Encourage questions. New hires may feel pressured to appear competent. Let them know that you're happy to answer questions when anything is unclear.

6. Provide feedback. Constructive criticism is essential for learning and high performance. Make your comments prompt, specific, and actionable.

7. Start small. Virtual assistants need onboarding too. If time allows, introduce them gradually to their new role and help them to connect with the bigger picture. Make their first assignment something simple that they can excel at.

8. Respect their time. Maybe your virtual assistant has limited availability or you're one of several clients. Make the most of your time together by being prepared for the hours they spend with you.

9. Build morale. Team spirit has more to do with the quality of your relationship rather than sharing the same business address. Create a welcoming environment and promote two-way conversations. Give your new assistant their own company email and send them a coffee cup with your logo.

Your new virtual assistant could save you time and enable you to focus on tasks that maximize your strengths. Make your relationship happy and productive by choosing an outstanding candidate for the job and helping each other to succeed.

