

Overcoming the Overwhelm



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What's the Problem?

Who couldn't use some extra help when it comes to running their businesses? This is why I'm offering you this free eBook that is centered on helping you to recognize when you're overwhelmed and why it's okay to ask for help. The textbook definition of overwhelmed is "completely overcome in mind or feeling" (Dictionary.com). Is this you? Are you the only person doing EVERYTHING in your business and in your personal life? If so, it is very likely that you feel overwhelmed.

What Can You Do About It?

First, realize that we all feel overwhelmed at times. However, if yours is a constant state, then it's time to ask for help. Not only is it not healthy for you to live in a constant state of overwhelm, it's not conducive for your business to have you living in that state. It impacts your physical and mental health and kills creativity. Those are the last things a busy solopreneur needs.

Once you recognize that you're overwhelmed, take the time to understand what that means for you. Do not engage in endless analysis that leads to analysis-paralysis. You haven't gotten to where you are in business by not making decisions. You absolutely have choices; it's just a question of which choice is best for you.

Deep breaths, my friend. Don't let the choices further overwhelm you. As a female solopreneur, you pride yourself on your work ethic and doing things on your own. As one myself, I totally get that. However, there comes a time when it's in your best interests to ask for help.

HELP!!!!

It's time to make a choice. Here are some that you could make:

1. Continue to stubbornly do it all yourself.
2. Chuck it all and quit.
3. Beg a friend/family member to help.
4. Trade services with another solopreneur.

5. Hire a permanent employee.

6. Hire an assistant who's flexible-like a virtual assistant (VA).

There are pros and cons to each choice. If you're really overwhelmed, continuing to do it all yourself is probably not the best plan. And, do you really want to chuck it all and quit? I suppose you could, but then how would you support yourself and your family? Begging a friend or family member to help will only go so far, especially if they have other things to do themselves. You can absolutely trade services with another solopreneur, but you have to find someone willing to do so with the skills you need. Plus, then you have to make time to repay the services. The last thing an overwhelmed person needs is one more thing to do.

That leaves hiring a permanent employee or a flexible employee. If you hire someone permanently, then you have all of the costs associated with employees-payroll, taxes, unemployment, worker's compensation, finding space and buying equipment for the employee. It's a great option if you're ready to go that route and can afford it. What if your needs are more intermittent, short term or part time? Then what?

That's where having a flexible employee makes sense. You could hire someone specifically for that purpose, use them sparingly and keep them as a 1099 employee. Then, you're hoping they're available when you need them and hoping they're willing to serve in a very limited role. Or, you can hire a VA, who is a professional with his/her own business and equipment, who understands your needs may be limited and is completely willing and able to serve you in that capacity. You hire the VA, tell him/her what you need and he/she gets the job done without you having to pay more than his/her fees. Win-win.

Where Do You Find a VA?

This will take a little work on your part, so don't get overwhelmed by trying to figure out who to hire to reduce the overwhelm. The internet has thousands and thousands of possibilities. I recommend checking out your local chamber of commerce, your fellow solopreneurs and networking groups. Those are some of the best places to find someone reputable and possibly in your area/country. Rates for VAs will vary dependent on where the VA is located. Don't assume that

the cheapest is your best alternative or immediately discount the most expensive. The goal is to find someone with the skills you need, who is reputable and dependable. Not all VAs have the same skillset. Interview a few and make a decision based on who is best for you.

You've Hired a VA, so Now What?

Lay out clear expectations. Respect the VA's time-he/she is likely to have other clients as well. Pay him/her promptly upon receiving the invoice. Let the VA know if you need something done a different way. Most VAs want to do the best possible job for you, so set both of you up for success. Take care of your VA and your VA will take care of you.