

How to Effectively Communicate with Your Virtual Assistant using Screenshots and Images

Owning or running any portion of a business can be one of the most complex and difficult endeavors anyone can undertake, and very few entrepreneurs have been able to achieve success, let alone make ends meet, without the assistance of professionals bearing some of the load. When the CEO of a technology company is burdened with crashing servers, angry clients and an upcoming meeting with the angel investor, it's unlikely that he or she has even a minute to call the plumber. This sort of task, and other small-but-still-important assignments, can be handled by a virtual assistant for a small fee.

Many companies of all types and sizes utilize the services of virtual assistants because they are affordable, and most virtual assistant sites allow clients to rate and rank the assistants on their helpfulness. It's proven to be an effective and easy way of delegating tasks, and allows more time in your schedule to handle all of the other items on your constantly growing to-do list. However, there may be times in which your virtual assistant will need to be trained or briefed on an assignment request and it is at this time that visual items such as screenshots and images can make a major difference in the details.

Although most of us prefer emailing as a means of communicating with virtual assistants on a busy day, sending your virtual assistant a quick explanation of a complicated duty can result in misinterpretation and frustration on both ends. For example, you may ask your assistant to complete a task using a specific software program that they are unfamiliar with, and they may not handle the duty as requested. Now, not only is the task incomplete, but you will have to take additional time to re-explain the task or complete the assignment yourself.

On the other hand, if you take a few minutes to capture screenshots and images of the program's interface, your assistant will have a clear idea of what you need. Remember, however, that communicating with virtual assistants using images is a step in the right direction, but sending an image with highlighted instructions and annotations can mean the difference between a successfully completed assignment and an all out failure. A few extra minutes spent marking up your images for additional clarification translates into a better experience for both parties. You have a fully completed task, your assistant is paid and you are both happy.

If you are concerned about the additional time spent taking screenshots and circling images when communicating with virtual assistants, then you're not alone. It's easy to feel that this additional clarification is a waste of time and that you'd be better off just completing the assignment yourself. However, capturing screenshots and images takes only seconds and once your virtual assistant is briefed on the task, you will be able to delegate similar assignments in the future with little to no explanation. In the end, you will save plenty of time and, as everyone in the business world is well aware, time is money.