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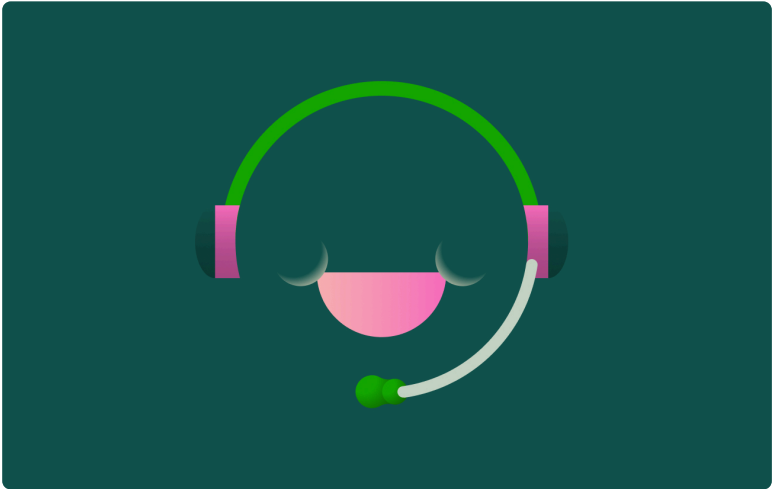
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14 Virtual Assistant Skills To Have on Your Resume

Master the top virtual assistant skills in 2026, from time management to AI tools, and stand out in a competitive remote work market.

The Upwork Team
Published | Aug 21, 2025

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With companies continuing to expand their workforce to include remote work talent, the demand for virtual assistants is rising. These independent professionals enjoy the flexibility of working from anywhere while gaining experience in different industries and learning a variety of skills like social media management and writing.

Virtual assistants (VAs) have many career paths and can advance to roles like account executive assistant or marketing manager. While you may start as an assistant, you're learning how the company works and how to thrive in a corporate environment, and gaining key insights into the industry. Assisting could become managing as you become more experienced and learn new job skills.

As the technology and tool ecosystem evolves, the key skill set may extend to AI-powered tools, automation, and digital marketing.

How to Become a Virtual Assistant

▶

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How virtual assistant work is evolving

Virtual assistants are becoming strategic partners for entrepreneurs, executives, and small-business owners. As businesses embrace distributed team members and automation, virtual assistants are taking on more specialized responsibilities: managing CRMs, optimizing inbox workflows, handling social media calendars, and using AI tools to streamline repetitive tasks.

In 2025, the most in-demand virtual assistants combine traditional skills, like time management and communication, with emerging strengths in digital marketing, project management, and tech-savvy adaptability. Many are also investing in certifications, online courses, and tools like Slack, Trello, and Canva to stay competitive.

Whether you're an administrative assistant transitioning to freelance or looking to build a full-time business, having a well-rounded skill set matters more than ever. Clients aren't just hiring for availability; they're looking for initiative, optimization, and results.

To become a virtual assistant, you might ask yourself: What specific skills does a virtual assistant need? What are the responsibilities of a virtual assistant? As you build your resume and portfolio, make sure you have these virtual assistant skills listed to land a great job.

1. Communication

One of the top virtual assistant skills is effective communication, both asynchronous and synchronous. Sometimes, you may work in real time with your client during a video conference or a phone call, while other times, you'll give updates via email, Slack, or text.

Virtual assistants need to communicate clearly with clients and on behalf of their clients. Companies and individuals engage virtual assistants because they need help completing tasks and want to make their lives easier. As a VA, your job is to complete these assignments virtually.

Depending on the client's needs, you could make travel arrangements one day and respond to social media inquiries the next. Virtual assistants often represent their clients when sending emails, interacting with followers on social media, or making cold calls, and strong professional communication skills are a must.

2. Time management

Successful virtual assistants are experts at managing time, both their own and their clients'. As an independent professional, you create your own schedule and decide when to take on additional projects or say yes to new clients. As a virtual assistant, you need to complete your client's tasks on time, making sure you stay caught up and finish all assignments.

Part of having great time management skills is knowing your workflow and how much you can realistically complete in a day. As you say yes to new projects, create a manageable personal schedule and to-do list. Minimize distractions and block your time into tasks so you work efficiently. The right time management tips can help you become an expert.

Some clients may require scheduling appointments and planning, and calendar management. Each client and company is different; learning what works best may take trial and error. You could also work in a different time zone from your client, so you need to double-check times and be flexible for meetings.

Some time management courses to impress clients include:

Udemy

- Complete Time Management Course: Raise Personal Productivity
- Time and Task Management: Time Management Techniques
- Time Management Mastery: Do More, Stress Less
- Practical Time Management: Personal Productivity Tools

LinkedIn Learning

- Time Management Fundamentals
- Time Management: Working From Home
- Time Management Tips: Scheduling
- Building a Better To-Do List

3. Bookkeeping

Bookkeeping is a worthwhile skill for virtual assistants. You could offer this as a service or make it your niche and specialize in bookkeeping; many companies look for virtual assistants to manage their finances day to day.

Keep in mind that bookkeeping is different from accounting. It's less inclusive, with specific tasks that might include:

- Invoicing
- Data entry
- Billing
- Employee reimbursement
- Reconciliation (comparing financial records to ensure accuracy)
- Payroll
- Inventory control and analysis
- Reporting

Interested in learning more about bookkeeping to see if it's a virtual assistant skill you want to develop and offer to clients? Check out these bookkeeping courses:

Coursera

- Intuit Academy Bookkeeping Professional Certificate
- Bookkeeping Basics
- Creating a Budget With Microsoft Excel

Udemy

- Bookkeeping in QuickBooks Online (Bookkeeping and Accounting)

- Accounting and Bookkeeping Masterclass – Beginner to Advanced

- Bookkeeping Basics Explained (Bookkeeping & Accounting)

- Effective Bookkeeping and Payroll

Skillshare

- Using Google Sheets for Your Small Businesses

- Introduction to QuickBooks: Bookkeeping Basics

- Bookkeeping for Freelancers: How To Handle Your Finances

4. Email management

Email management is a popular administrative support task for virtual assistants. Companies and individuals need help managing their inboxes, organizing emails, and responding in a timely fashion. As a virtual assistant, you could find this to be a viable focus.

You could manage a company email account that receives customer questions, complaints, requests, or orders. Clients may ask that you handle their business email because they don't have time to read every incoming message. They need their email organized by someone they trust.

When clients hire you for email management, they need to feel confident in your skill set and trust that you'll respond to emails with proper etiquette. Your daily tasks could include reading all emails and responding if appropriate, sending follow-ups, and letting the client know which emails require their attention.

You could also be responsible for email marketing and setting up and monitoring campaigns. Using an email service provider like Mailchimp or Constant Contact, you might send out regularly scheduled newsletters or mass marketing emails to clients or potential clients. Part of email marketing is reporting analytics like open rates, click-through rates (CTR), bounce rates, and unsubscribes.

5. Organization

Virtual assistants need strong organizational skills. One aspect of being a virtual assistant is organizing your administrative tasks, so you can meet deadlines and avoid missing any assignments. Project management, a valuable and in-demand skill for virtual assistants, requires a great deal of organization.

Establishing a daily routine and creating to-do lists can help you stay organized while working. Clients may also ask you to help them stay organized by creating processes and using tools that streamline their everyday lives, such as templates.

Before starting a virtual assistant job, know how you'll stay organized.

What will be your main form of communication?

- Slack

- Email

- Zoom

- Upwork Messages

How will you schedule meetings and appointments?

- Google Calendar

- Microsoft Outlook

- Calendly

Do you have a way to collaborate on social media?

- Hootsuite

- Buffer

- Loomly

- Canva

How will your client assign tasks?

- Upwork milestones

- Asana

- Trello

6. Writing and typing

Writing and typing skills can help you be more efficient when working remotely. Virtual assistants must be able to type quickly and professionally for their clients, whether doing data entry or email marketing. If you're a talented writer, you could offer copywriting and content writing skills as part of your virtual assistant services.

You may transcribe meetings, write emails, and create content like blogs, presentations, or website copy. Fast and accurate typing also helps with data entry and note-taking. Creating quality content quickly expands your skill set as a virtual assistant and makes you more marketable and competitive.

Clients may ask you to ghostwrite blog posts or send out emails on their behalf, and you need to sound professional and match their tone and voice.

Need more confidence in your writing skills? You can improve your writing with practice and by taking online courses. The more you write, the better you'll get.

Udemy

- Writing With Flair: How To Become an Exceptional Writer

- Better Business Writing Skills

- Modern Copywriting: Writing Copy That Sells in 2025

Skillshare

- Creating Content That People Love To Read (and Google Loves To Rank)

LinkedIn Learning

- Marketing: Copywriting for Social Media
- Tips for Writing Business Emails
- Learning To Write for the Web

7. Basic IT knowledge

Being tech-savvy and having basic IT knowledge are helpful technical skills for virtual assistants. As a virtual assistant, you'll work on the computer and may have to use different software and collaboration tools, such as Microsoft 365 (formerly Microsoft Office Suite).

You may need to create reports in Excel or presentations in PowerPoint. A company may need data entered into Salesforce or another customer relationship management (CRM) platform. Learning new software can give you an advantage and make your work easier.

The better your computer skills and comfort with different tools, the more you can offer clients. You could help maintain the business's website, add new content, or run reports on how certain ads perform.

Improve your computer and IT skills with these courses:

Udemy

- Microsoft Excel – Excel From Beginner to Advanced
- Complete Google Workspace (G Suite), Beginner - Advanced
- Master Microsoft Outlook – Outlook From Beginner to Advanced
- WordPress for Beginners – Master WordPress Quickly

Skillshare

- How To Use Elementor: Build an Awesome WordPress Website, With No Code
- Build Your Site and Shop: Beginner's Guide to Shopify and Website Design
- How To Efficiently Build WordPress Websites With Divi
- Getting Started With Email Marketing | Learn With Mailchimp

Salesforce and HubSpot both offer free online training and certifications on their software.

Do the work you love, your way

Sign Up

8. AI-powered tool proficiency

Virtual assistants today are increasingly expected to work with AI tools such as ChatGPT and Microsoft Copilot. Skills include drafting emails via

generative AI, automating repetitive tasks, formatting content, and leveraging GPT-4 or GPT-4o models for fast research. Familiarity with AI-powered spreadsheet tools (e.g., Copilot in Excel) or content-generation bots adds efficiency and modern credentials.

Here are a few key habits that can make a big difference in how effective (and trustworthy) your AI-assisted work is:

- **Write better prompts.** Instead of vague inputs like "Write a blog post," go with something more specific, like "Write a 600-word blog post on the benefits of remote work for small businesses, using a friendly, professional tone." Clear prompts lead to better, more usable results.

- **Double-check everything.** AI can sound confident, but it's not always accurate. Always fact-check key points, especially when working on research, reports, or anything a client will read.

- **Use AI ethically.** Don't paste private client info into tools unless you have permission. Avoid copy-paste plagiarism, and be transparent about how AI supported your work. Clients appreciate honesty just as much as speed.

- **Apply AI insights.** VAs who want to grow in the field should also learn how to read and use AI-generated takeaways, like spotting customer pain points in chatbot logs or turning survey data into next steps. And if you can set up or manage tools like Intercom or Tidio, that's a major plus.

If you're looking to sharpen your AI skills and stay ahead of the curve, here are some helpful training courses to check out:

- LinkedIn Learning – AI for Business Professionals. Covers basic AI concepts and how they apply to day-to-day work.

- Coursera – Prompt Engineering for ChatGPT. Learn how to write better prompts and understand how AI models respond.

- Udemy – ChatGPT for Assistants. Get practical tips on using AI for writing, admin tasks, and client work.

9. Self-motivation and concentration

People transition into freelancing to work on their terms. As a freelancer, you get to select your clients and the types of projects you work on. However, working remotely and setting your own schedule requires self-motivation and concentration, especially as a virtual assistant.

Business owners often depend on virtual assistants to complete tasks without much oversight. They engage virtual assistants because they have never-ending to-do lists and need someone to help. The more involved they have to be to micromanage their people, the more time it takes out of their day. That quickly becomes unsustainable, even for the best managers. As a virtual assistant, you build trust with your clients to complete your assignments on time.

Successful virtual assistants know how to self-motivate and work with a concentrated focus. When you love what you do, it's easier to be motivated and not procrastinate.

Some tips for improving self-motivation and concentration include:

- Create a work schedule and stick to it.

- Find a daily routine that works for you.

- Designate distraction-free (no nonwork notifications) times to work.

- Give yourself breaks.

- Write to-do lists and check off items one by one.

- Work away from your home for a change of scenery.

- Go for a walk when you're feeling burned out or overwhelmed.

10. Detail orientation

Virtual assistants care about the details. When handling administrative tasks and project management for clients, detail orientation is a critical skill. As a virtual assistant, clients rely on you to send error-free emails and catch any mistakes in presentations and other content before publishing.

Companies depend on virtual assistants to take on tasks requiring detailed orientation, such as scheduling or payroll. Virtual assistants must be able to complete a long to-do list without mistakes. They must also stay ahead of deadlines and work on time-sensitive tasks that require precision.

Tips for being more detail-oriented include:

- Use programs like Grammarly to check for spelling and grammar mistakes.

- Focus on one task at a time.

- Double-check your work.

- Write deadlines in your calendar and utilize alarms or notifications.

- Minimize distractions.

- Take notes during meetings.

- Break up bigger tasks into smaller, more manageable subtasks.

- Get the right productivity tools.

11. Reliability

When working as a virtual assistant, especially freelancing, reliability is a soft skill that clients look for. Companies want to engage someone they can trust to complete assigned work on time without errors and be available when needed.

Whether you bill hourly, by project, or on a retainer, setting up "working hours" for your clients and being available to take on new tasks and answer questions is essential.

If you work asynchronously, a client could send you a weekly message with a list of admin tasks to complete. Those on an hourly contract may be available from 9 to 5 for meetings and talk regularly with their client throughout the day, giving updates and getting new assignments.

Reputation matters as a virtual assistant. Companies and clients want to work with someone they can count on. If you're freelancing on Upwork, having a high Job Success Score and positive reviews from other clients indicates that you're reliable and can help you win more jobs.

Tips for being a reliable virtual assistant include:

- Meet your deadlines.

- Don't take on more jobs than you can handle.

- Respond promptly to messages if within your designated working hours

- Ask for reviews when a project ends.

- Ask questions if you're unsure about a job's requirements.

- Be reasonable about when you can have a task finished.

12. Creativity

Creativity is an essential skill for many aspects of virtual assistant work, from problem-solving to content creation. Everyone has their own type of creativity. For some, it may be writing, while others might lean more toward visual art and graphic design. Embrace your creative abilities to be a better virtual assistant by integrating them into your skill set.

As a virtual assistant, you may have a unique angle and approach to different problems or ideas, making you a valuable asset. Being positive and seeing problems through a creative lens can help you overcome on-the-job challenges. A client could give you a task with minimal direction, and you'll have to figure out the best way to accomplish it. Being creative could help save you time and impress your clients.

AI tools can also boost your creative output by helping you generate design assets, copy, or even entire marketing campaigns. For example, Canva's AI features allow you to create custom images and layouts quickly, while Adobe Firefly lets you generate high-quality visuals using text prompts. These tools are especially helpful when clients provide limited direction, giving you a starting point that you can then refine and personalize.

Find virtual assistant jobs that fit your schedule

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- Presentations

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- Ad campaigns

13. Digital marketing

Digital marketing skills are invaluable for virtual assistants. Many clients, especially entrepreneurs and small businesses, rely on their virtual assistants to help manage their online presence. This can include a wide range of tasks, from managing email marketing campaigns to creating content for blogs and different social media platforms.

Many brands focus on social media marketing; creating content daily to engage their followers is important. It's a way for them to connect with customers. Virtual assistants with social media management skills should be able to create on-brand content and respond appropriately to comments and messages on their social media accounts on behalf of the brand.

As a virtual assistant with digital marketing skills, you might be responsible for:

- Creating and implementing digital marketing strategies.
- Managing and optimizing pay-per-click (PPC) advertising campaigns.
- Conducting keyword research for search engine optimization (SEO).
- Analyzing website traffic and user behavior.
- Creating and distributing content across various digital channels.
- Managing email marketing campaigns.
- Monitoring and reporting on key performance indicators (KPIs).

To excel in digital marketing as a virtual assistant, consider taking courses in SEO, content marketing, social media marketing, and analytics. Likewise, AI-powered content generators for social media captions and SEO optimization are a rising trend clients are interested in. Familiarize yourself with tools like Google Analytics, SEMrush, and Hootsuite to boost your value to potential clients.

14. Adaptability

Adaptability is a crucial skill for virtual assistants in a business landscape driven by speed and innovation. As a virtual assistant, you'll often work with multiple clients across various industries, each with unique needs and preferences. Being adaptable means you can quickly adjust to new situations, learn new tools, and confidently tackle unfamiliar tasks.

Key aspects of adaptability for virtual assistants include:

- **Learning new software and tools.** Clients may use different project management tools, communication platforms, or industry-specific software. Being able to quickly learn and adapt to these tools is essential.
- **Flexibility in work hours.** Depending on your client's needs and time zones, you might need to adjust your working hours occasionally. Being flexible can make you a valuable asset to your clients.
- **Handling diverse tasks.** Your responsibilities can vary greatly from one client to another. One day, you might be managing social media, and the next day, you could be researching market trends. Embracing this diversity and being willing to learn new skills is crucial.
- **Adapting communication styles.** Different clients have different communication preferences. Some might prefer quick check-ins via chat, while others want detailed email reports. Being able to adapt your communication style to each client's needs is important.
- **Problem-solving.** When faced with new challenges or unexpected situations, adaptable virtual assistants can think on their feet and find creative solutions.
- **Keeping up with industry trends.** As industries evolve, so do the needs of your clients. Staying informed about the latest trends and best practices in your clients' industries can help you provide more valuable support.

Developing your adaptability skills can make you a more versatile and valuable virtual assistant, capable of handling a wide range of tasks and

client needs.

Find virtual assistant jobs on Upwork

Thinking of embarking on the journey to become a virtual assistant? See what virtual assistant jobs are available on Upwork.

Whether you're new to virtual assisting or are transitioning to freelance for the first time, clients on Upwork are looking for someone like you to help with their day-to-day administrative tasks. Build a career as an independent professional and see what new doors appear, waiting for you to open and walk through them.

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Author Spotlight

The Upwork Team

Upwork is the world's largest human and AI-powered work marketplace that connects businesses with independent talent from across the globe. We serve everyone from one-person startups to large organizations with a powerful, trust-driven platform that enables companies and talent to work together in new ways that unlock their potential.

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