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10 benefits of hiring a top virtual assistant

 14min

Hire for a role

**Hire a skilled virtual assistant and
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The curse of being a busy professional is that when your career takes off, managing your schedule becomes a job on its own.

It doesn't matter how good your problem-solving skills are. Fielding emails, fitting in meetings, chasing status updates and progress reports from your employees – it all takes time you don't have if you want to focus on the high-value work you're passionate about.

Hiring a virtual assistant can be a great solution, removing time-consuming administrative work so you can focus on your core activities.

In this blog post, we cover the 10 benefits of hiring a virtual assistant and explain how and why you should use skills testing to hire one.

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What does a virtual assistant do?

A virtual assistant (VA) **does administrative work for clients from a remote location**, usually on a freelance or contract basis. They can be based anywhere in the world and still assist businesses with administrative tasks.

Some companies [hire virtual assistants](#) who specialize in specific areas, such as bookkeeping, social media, or content creation, while others offer more generalized administrative services, including:

Handling phone calls and emails

Arranging travel

Organizing appointments

Usually, virtual assistants are paid an hourly rate for their remote work, but you can also pay them a salary.

The top 10 benefits of hiring a virtual assistant

Why hire a virtual assistant instead of a full-time, in-house administrator?

Both roles deal with repetitive tasks and can improve your work-life balance and wellbeing. However, only one can take over routine tasks **without increasing your operating costs**.

There are many advantages of virtual assistants over [hiring secretaries](#) or administrative workers as full-time employees.

Here are 10 benefits of hiring a virtual assistant.



THE TOP 10 BENEFITS OF HIRING A VIRTUAL ASSISTANT



- 1 Cost-effective
- 2 Save time
- 3 Hire worldwide
- 4 Improve your work-life balance
- 5 Grow your online presence
- 6 Regular reporting
- 7 High quality of work
- 8 Streamline your operation
- 9 Customer care 24/7
- 10 Scale up or down

1. Cost-effective

As independent contractors or [1099 employees](#), virtual assistants offer greater flexibility than full-time workers.

Hiring a remote VA is significantly more cost-effective than hiring one in-house because virtual assistants bill you based on the number of hours they work or the scope of the work required. You pay them for their productive time, not any time spent on breaks or vacations.

Virtual assistant companies also offer professional VA services in monthly packages tailored to their customers' needs.

This cost-effectiveness is one of the major reasons for hiring a virtual assistant for small businesses and startups. For a detailed breakdown of the cost of a virtual assistant and the factors that impact it, check out our guide on [what to pay a virtual assistant](#).

2. Save time

Research shows that the average small-medium enterprise (SME) owner needs [four extra hours](#) in the day to complete admin, including tasks like:

- Scheduling meetings
- Generating reports
- Responding to emails

Having a virtual assistant frees entrepreneurs from these routine administrative tasks so they can focus on growing their businesses.

3. Hire worldwide

If you hire a PA or administrative assistant for a physical office role, you are limited to employing those who live within commuting distance of your office. It may limit your candidate search to the talent available in your immediate geographical region.

By contrast, if you [hire a freelance](#) virtual assistant instead, you have **a whole world of talent to choose from**.

Because they work remotely, they aren't constrained by geographical closeness to your office, so you may find the ideal candidate on the other side of the world.

Hiring a virtual assistant in a different time zone may bring unique benefits you're unlikely to find in local candidates.

4. Improve your work-life balance

The same study that found that business owners need four extra hours per day to do admin tasks also discovered that a massive **43% of SME leaders take their work home with them**, with only 16% saying they enjoy doing so.

Virtual assistants help you maintain firmer boundaries and create a strong [life-work balance](#) by reducing your administrative workload and organizing your schedule.

This point could have a bigger impact than you think. Research has shown that [turning off work alerts](#) on cell phones outside of work hours reduces workers' strain and even improves their resilience to other workplace stressors.

5. Grow your online presence

All businesses should have an online presence, be that a website, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn.

These platforms need to be regularly updated, which takes time if you have more than one social media account.

You may wonder if it's worth the time it takes to post consistently, but did you know that [50% of Instagram users say](#) they clicked through to a brand's website after seeing one of their Insta Stories?

You can't afford to ignore online channels, but there's no denying that keeping them up to date is hard work.

That's where a virtual assistant comes in. They can create and arrange posts to go out on your social media at scheduled times, so that's one less task for you to worry about.

6. Regular reporting

When you work with a virtual executive assistant, they usually provide you with a weekly report on the tasks they did during the week.

You can see how long each task took from the reports, which helps you prioritize tasks and budgets.

If you use a virtual assistant company, some have online portals you can access anytime. These portals enable you to see what your assistant is working on.

7. High quality of work

Because virtual assistants are independent contractors, they know that their reputation and success depend on their productivity and ability to deliver value to their clients.

Professional virtual assistants strive to **perform at a high level** and don't suffer from the distractions of a typical office-based assistant on a salary, such as chatting with co-workers.

Did you know that only three hours of productive work are done in an eight-hour workday in an office? That's yet another reason to hire remote workers.

8. Streamline your operation

Virtual assistants are tech-savvy and have a wide range of experience in different software, so they can help improve your office processes and services to make things leaner. They use time-saving hacks and automation to speed things up and improve them.

Some common examples of this are using mail merge protocols in Microsoft Outlook to send out mass communications and setting up email rules to organize emails automatically.

Although many business owners are proficient in Microsoft Outlook themselves, daily. That's why you should hire a virtual assistant to do it for you.

9. Customer care 24/7



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zones worldwide.



When customers contact you, they expect a swift response. That's impossible with just one person running customer services – they need to sleep, eat, and have a life outside of work, too.



By outsourcing customer services to a VA in a different time zone who is awake while your part of the world is asleep, **you can run customer care 24/7.**

You can also find virtual assistant companies that set up a team of VAs to work around the clock for you, giving you peace of mind that your customers' needs are met regardless of the time of day.

If you're a small business owner, one of the major benefits of hiring a VA is that if a company's customer service is excellent, [78% of consumers](#) continue to do business with them after a mistake.

10. Scale up or down

One of the benefits of hiring virtual assistants is that they offer flexibility when it comes to adding to or decreasing their hours. Many brands have busy and quiet times, and having a virtual assistant means you can scale your work according to business needs.

Of course, that depends on the assistant's other clients and how much or little work the VA wants to take on.

If you are planning to regularly increase or reduce the number of hours you want a virtual assistant to work, you may want to consider using a virtual assistant company or agency instead of a freelancer, as they can accommodate the changing workload easily.

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How to assess virtual assistants: What skills to look for, plus 5 key assessments

Of course, to access the advantages of hiring a virtual assistant, **you need to make sure that your candidates have the right skill sets.**

You can do this by asking strong [virtual assistant interview questions](#) at the interview stage and screening candidates for the right skills ahead of time by using pre-interview assessments.

It saves you time scouring resumes and gives the best talent a chance to excel on a level playing field because skills-based testing [encourages diversity](#) and reduces hiring bias.

Get started with talent assessments today

Use our 400+ skills tests to improve VA quality, reduce recruiting costs, and eliminate unconscious bias.

Get your free TestGorilla account



Here are the skills to look out for and our assessments to find them.

Benefits of hiring a virtual assistant: Skills to look for

A great virtual assistant has a **well-rounded mix of technical aptitude and interpersonal skills**. The hard skills you should generally be looking for when hiring a virtual assistant are:

Microsoft Outlook

Basic data analytics and reporting

Social media management

Bookkeeping

Data entry

You may require more specialized skills if they work with a technical team or in a more specialized role.

Virtual assistants also need strong, soft skills in a range of areas, including:

Communication

Time management

Problem-solving

Project management

Attention to detail

Creativity

Reliability

Interpersonal



SKILLS NEEDED TO BE A SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL ASSISTANT



- 1 Communication skills
- 2 Time management
- 3 Project management
- 4 Attention to detail
- 5 IT skills
- 6 Problem-solving
- 7 Creativity
- 8 Reliability
- 9 Interpersonal skills

Skills testing can help you identify these skills, regardless of whether you're hiring for a general virtual assistant or a specialized marketing assistant like [our client Pilgrims' Friend Society](#).

Let's look at five virtual assistant tests you can use when hiring with TestGorilla.

1. Administrative assistant skills

The best place to start is with our [talent assessment](#) that's been specifically designed for administrative assistants. This test helps you access the virtual assistant benefits outlined above by testing candidates on core VA skills.

Our [Administrative Assistant test](#) evaluates candidates' proficiency in:

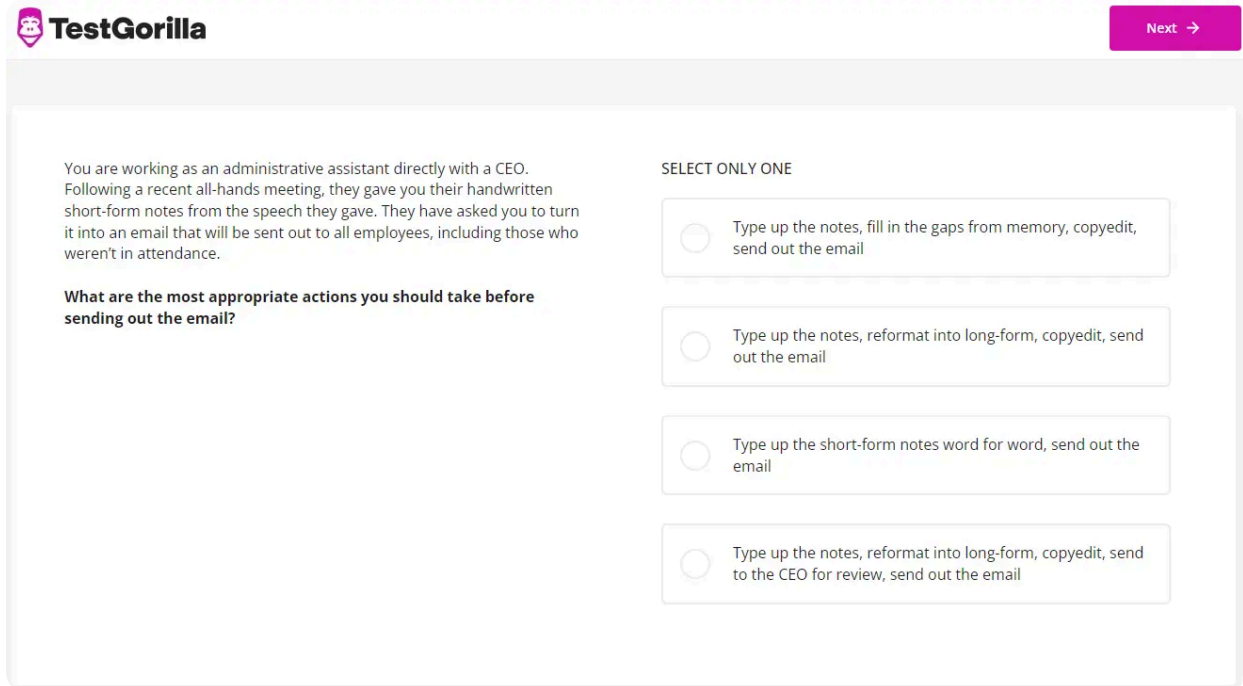
Verbal and written communication

Organization and time management

Attention to detail

Problem-solving

It asks candidates to answer multiple-choice questions about realistic scenarios – take the below:



The screenshot shows the TestGorilla logo in the top left and a 'Next →' button in the top right. The main content area contains a scenario: 'You are working as an administrative assistant directly with a CEO. Following a recent all-hands meeting, they gave you their handwritten short-form notes from the speech they gave. They have asked you to turn it into an email that will be sent out to all employees, including those who weren't in attendance.' Below this is the question: 'What are the most appropriate actions you should take before sending out the email?'. To the right, under the heading 'SELECT ONLY ONE', are four radio button options: 1. 'Type up the notes, fill in the gaps from memory, copyedit, send out the email' 2. 'Type up the notes, reformat into long-form, copyedit, send out the email' 3. 'Type up the short-form notes word for word, send out the email' 4. 'Type up the notes, reformat into long-form, copyedit, send to the CEO for review, send out the email'

For more sample questions, please check out our [preview Administrative assistant test](#).

2. Communication skills

Another area where skills-based hiring can help you access the benefits of a virtual assistant is by testing their communication skills.

Our [Communication test](#) assesses written and verbal communication skills, evaluating their ability to:

Understand and interpret written communication

Listen and interpret non-verbal cues

Clarify the next steps and summarize messages

Communicate professionally with colleagues and clients

3. Microsoft Outlook skills

TestGorilla's [Email Skills \(Microsoft Outlook\) test](#) lets you see which candidates are proficient in internal and external communications using Outlook.

The Microsoft Outlook test assesses candidates' understanding of basic email functionalities. It also evaluates how well they can use Outlook to collaborate with others and manage their workflow.


Candidates who take the Microsoft Outlook test are also evaluated to see if they can write appropriate business emails following proper email etiquette.

The best virtual assistants score highly on this Microsoft Outlook test and can also use key Outlook features and functions to streamline email processing and maintain best practices.

4. Time management skills

One of the main benefits of a virtual assistant is that they take over handling the complexities of your schedule, especially time-consuming tasks that may hinder your business growth.

As a result, time management skills are vitally important. Our [Time Management test](#) objectively assesses candidates' responses to time pressure and competing priorities with questions like the below.

Next →

You have a busy job and often run out of time to complete all your tasks. In particular, you must respond to some emails every day that typically only require a short and simple response, but you can't seem to get these done during your normal day.

How should you handle responding to these emails?

SELECT ONLY ONE

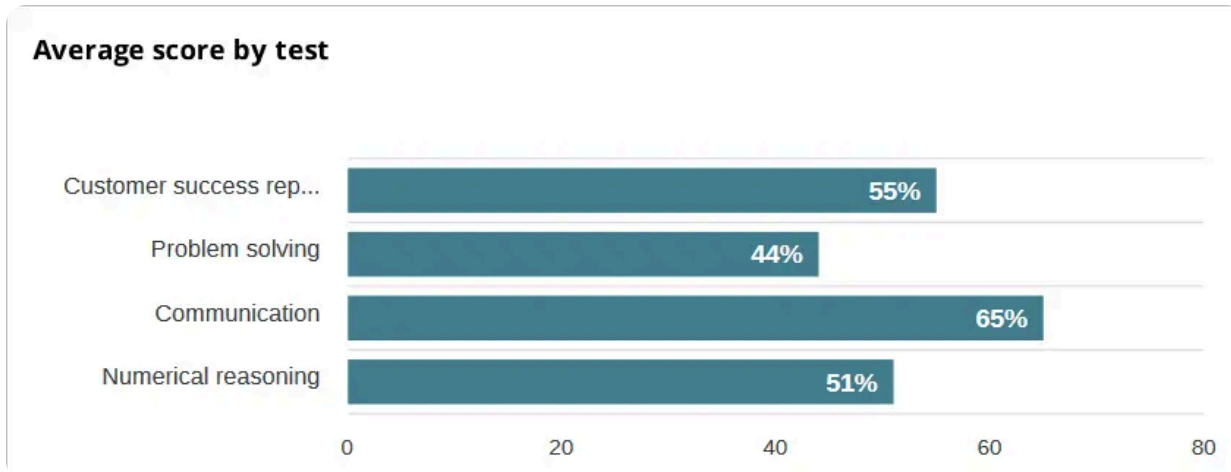
☐ Process these emails over your lunch break when you aren't working on other tasks.

☐ Schedule some blocks of time during the day only for responding to these emails.

☐ Multitask and reply to these emails during other meetings.

☐ Process these emails first thing in the morning.

TestGorilla makes it easy to measure these hard-to-assess skills and automatically shortlists candidates based on their responses. Our platform even shows you the average scores among candidates for easier benchmarking:



Try the Time Management test out yourself for free

Use our Time Management test to hire virtual assistants with the ability to handle time pressure and competing priorities.

Get your free TestGorilla account



5. Social media management skills

Finally, managing social media marketing channels is an important task for the right virtual assistant, especially when assisting business owners and other high-profile leaders.

To do this well, candidates need strong writing skills, email marketing, SEO, sourcing, and the ability to understand your individual and company brand. They also require a working knowledge of different social media platforms.

Use our [Social Media Management test](#) to find a virtual assistant who can grow your personal and employer brand using their skills in:

- Strategy planning

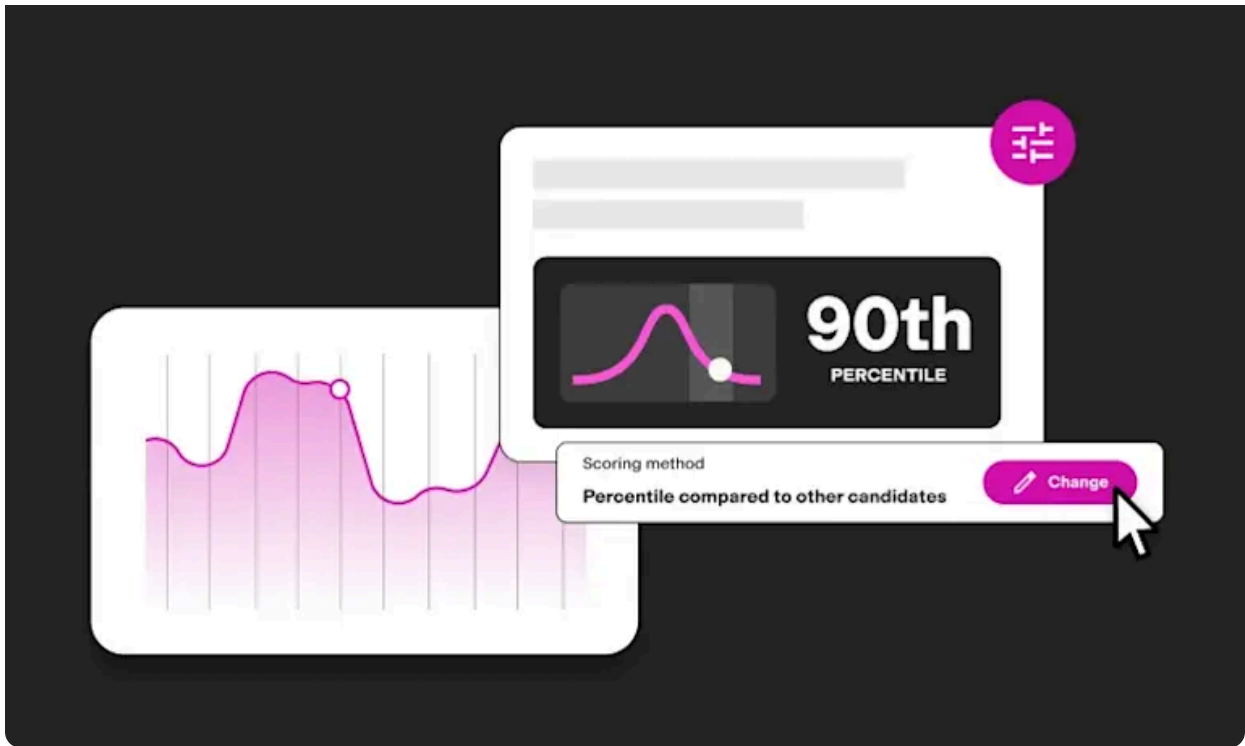
- Lead generation

- Community management

Analytics

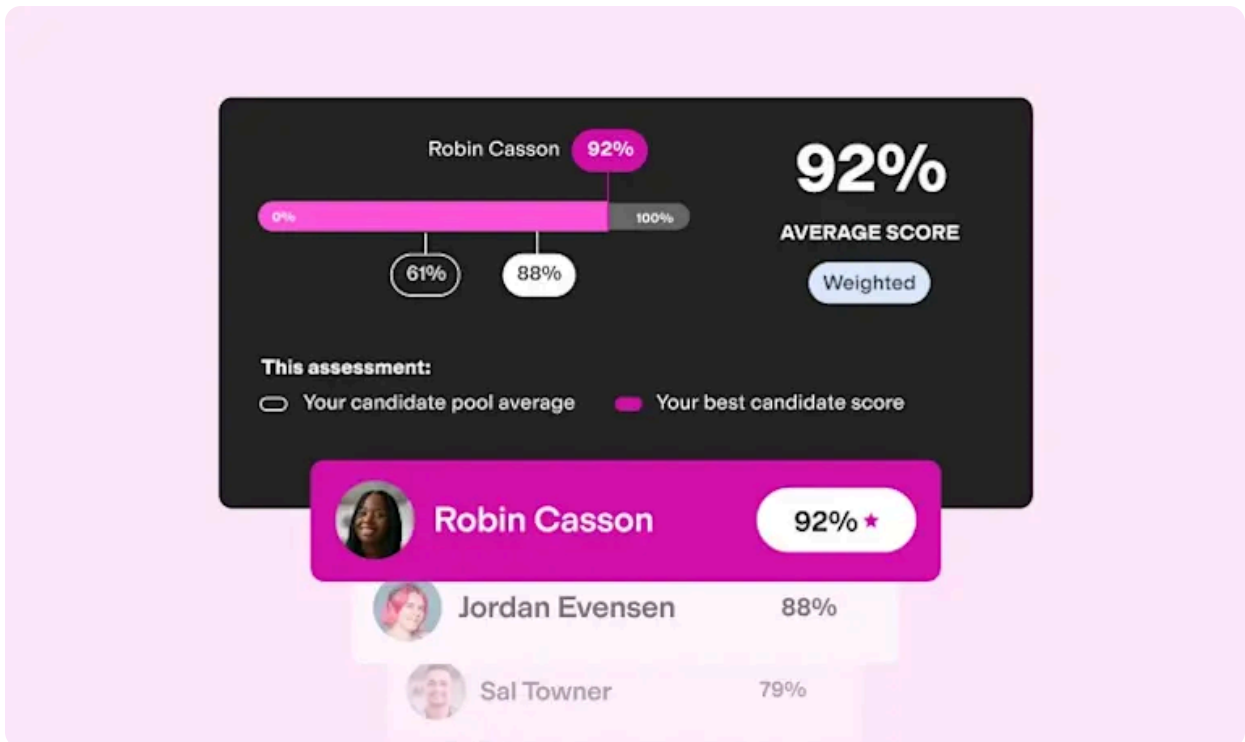
HOW TO HIRE A DEDICATED DEVELOPER

How to hire a dedicated developer: The skills-first method that works



Talent sourcing

The 6 best AI resume scoring tools for fairer, faster hiring



Talent sourcing

Talent intelligence is transforming workforces, and early adopters are already pulling ahead

Fast-track the benefits of hiring a virtual assistant with TestGorilla

In this post about virtual assistant services, we've covered:

The benefits of hiring a virtual assistant, including improved business operations and cost savings

The advantages of virtual assistants compared with providing a workspace to full-time, in-house employees

The [skills virtual assistants need](#) to excel

The benefits of hiring virtual assistants using skills-based hiring

You've got all the information you need to hire a great VA – now it's time to get started.

[Take a product tour](#) of TestGorilla, or [book a demo](#) with one of our friendly experts today to see how our skills tests can help you find a great virtual assistant.

Or even better, try it out yourself for free with our [Free Forever plan](#).

Benefits of hiring a virtual assistant FAQs

Are you still unsure of the importance of hiring a virtual assistant? Here are answers to some commonly asked questions.

Why is it important to hire a virtual assistant?

It is important to hire a virtual assistant because they bring many of the benefits of in-office personal assistants. For instance, they provide administrative support, schedule management, and problem-solving – **without the need to pay for a full-time salary or benefits**. There are also unique advantages of virtual assistants over in-office workers, such as their ability to respond to customers outside of working hours.

What are the different types of virtual assistants?

Social media and personal account virtual assistant

Data entry and support virtual assistant

E-commerce and graphic design virtual assistant

Customer service and customer support virtual assistant

Marketing virtual assistant

Bookkeeping and real estate virtual assistant

Administrative and technical virtual assistant

What to expect when hiring a virtual assistant?

When hiring a virtual assistant, you should expect most candidates to offer advanced administrative skills, such as Microsoft Outlook, calendar management, data entry, and problem-solving. Depending on your industry and niche, you may require more specialized skills in addition to these. The quickest way to narrow down a shortlist of candidates who meet your skills needs is to use [skills-based hiring methods](#).

What is the average per-hour rate for a virtual assistant?

According to Upwork, the average per-hour rate for a standard administrative and data entry virtual assistant in North America ranges from \$12 to more than \$20. However, this may change depending on several factors, including specialization, skill level, and the region they operate in. For example, it may be cheaper to hire a VA in a country with a lower cost of living and cheaper office space costs.