**Training Assignment #2**

I am using male words he/him/his in this document, although tthe Administrative Assistant role can be male of female.

This document will serve to illustrate ways to:

* How to Develop Administrative Assistant (AA) Skills
* Best Tips for Handling Administrative Assistant Duties

***\*\*\* How to Develop Administrative Assistant Skills \*\*\****

**Essential Equipment**

50 years, an administrative assistant had limited equipment to perform his job or role. The machines or tools were limited to mostly a desk, chair, a telephone, and a typewriter.

In today's world, a laptop or desktop computer is a minimum requirement, and the computer itself should have the software installed for the AA to perform optimally. Microsoft (MS) Office is the defacto software to have as it is preloaded with the necessary softwares such as word processor, spreadsheet, and email, which are the necessary softwares. With MS Word, the AA has multiple templates available for varied tasks.

The telephone has evolved from a rotary or touchtone to a device that can perform extensive capabilities. Today, the AA should possess an iPhone or Android OS phone at minimum.

Even the chair has evolved, and it would benefit the AA to have a chair with multiple height and and back adjustment settings capabilities.

**Become Computer Literate**

Technology plays a key role in for the AA to be successful. At minimum, the AA should be proficient in these MS Office skills: Word and Excel. I would also advise the AA to become well versed in PowerPoint. Depending on the objective of the role for the AA, other softwares will be required. An example here may be any software that manages or visualizes a database.

Being able to navigate a printer is essential also. Today's printers are more sophisticated in that they can print, fax, or even generate various types of documents, so getting to know the printer is a requirement for the AA.

**Perfect Communication Skills**

When creating documents or performing written communications, good grammar, spelling, punctuation, and use of language are requirements for the AA to have.

The AA also needs to cultivate skill when vocally speaking to other persons. The AA should be able to speak in a calm pleasant manner that may also be business-like as the AA will often represent the voce of the organization. Public speaking and participation in organizations such as Toastmasters can help in the effort to gain or improve this skill.

**Time management and prioritization**

The AA should always know and ask for the deadline for each task he is given, and be aware of that when performing work. Being able to shift quickly from a current task to a newer, high priority task is an essential requirement. If a newer task is given while working on a current task, the AA might want to communicate with the owner of the current task immediately. In this way, the AA can get the newer task accomplished and not have to worry about the current task.

**Attention to detail**

This was mentioned previously that good grammar, spelling, punctuation, and use of language are requirements for the AA to have. In creation of documents that have multiple sections, the AA should make sure that these sections are organized in logical fashion where the flow form one section to another makes sense.

**Organization of work**

The AA should have readily available any physical items related to perform the role. Having to ask "Where did I put that" should hopefully never be a question.

During the course of performing the role, the AA will become familiar with the way the company conducts business. Knowing this will be beneficial, because the AA will then be able to create a virtual and/or physical organizational system that is aids in performing the role.

**Listening**

This is a key skill to have, especially when receiving a task or project. If the AA has good listening skills, time will be optimally utilized when the work is assigned. The AA should always try to understand the work to do as completely as possible when it is given, so not have to go back to the assignor. However, the AA should feel free to approach the assignor at any time if a question arises that the assignor did not cover or maybe did not cover well.

When listening, the AA should always be perceiving and ready to jump in and come up with solutions to unexpected problems. This is an appreciated skill in fast-paced environments, where troubleshooting is part of everyday work and will allow the AA to become an asset and contributor to the team.

Listening is also a skill that will enable the AA to work independently, always improve in this area, and allow the assignor his own independence to focus on his work with minimal interruption from the AA regarding the given task.

***\*\*\* Best Tips for Handling Administrative Assistant Duties \*\*\****

**Keep in mind that the role is that of Administrative Assistant**

From day 1, he AA should know what the role is, the rules and procedures, and what the boundaries are for performing the role. This will help immensely so that the AA will perform the work required. If the AA believes that what he is doing on a particular task may step outside the set boundaries, the AA should feel free to ask management if such actions can be performed.

**Make sure the W's are well defined**

The AA should be provided with answers before proceeding with any task or project when it is given, or know the answer to these questions before proceeding:

* Who needs the work to be done?
* What is needed, ow what is the requirement?
* When is the task due?
* Where should the task be sent when completed?
* How should the task be handled?
* Why is this task needed? However, this question could be intrusive depending on the situation.

Other questions may be pertinent also for this list mentioned here.

**Communication with the assignor or receiver**

The AA should be able to communicate with the assignor and/or receiver while performing work. If the work covers an extended period of time, the AA should be able to provide progress reports to the assignor and/or receiver. Communication in this manner will also build trust with the team. The AA should be also able to know whether communication during performing work is permissible, needed or warranted.

**Ask questions**

The AA should always be able to ask questions while performing work, should anything arise. However, the AA should always cultivate the listening skill at the same time. Hopefully, any question is a new question, so that questions are not answered twice. It would be good to ask any new questions, so that the duration of the work itself is not interrupted if possible. This statement could be compared to the subject of sleep, in that the more uninterrupted sleep a person gets, the sleep itself improves.

**Take notes**

Writing notes during discussion is always a good idea, but try to make sure that the notes are needed and legible, so that reference to these notes later can be performed.

**Eliminate clutter and minimize distraction**

Another piece of advice is to eliminate clutter from the immediate work area. By doing this, the AA will be able to focus on tasks to be performed and not be distracted. The AA should always try to minimize or eliminate any non-work clutter of various forms, such as emails or family issues, which can all be addressed or set aside until after the work day.

**Take a break**

It has been said that taking a break after a period of time will allow a person to become refreshed and be able to proceed. This break could be after 20 or 30 minutes, depending on what is being performed. Be careful, because web browsing, social media, and non-work emails can lead to the break becoming excessive.