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PREFACE

Undoubtedly, we faced terror and concern for our health and safety, commodities, and much more because of pandemic. Most of us were advised by our company to bring our laptops, headset, mouse, laptop charger, and any other equipment that we use daily at work. Those employees who don't have internet connections at home were advised to purchase pocket wifi or pay for an internet subscription just to continue working. Some were happy because working from home allows them to have more freedom, time with their families, and so on. While most of the companies shut down their operation, many of us still have work at home, and having a source of income during a pandemic is definitely a huge blessing.

Of course, who wouldn't want to have another source of income as a backup plan knowing that everything is uncertain including the financial state or business needs of the company that we're currently serving? These thoughts compelled me to surf the internet and that's when I saw some ads about working as a Virtual Assistant (VA). Saying that I was tempted by the monthly income that they are receiving was an understatement. Earning as much as P50k-P100k per month is a significant sum of money. Not only will it change my entire life but also help a lot of people, my extended family, parents, siblings, our local church, and many more. Guess what? It already happened and it all started with me browsing online sites and sending proposals in the hopes that a client would show even a small interest in my application.

INTRODUCTION

Virtual assistants have spent time and effort establishing their own workstations (or locations wherever it is possible) and have all the experience, qualifications, equipment, and material necessary to provide high-quality services. They keep track of their own tax records, overtime payments, annual leave, training, and so on, so businesses don't have to worry about the additional costs of hiring more people.

Just like other employees out there, VAs are all different and have distinct skills to offer. Every customer or client is unique, and what we do is mostly determined by the needs of business owners in terms of expansion. It may write letters, figure out how to save money for a corporation, keep track of finances, record data, or create a social media profile. It will never be the same twice.

To be more specific, a VA may help any business in a variety of ways. Consider a businessman who has a busy week ahead of him and needs to plan a meeting for the following month, complete with agendas, invitations, lodgings, catering, and attendees. In addition, he has a mountain of priority documentation that needs to be entered and processed by the end of the week, as well as a status report for two other projects that needs to be completed as soon as possible. Without a doubt, he will not be able to do all of his tasks in the time he has available. This is when a VA's assistance will be useful.

CHAPTER ONE

What is a Virtual Assistant (VA)?



In a nutshell, a Virtual Assistant or VA is a highly qualified independent contractor who assists business owners with administrative tasks but does not work in the owner's office. As a result, we are "virtual." While some VAs work in their clients' or customers' offices, the majority do not. While companies employ a traditional worker 8 hours a day, five days a week, a VA is hired to work "as needed". For example, companies will hire a VA for overflow projects, take on monthly tasks, or just expand their offices.

Virtual Assistants typically work with a large number of clients around the country. Because the work is virtual, the location options are virtually endless. We have our own home office which gives us flexibility during working hours

In terms of payment, VAs charge hourly for finished work. Everyone is different. Most of us charge a flat hourly rate for the services we provide for a set number of hours on the days we selected to work. Some prefer project milestones, in which they are paid the agreed-upon amount after completing certain tasks or when the work is completed. The advantage is that as VAs, we have the ability to decline, decide, and negotiate payment terms.

Virtual Assistants come in a variety of shapes and sizes. If you want to become one, you can focus on administrative support and provide services such as editing, word processing, proofreading, document creation, event administration, scheduling, file organization, and other similar tasks. You can charge between \$15 and \$25 per hour in this niche.

The next type of Virtual Assistant would be what we call the virtual assistant 'web knowledge,' which supports administrative tasks and has experience in operations that are required for running an online business. This includes things like shopping cart setup and maintenance, autoresponder administration, website upkeep, and blog publishing, among other things. Because the expertise required is higher than that of the Virtual Administrative Assistant, those who are in this field can charge a little more.

Tentatively, they usually charge between \$20 and \$40 per hour.

Finally, there are Virtual Assistants who are more like corporate managers. They are likely to run a company's operations and suggest ways to improve systems. Due to their job responsibilities, these VAs charge \$50 per hour or more.

The skills you'll need to be a Virtual Assistant are mostly determined by what you'd like to be. At the very least, one must be familiar with office software – Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and so on – as well as the Internet. Before you can start serving your clients, you must have a general understanding of this. Otherwise, you will just frustrate them and yourself.

At a higher level, you will learn and acquire a wide range of new skills. In fact, you might already have some experience with web design or copywriting that you can leverage. The best part about working as a Virtual Assistant is that you can devote the time necessary to master these skills because they will only benefit yourself and your clients.

A basic understanding of computers is required; if you are not good at computers, you will not be an effective Virtual Assistant. Many businesses want to know that when they provide their work, they will not be charged for training or time spent learning how to complete the project or task. If you still don't know how to use a computer, I strongly advise you to enroll in a professional development center around the area to learn the basics.

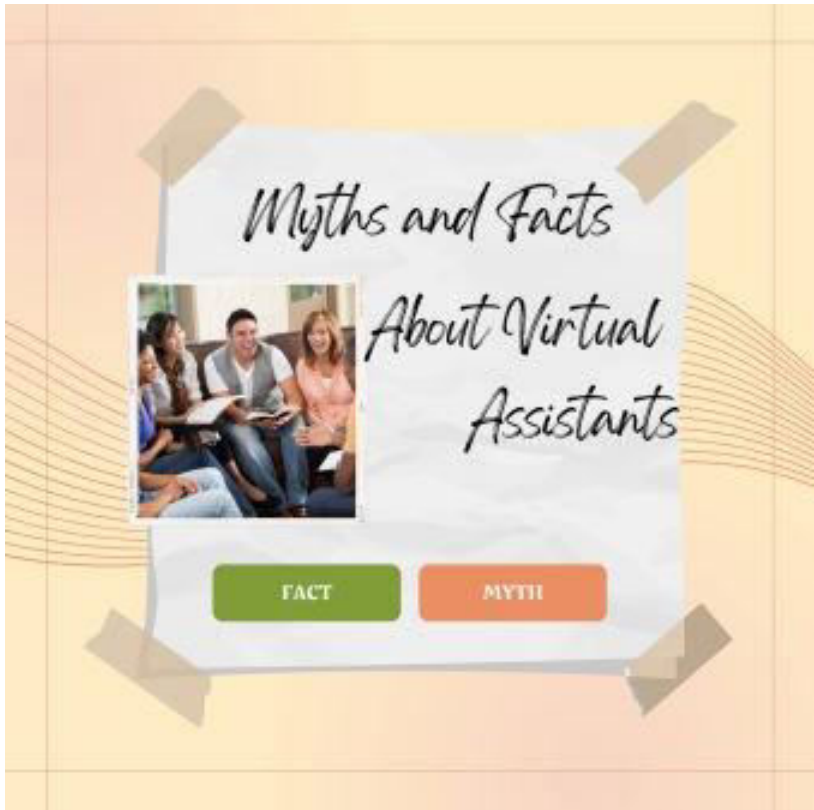
Communication and time management are two other essential qualities for a Virtual Assistant. We need a high level of concentration.

Because most of us work from home, it's easy to get distracted by friends, family, the phone, TV, a nice book, or our bed. In all aspects of our chosen niche, we will be the sole in charge. We need to talk to new clients, send email addresses to potential customers who ask questions about our services, and, above all, we should know how to communicate clearly what we're good at.

Being a Virtual Assistant requires excellent time management skills. To avoid missing deadlines, you must know how to prioritize your to-do list, be enthusiastic to learn and be willing to invest time in studying new technologies and industries. Your clients will not all be in the same industry. You will deal with people in a variety of fields and businesses. Nothing is certain, it's always changing.

CHAPTER TWO

Virtual Assistants: Myths and Facts



- I want to use a VA to save money because it's less expensive per hour than hiring office employees.

This is the biggest misconception concerning VAs among businesses. When they compare their employees' hourly rate to that of their Virtual Assistants, they frequently find a considerable difference— Virtual Assistants are paid MUCH more. They are, however, saving money because they are

not paying for hardware, utilities, office space, payroll tax, or perks for normal office employees (insurance, vacation, sick days, etc.). Unquestionably, they can find VAs for \$10.00 per hour or even less.

- My VA should be available for 40 hours per week to take on my projects.

It's better to have several clients as a Virtual Assistant. If you ever have a client who requires you to work 40 hours per week, you should be paid for the time spent. Typically, you and the client will agree on your working hours, and he/she would expect to easily reach out to you for tasks or projects and expect a prompt response. If the client that takes up the majority of your time refuses to pay for the hours you work for him/her, finding other clients is always the best alternative. Remember that if a client isn't paying you enough, you can always fire him/her. Exploitation is not tolerated in the realm of freelancing.

- My VA is more competent because she went through an online VA training program.

Though online courses and training programs are beneficial, they do not ensure that VAs will become more knowledgeable or experts in their specialties after completing them. These training sessions often ensure that VAs have a thorough understanding of what it's like to work with business owners, including marketing, networking, web development, time management, and many more. If you're an aspiring VA, being an expert is, nevertheless, within grasp with ongoing and persistent training, research, exploration, and skill polishing.

- I'm using a third-party VA service. I'll find someone who is both skilled and screened.

Applicants are not screened to see if they are truly capable of finishing their jobs on freelance websites. Some websites need references or qualifications to be confirmed, although this does not always imply high-quality services, as most freelancers claim. Clients are just as willing to take chances with a freelancing site as they are with online advertising. When they choose you as their VA, the real work begins. You must meet their expectations, which are typically based on the profile you set up.

- Using a Virtual Assistant (VA) means I'll have to do extra work because I'll have to constantly tell my VA what to do and how to accomplish it.

Assuming you've been selected as a virtual assistant. Your client may need to spend a little more time showing you how things are done at first. Unless you already possess the abilities and experience that your client needs. Otherwise, you must understand what the client desires and how it is accomplished. Virtual assistants are ideal since they allow clients to focus on more vital elements of their business. As a result, if you want to be indispensable, your client shouldn't be repeating what they want from you, and you should offer excellent results.

- I'm not sure I can trust a Virtual Assistant with personal information!

Who would entrust their personal information to a complete stranger?

Clients want to know that you can be trusted with their personal and business information. If you have previous employees who have given you positive feedback, it will boost your credibility. If you're just getting started, you can carefully lay out your skills in an enticing way. The stronger your profile, the more proof you can provide, such as visuals, or sample articles, the higher chances you'll have.

- The software and tools used by Virtual Assistants are costly. I can't afford them.

This is also a big misconception. As a Virtual Assistant, you should have your own software and hardware. You are expected to be self-sufficient unless the client uses proprietary tools for the business. Laptops/computers, high-speed internet, and software like Microsoft Word, for example, are all things you should already have.

Knowing what your clients think of Virtual Assistants and what they expect from them will give you an advantage since you'll be prepared to tackle their uncertainties and doubts when they arise. Primarily, you can prepare to exceed their expectations and portray yourself as a good fit for their businesses and projects.

CHAPTER THREE

Types of Virtual Assistants and The Services They Give To Help Businesses Succeed



As a company grows, the clients would have so much on their plate that they couldn't help but hire someone with the necessary skills to assist them. They know that the people working with them have a significant impact on the success or failure of their business or projects. Hence, they will be carefully choosing who to pick for the company and as a VA, you

should be worthy to be selected.

Offshoring became possible, thanks to fast-evolving technology. Virtual assistants, regardless of location, favorably impact business growth and optimize employees' productivity. How?

A typical businessman who prefers to do his own clerical work spends more time at the office and eventually becomes his own secretary. As a result, many important tasks may be overlooked, thus limiting business growth. This is where VAs play a vital role in so many ways. Depending on the nature of a company, a client can choose what type of VA to hire.

Types of Virtual Assistants

Virtual Administrative Assistant

Virtual Administrative Assistants manage all offices and secretarial needs from a remote location, acting as traditional office secretaries. They are in charge of keeping the client's documentation, presentations, schedules, and customer communication needs up to date and organized. In summary, they handle most, if not all, administrative responsibilities and take time-consuming tasks off the client's to-do list. Emails, phone calls, and managing presentations are all things they do on a regular basis.

Data Management and Data Processing

Data processing and data management are essential elements of any business. A bit similar to General VA, performing specific operations on a set of data or a database is a typical service for a VA who masters this niche. A

database is an organized collection of facts and information, such as records on employees, inventory, customers, and potential customers. As these examples suggest, numerous forms of data processing exist and serve diverse applications in the business setting.

Transcription services

Transcription is a process by which voice-registered reports are converted into text. For this, many customers can use a virtual assistant. One example might be a lawyer who sends you a microcassette to transcribe. You would then type the report and email it to the lawyer. You can also receive a telephone conversation as a virtual transcription assistant, which must be recorded, typed, and sent to all participants. A client can dictate cassette, CD, or MP3 letters and memorandums and send them to you to write.

SEO and SEM (Search Engine Marketing)

For a modern businessman, "internet marketing" isn't a foreign term, but can they keep up with the internet's quick changes? Hiring a SEM Virtual Assistant is a fantastic approach for a company to sell themselves online. Why? SEM primarily refers to all SEO methods that are required for search engine exposure. When it comes to online marketing, SEO VAs, on the other hand, do a lot of things that business owners aren't aware of, and the main tasks they perform for websites are as follows:

- Competition Analysis
- On-page Optimization
- Keyword Research

- Active Forum Participation
- Domain Registration
- Submission Services
- Blogosphere Participation
- Content Marketing
- Link Building

These activities, along with a few others, contribute to the internet's increased prominence in search engine results. This is a great chance for companies to advertise without having to pay high advertising fees.

Marketing VA

A virtual assistant who monitors and tracks the advertising campaign's development, which may involve offline and internet marketing, social media, and networking.

Writers

Virtual Assistant Writers are those who compose blogs and articles. Writing original website content or promotional blogs for advertising objectives isn't exactly on a client's or businessman's daily agenda. Why do they want to hire a Virtual Marketing Writer to turn their business principles into powerful sentences? In the development of a website, excellent content writers are needed. Internet users do not use browsing services directly, preferring to study more before making a purchase. Employers must then hire a writer who can produce persuasive pieces without making a direct sales pitch.

An effective internet marketing author writes articles that are

SEO-friendly and include the right keywords. They may also produce assignments that are not linked to SEO writing, such as technical writing and research.

Other writer-created materials:

Newsletters

It is critical to write newsletters. This should be catchy and easy to understand because recipients should be given attention-getting and useful information.

Grant Writing / Proposal

Clients will frequently request your assistance in creating business proposals. Expertise is definitely required for the compilation of important data into a compelling proposition.

Business Plans

Marketing plans are necessary for every business, and their preparation is extensive and time-consuming. Hence, clients hire writers.

Press Releases

Press releases are frequently used to promote any event or announcement. A company can create a brief and concise publication with the help of writers.

Research

Writers are excellent researchers too. Knowing where to find information can be extremely helpful and can save clients' hours of work to make decisions for their business.

Presentations of PowerPoint

Writers can assist coaches, lecturers, and presenters in preparing and designing captivating presentations.

Editing and Proofreading

Authors frequently seek the assistance of a proofreader and editor to ensure optimum accuracy and correct any errors in grammar, clarity, delivery, spelling, etc.

Web Developer (Creatives)

Web developers are the lifeblood of any functioning website. They are in charge of developing and maintaining the company's functional and creative website. From invention to redesign to maintenance, a virtual programmer may handle all of the computer's programming needs. Customers want to see certain things on a company's or client's website, and virtual programmers with experience designing company websites are fully aware of this. These VA programmers commonly offer the following services:

- Graphic Design Services
- Web Design Services
- Logo Design Services

Creative and programmers can work as Virtual Assistant Graphic Artist and Coder at the same time. These two jobs complement each other, allowing programmers to offer design services. Can you imagine how much money a client or company could save if they had one VA who could handle the work of two or more employees?

Most companies need paperwork, advertising material, and a logo to ensure that they have a marketable image. When you are creative or artistic, it's often necessary for someone to design a logo that can then be transferred to their paper and advertising material. Desktop Publishing offers a service that is very often necessary because most business owners have no knowledge or time to design brochures, leaflets, business cards, or other related material.

Bookkeeper

The revenue-to-expense ratio is one of the most important aspects of a business. Virtual Financial Assistants can help business owners with their bookkeeping and financial records because these VAs are as qualified as traditional bookkeepers and have been trained to handle a variety of financial operations, including bank transactions and tax filings.

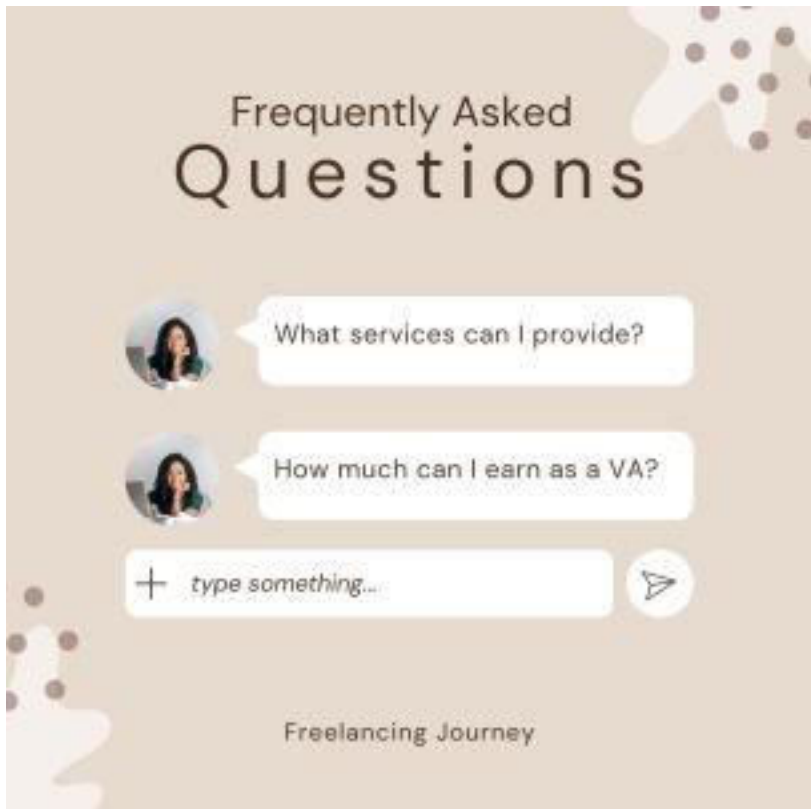
Bookkeeping can record what is purchased, sold, owed, owned, and

owned; what money enters, what goes out, and what's left. This position complies with the basic accounting rules, but you do not have to be an accountant. As a virtual bookkeeper assistant, you can write daybooks consisting of purchases, receipts, sales, and payments. You are in charge of ensuring that all transactions are recorded in the proper daybook, supplier manuals, customer manuals, and general manuals.

As an aspiring VA or someone who is just getting started in this industry, it's vital to understand what skills you have in order to find clients who are looking for the services you can provide. You can not only offer the results your clients want, but you can also profit from your efforts. To succeed, you'll need creativity, skills, and experience.

CHAPTER FOUR

A Home-Based Profession: Frequently Asked Questions



Many of us aspire to have a job that we can do from home. One of the most well-liked careers is that of a Virtual Assistant. Even though it is well-known nowadays, it is still unknown to certain people and probably, you're one of them. Therefore, we're going to address several questions that are frequently asked about it in order to gain a better understanding of the

Virtual Assistant industry.

- What are the services that I can provide as a Virtual Assistant?

As previously mentioned, there are several types of Virtual Assistants. Therefore, depending on your skills and experiences, you can offer a wide range of services including the following:

- Data Entry
- Word processing
- Desktop Publishing
- Database Management
- Bookkeeping
- Marketing
- Web Design & Maintenance
- Internet Research
- Email Management
- Event Planning
- Transcription (Medical, General, and/or Legal)
- And much more.

Remember, DO NOT provide services that you have no knowledge of. If you're interested in other services but lack the necessary qualifications, you shouldn't include them in your scope of expertise just yet. Of course, you may always receive the training you need in the future if you need to give more services to your clients. The most important thing to remember is that you must first succeed at the services you provide. As a result, you will be able to offer exceptional outcomes, allowing you to

secure further projects from your current client and maybe receive a referral when your contract with him/her expires. It's usually a good idea to start with what you already know and be confident with it.

- How much will I make as a Virtual Assistant?

Virtual Assistants' rates vary from \$25 to \$100/hour depending on experience and skills. Some services need much more work, hence the rate is more. For instance, a VA that performs word processing would not charge as much per hour as a VA that does site design and maintenance. It is primarily dependent on the intricacy of the service being offered.

In addition to the regular hourly wage, a VA might provide monthly retention plans. Monthly retention plans are frequently offered at a reduced charge for a specific number of hours each month. Clients can either accept this arrangement or request to be invoiced every week or every two weeks.

- Must I be in the same location as my clients?

VAs are not required to work in the same office as their clients. Most VA clients are in diverse cities, states, and occasionally in separate countries. However, some clients prefer to work with local VAs because they can easily meet them. Clients who are new to working with virtual assistants, for example, may feel safer if they can meet their VA in person.

- Is it necessary for me to have prior experience?

Though there are businesses and clients who hire VAs without experience, people who start as Virtual Assistants today generally have

exposure to the services they offer. Many businesses believe that virtual assistants should work in the corporate sphere for at least five years (non-virtual world). Don't lose hope if this isn't the case for you. While seeking to land a client, you can receive the training you need to equip yourself in a variety of places. There are several online training courses available for Virtual Assistants in particular. Also, if you need to improve your computer skills, you can learn at vocational schools to obtain the essential expertise to learn about the range of VA programs.

- Is it necessary for me to make a financial investment?

The answer depends on what you already have and understand. To work, you'll need a variety of tools, just like any other job. As a VA, you need a computer, headset, high-speed internet, apps like Microsoft, Excel, etc. Are you currently an expert in the services that you're delivering to your client or do you require extra training? You can either get free classes online or invest a little to discover advanced and premium tutorials on the web. Bottom line is, it will rely on where you are at now in terms of abilities, knowledge, and tools.

If you think becoming a Virtual Assistant is something you really want to do, read the following helpful tips before getting started.

- **Research:** Researching is the number one thing you need to do before starting your VA career. Search for the keyword Virtual Assistant online to find out all the information that can be gathered. There are a variety of resources that may help you with questions like how to get started, be prepared, and excel in this industry.

- **Services:** Understand what services you would like to offer before you start. Even if you simply offer one or two services, it's important to start with what you know and are confident of.

- **Rates:** Make sure you set a rate fair for the services you offer. Though you may want to charge a smaller cost than someone who has more experience and worked in the industry if you just started out, have no previous experience, but have had the training to start as a VA. however, don't charge an extremely low rate that clients doubt if you are experienced enough to complete the task they need. One approach to figure out your rate is to look at other VAs' profiles to see what services they provide, what rates they charge, and what experiences they've had. Based on this information, you can compare your skills and experience to them and come up with your own rate.

- **Office:** Set up a home office where you'll have some solitude and be able to work comfortably because you'll be spending most of your time there

- **Computer:** A fast computer and internet connection should be available.

- **Software:** A VA's software is often used in the form of Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, Publisher, etc.), QuickBooks, Peachtree, Dreamweaver, Adobe, etc. The software you need will be determined by your niche or the services you offer.

- **Website:** It's important to have a website as a Virtual Assistant,

even if it's not necessary because that's where you can show off your actual work and demonstrate how skilled you are at it, especially if you're a graphic artist, writer, or in a related area. On top of that, it will also give you more credibility and clients will think highly of you.

One final thought: Being a VA involves a great deal of discipline, dedication, patience, and perseverance. To excel in this industry, you'll need a lot of research, experience, and training. There's nothing like being your own boss, even though it can be difficult. It's a fascinating career path to explore, but it's not one to be treated lightly.

CHAPTER FIVE

How Virtual Assistants Improve Customer Engagement



In recent years, the development of social media, big data, mobile phones, analytics, and the cloud has dramatically altered our lives and the way we work and interact. These dynamics have increased customer expectations and compelled businesses to rethink their entire customer experience strategy. Customer engagement solutions should be focused on

improving the direct experience and assisting businesses in increasing revenues, improving customer happiness and retention, expanding margins, and providing the most important differentiators in this competitive environment.

Virtual Assistant Technology is a new area that can be integrated into existing apps that allow users to speak with a lifelike online voice or text avatar in natural language. They deliver a tailored experience that reduces the need for contact with the support team, establishes a brand image, and boosts client happiness. It can be linked with current apps to improve and add value to the services they provide. We'll look at how incorporating Virtual Assistants into Omni-channel communication solutions might help organizations better serve their customers.

The customers expect proper responses to their concerns or solutions to their problems when visiting a support website or contacting the helpdesk. Just like you, they would be dissatisfied if their expectations were not met, resulting in a loss for the company. Other problems in providing high-quality services include poor web, phone, or email assistance, a lack of product knowledge, long lines, linguistic misunderstandings, and the list could go on.

Companies or businesses may dramatically boost their brand value and revenues by giving customers prompt and accurate responses through efficient customer engagement services. It can assist them in improving their services and increasing customer retention and happiness. Virtual Assistant solutions can help businesses improve a variety of customer service

capabilities, such as registration form completion, first loss notice, front desk, meeting records, and other tailored services.

Challenges in Customer Engagement Services and How Virtual Assistants Can Help

- Meets the ever-increasing demands of smart technology users who communicate through many platforms such as the web, mobile, Facebook, Twitter, etc.

- Make an excellent first impression when customers first access a web or a mobile app to increase web traffic.

- Providing personalized support when creating a new account or when registering a product that may require an agent.

- Providing a user-friendly self-service function that could be faster than navigating a system just to speak with a live agent which is typical to most companies or businesses.

A Virtual Assistant can serve as a conversational online avatar capable of simulating conversation in order to make voice or text connections to any web application or mobile interface. They can answer queries, provide specific step-by-step activities for particular processes and offer interest-dependent cross-selling opportunities. Depending on the skills of a VA, the number of support teams of a company can be reduced.

Virtual Assistants can efficiently offer information about special deals in addition to answering customer concerns. You're a virtual assistant for flight reservations, for example. When a tourist is flying from one location to another, you can provide them with not only flight information, but also great deals or discounts on hotels where they can stay, as well as reminders about luggage restrictions, the destination's climate, and any other useful information that will make their trip more enjoyable.

Although there are online FAQs and manuals in Web applications to help users, sometimes they are inadequate and time-consuming which compels customers to contact support teams. Virtual Assistants experts in web development can create a knowledge base tailored fit to customer needs or provide an interface that users can utilize to submit concerns and obtain the answers they need. On top of that, they can generate reports on the most frequently asked questions and how satisfied customers are with the support they received. This provides the company with an opportunity to improve its systems and operations.

Mobile Virtual Assistants

In relation to Virtual Assistants for web applications, Mobile Virtual Assistants provide an easy-to-use interface for a smartphone. They are able to understand the user profile, questions and offer a more effective engagement. The smartphone can become a voice-capable customer service person by advancing speech and voice recognition technologies. They can acknowledge the customer, understand what they want, and interact in a way that allows for a tailored experience. In a nutshell, Mobile Virtual Assistants can enhance the customer's experience through the use of smart devices.

To summarize, Virtual Assistants' business process automation solutions provide numerous advantages by increasing efficiency and production. A business or company can not only improve customer happiness, but also boost productivity, improve monitoring and control, and increase sales, all of which can contribute to corporate expansion.

CHAPTER SIX

What Clients Look For In A Virtual Assistant: Will You Qualify?



In these difficult times, most companies or businesses are lean. There is still a lot of work to be done when it comes to downsizing and running a profitable business. As a result, they're turning to Virtual Assistants to assist them to outsource some of the work they have to do every day. Not only are VAs known for their low-cost services, but they also deliver high-quality work, making everything worthwhile for their clients. The question is, what qualities do clients look for in a Virtual Assistant? Will you qualify?

Clients prefer you to be well-versed in a variety of topics and tasks as

a Virtual Assistant, which you can achieve through research or firsthand experience. If you want to work as a VA for a business owner, your marketing and secretarial skills will persuade clients to hire you over another candidate. You treat your clients' success as if it were your own. Clients will be delighted to have you onboard if they know you aren't just looking for personal gain but also genuinely care about the company's success. They will expect you to show a high level of dedication while adhering to business guidelines and ethics that safeguard your and your client's interests.

Being proactive is another important factor in attracting a client's attention. Recognizing and responding to a client's demand without being told or before it occurs demonstrates that you're attentive to detail, alert, and up for any task.

Do you have the ability to multitask? You should be able to juggle duties while being efficient as a Virtual Assistant. Your clients outsource their tasks so that they may focus on the parts of their business that generate income. As a result, they want someone who is quick and efficient in completing the task at hand.

Finally, let's go over some fundamentals. It is possible to acquire new skills and knowledge. Have you ever had friends get hired despite the fact that they were inexperienced in the field? It's because some clients place higher importance on personality and attitude than on qualifications and expertise. To succeed in this industry, you must have a decent personality. Are you punctual, respect integrity, and are you dependable, truthful, and trustworthy?

How do I get paid for being a Virtual Assistant?

PayPal, Transferwise, Payooner, and direct bank fund transfer are the most common payment methods. All you have to do is share with your clients your account or bank details. It's that simple! Because you're compensated as an independent contractor, your salary is determined by the task, the amount of time you spend on it, and/or your level of expertise.

Based on the complexity of the task, Virtual Assistants can charge between \$5 and \$75 an hour. For example, web designers will obviously charge more than a Data Entry VA for obvious reasons - skills and expertise.

Typical Tasks Assigned to Virtual Assistants

The tasks you are assigned will vary depending on your abilities, however, most VAs provide the following services:

- **Word processing:** Word processing duties are no longer the same as they were in the late 1990s. However, after the PC was introduced to our regular office operations, the position of typists took on a whole new meaning. They are now expected to generate a wider range of work rather than just documentation.

- **Proofreading:** A proofreading specialist will be needed by an author or a publishing company to examine articles before they are published. As a proofreader, you must ensure that the content or written material is flawless and devoid of errors.

- **Edit and format:** Clients use experts in this area to guarantee that their documents are as professional, appealing, and presentable as possible. Do you have editing and formatting skills?

- **Copywriting:** Copywriting is the process of putting words together on paper in order to persuade readers to do a specific action. It's commonly used in sales letters, marketing documents, and other communication materials that persuade the reader to take action. You will undoubtedly succeed in this position if you have prior sales expertise.

- **Technical Writing:** Technical writing is used when building manuals, specification sheets, or other forms of descriptive text on product details, use, and reference data.

- **Internet Research:** Do you enjoy doing research? You might be a good fit for companies searching for Virtual Assistants who are adept at obtaining data or information that is useful for their business or initiatives.

- **Content of the Web Page:** Clients should have good and relevant content if they want to sustain and enhance the number of visitors or traffic to their websites. As a Virtual Assistant, you can be tasked with managing and improving clients' web pages.

- **Small Business Website:** A company's website will not only be in search engine results but may also be at the top of the list, thanks to excellent web design and keywords. Increasing the company's income could eventually lead to an expansion.

- **Accounting | Bookkeeping | Bean Counter:** Ah! The heart of the company that rarely gets the credit. Accounting or Bookkeeping is time-consuming. Why? Because it's difficult to keep track of the company's financial transactions. As a result, clients require someone who excels in this area.

- **Data input:** Data entry duties include entering sales into a database, updating customer lists based on current sales, filling out online forms, and a variety of other document organization chores. This can take several hours, and clients would prefer to spend their time elsewhere. As a result, they're looking for Virtual Assistants.

- **Admin Support:** Business owners rarely interact directly with their customers due to tight schedules and more pressing concerns that require urgent attention. Most of the time, they have Administrative Support who deal with customer issues.

- **Real Estate Info:** Time is money. VAs can help real estate companies reach their goals by promptly processing documents, generating exceptional sales pitches, and providing unending support on any aspect of the business.

Being a VA is not a walk in the park, contrary to popular belief. New internet applications, business models, and milestones are introduced in the industry on a regular basis, so studying, learning, and exploring are always necessary. While VAs work largely part-time and on a contract basis, there are more opportunities for career advancement and promotion in large

organizations than in traditional office occupations.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Virtual Assistants From The Philippines



Why are Filipino Virtual Assistants in High Demand?

The new technology, coupled with a young, educated, ambitious workforce, has made the Philippines the place for virtual assistants popular (and affordable). Many of us have dealt with English-speaking countries through customer service centers or BPO companies, and I believe clients find that "Western" culture is slightly more common than in other countries like India. Furthermore, we begin learning English at an early age in school,

making it simple for us to speak with clients from all over the world.

Proposals or Cover Letters for a Virtual Assistant that Always Wins the Contract

Writing and sending proposals to a prospective client who is looking for the services you offer is one of the time-consuming and frustrating tasks you will face as a VA. Why? Because even if you think you've written a good proposal, explained why you're the best fit for the clients, and offered compelling suggestions to help them, you still couldn't get a positive response.

You'll eventually start to wonder if you did something wrong. While you can include anything a potential client wishes in your proposal, there are far too many aspects that can influence their decision to choose you or not. There is no "best format" but you can tailor your proposal to the following guidelines to improve your chances of being chosen.

13 Tips to Make Your Proposals or Cover Letters More Powerful

1. Address your proposal or letter to a specific person

Make contact with a specific person whenever feasible. If a job posting does not specify a person's name, conduct some research to determine who the proper individual is. Then, use "Dear Mr. or Ms. (last name)" or any other official yet friendly greetings you can find on the internet

to keep your letter professional.

2. Job postings without the clients' names

If you can't find the name of the person trying to recruit someone, start your cover letter or proposal with 'Dear Hiring Manager,' 'Dear Human Resource Manager,' or 'Dear Recruiter.'

3. Minimize the use of "I"

Excessive use of the word "I" should be avoided. As much as possible, make it "you." You should concentrate on what you can bring to the client rather than what you can get for yourself.

4. Use the right format

Use a 12-point font, brief paragraphs, and bullets in Times New Roman. Italics, strong text, and emphasis should all be avoided. You want your point to stand out, not your text's formatting.

5. Use a Creative Conclusion

Use "thank you for your attention" or "Sincerely" instead of the commonly used "thank you." "With my best respects," "enthusiastically yours," or "with kind personal regard" (ideal for a thank you note), "good wishes always" are all examples of phrases that are remembered well.

6. Customize your cover letter or proposal

Use a lot of relevant keywords and emphasize your qualifications for the position you're aiming for. When you're looking for numerous jobs that are extremely similar at different companies, you might be tempted to create a single cover letter or proposal. As needed, make sure it's customized for each work.

7. Keep it concise

Clients' time is valuable. It's critical to write a proposal that is both brief and informative. The recommended length is half a page or even less.

8. Mention of accomplishments

To boost your chances of standing out from the other candidates, highlight one or two of your most notable accomplishments.

9. Avoid generals

Unless you have accomplishments to back up terms like "self-starter," "proven leadership qualities," "great interpersonal skills," and so on, don't use them. You might find yourself spouting words with no proof to back them up.

10. Don't overdo it

Even if clients were unaware during the interview, if you get the job, you will probably be discovered. You don't have to have all of the credentials;

simply be honest about yourself and emphasize your skills.

11. Use a sense of humor

In a cover letter or proposal, humor can also be used. Your resumé is a formal document that should not contain anything funny, but a cover letter allows you to exhibit some personality and differentiate yourself from other candidates.

12. Use a conversational tone

When writing a cover letter, use a conversational tone. Do not use words that you would not use in ordinary conversation.

13. Have your cover letter or proposal proofread by someone else

Finally, have someone else proofread your cover letter for spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors. You can read your own letter ten times and still miss a glaring error. Someone else, it appears, can.

CHAPTER EIGHT

How to Write Resume or Curriculum Vitae (CV)



1. Start with a clear focus

You want the client or the recruiter to grasp your abilities instantly. Focusing on the summary of your skills and why you're the greatest fit for the job is one method to do this. A common resume blunder is including a general target. Remember, there's no reason to put an objective that applies to everyone in your CV!

2. Action verbs should be used to begin sentences

Managed! Attained! Sold! Launched! Your CV will be more engaging if you use action verbs like these. To explain each of your abilities and accomplishments, use more dynamic and impressive verbs. Simply avoid using the same words in the same article or paragraph to avoid dullness.

3. Use correct proper verb tense

Use the past tense when discussing a prior position or accomplishment. Use the present tense when talking about a job you're doing right now or a goal you're aiming for. When writing about a talent you've used in the past and plan to use again, use the present tense. Use the continuous tense past if it seems awkward, such as "having sold more than 27 paintings..." or anything similar.

4. Make it easy to read

Your curriculum vitae should be short but informative. Each text segment should be no more than seven lines long. If you require additional space, start a new section or paragraph.

Short, impacting phrases, rather than flabby lines and huge words, will impress the reader. Each statement should be simple and direct to the point. Commas can be used to break up larger sentences into smaller chunks. Obviously, pronouns like "I" should be removed because your CV is simply about you.

Summary writing is best for a conservative font, like the New Roman Times. The font size should be 11 or 12, but for a chunky font like Verdana, 10 may be acceptable. Also, to avoid the content looking stuck, give your curriculum vitae a wide border.

5. Use consistent formatting

Coherence and parallelism are appealing and thus adapt to the art of resuming writing. For example, if you italicize the years you have worked for the same business, do so for the years you have worked on for each company. The same applies to capitalization, bullet points, emphasis, and bold text.

6. Strategically present all details

The art of writing is presenting the truth in an appealing manner. Organize your CV to highlight your most noteworthy skills and experiences. Decide where you want to focus your efforts with the aim of using your CV as a publicity tool.

The information at the top of the page is more important. English speakers clearly read from left to right, therefore information appears first on the left. Italicized text decreases while bold text expands. Words surrounded by white space attract the viewer's attention more quickly than words put in a block of text. Always consider the viewer's perspective on design elements,

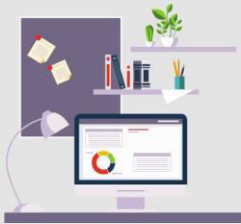
structure, and overall effect.

Build an Impressive Portfolio

Putting together our portfolio and proposals is a representation of who we are. Consider yourself in the presence of a mirror. What kind of person do you see? We can notice right away in the mirror if we look decent, if we forgot to apply something to our face, and so on. Before sending our portfolios, resumes, or proposals to a potential client, we must double-check all of the facts. I believe that some novice Virtual Assistants do not have portfolios yet. Just be sure to provide an excellent proposal and cover letters so that clients will be drawn to them even if you lack experience as a VA.

Part II: How and Where to Find Clients

HOW and WHERE TO FIND CLIENTS



To succeed as a Virtual Assistant, you must become the most proactive and effective marketer for your own services. This requires determining the best marketing approach, how frequently you should promote yourself, and where you should do so in order to attract clients. This isn't something you do when you don't have much work to do; it should be part of your daily routine. It's all about demonstrating what you're capable of, your abilities, and the value you bring to the table. In short, if you want to get

anywhere in life as a VA, you must bite the bullet and get your name out there. Therefore, the following chapters will substantially help you in determining how and where to find clients.

CHAPTER ONE

In-Person



COWORKING | GATHERINGS | CONFERENCES

Your primary network consists of close friends, relatives, colleagues and peers in your industry or profession. You've built trust over time, and they're confident in your expertise and knowledge on a certain market or topic. It's highly likely that they have their own professional network.

In-person marketing can be done in a variety of ways

Referrals/Word of Mouth:

When looking for referrals, you can ask family, relatives and friends if they know anyone who needs what you're offering. Tell them what you're capable of or what you do, and ask them to suggest anyone they know who may be interested. Starting out by doing work for a family member is nothing to be ashamed of. Money is money. Experience is experience. And you need both. However, be careful not to be too pushy. Your network is valuable, and it's not worth burning relationships by pestering them.

Let former co-workers know you are looking for freelance work and ask them to pass on your name. And don't forget to reach out to your old boss—especially if you had a good relationship with them. Ask if they know of any opportunities, or if they have advice for finding clients in your field. They might even hire you on the spot for a project once they know you are freelancing. After all—you are familiar with their business, which cuts down on briefing time, and they already know how great you are.

This is also a good reminder to never burn your bridges. A recommendation from a former boss can get your name in front of decision-makers and lead to high-quality freelance work.

Don't forget about the other people in your life. Your hairdresser runs their own business, so why not ask if they need someone to design their appointment cards? When your plumber is installing your backwater valve, mention what you do for a living. He just might need help editing the blogs on his website. You never know where your freelance clients can pop up.

You are hiring these people for their expertise, so tell them about yours. Just think about all the people you come in contact with, like dentists, accountants, and car mechanics. You'll never know if they need your services unless you ask. And even if they don't need to get freelance work done right now, they may know someone who does.

Then and now referrals or word of mouth is effective in marketing yourself because clients trust personal recommendations more than a portfolio, killer resume/LinkedIn profile, or blog. It all comes down to that age-old saying: "It's not what you know, but who." So, do good work, and get referred to others. People who own their own business probably know others who do, too. And those connections just may need a new website, video editing, new logo, etc.

Inspiring word-of-mouth for your services doesn't require much effort. All you need to do is send an email when the time is right. This could be when you receive positive feedback, or after a project has been wrapped up. Completing a fantastic job is always your key to win another client by getting referred. Speaking of referrals, when was the last time you asked an existing client for one? While it's good to reach out to family, friends and peers, your

clients likely know other potential clients who are just like them.

To stand out and encourage referrals, you can incentivise it by rewarding clients and friends for every new project they send your way. Tools like ReferralCandy make this possible without any technical knowledge. This is probably the best way to land clients without doing any work to get them. When someone recommends you to a person they know, it means a lot more than a polished resume.

Meeting face-to-face is always more memorable—there's that in-person connection you can't get online. Even with all our technological advancements, nothing compares to face-to-face marketing.

Coworking:

Coworking is like another form of in-person networking. The main difference is that you typically go to a coworking space daily, or at least semi-regularly. These are spaces, buildings or large rooms used by groups of entrepreneurs/small business owners/freelancers. They're ideal for getting work done (especially freelance work) in a collaborative environment. Plus, a coworking space is a great place to make friends, because being a freelancer can get lonely (It's not like your typical office life, where you are surrounded by coworkers with no choice of your own.).

Network with others, collaborate, and get your own work done. In normal times, co-working spaces are brilliant places to work and get connected to a new circle of friends and potential colleagues. Building connections takes time though, so be prepared to make co-working a regular

part of your routine. You should also take advantage of any social occasions, workshops or presentations hosted within your co-working space, as these are a great way to get to know your fellow co-workers.

Attend/Speak in Conferences:

If you're creating content as part of your Virtual Assistant career or freelance business, take advantage of the "press passes" that many conferences offer. Getting behind-the-scenes gives you a great opportunity to connect with big players in your industry. Most keynote speakers are distinguished individuals, so it is an excellent opportunity to meet them face to face. Offer an interview opportunity to them. Influencers, journalists and bloggers in most industries are keen to reach a new audience, so they'll most likely take you up on your offer.

One step up from attending events is speaking at them. The best kinds of events/conferences to speak at are ones where audience members may need your services. For instance, you are a web designer. These days, every business should have a website (made easy by companies like Brandcast – who offer a killer end-to-end web design platform for professional designers) so speaking at a conference for business owners will get quite a few potential clients to remember your name. And if you give a talk about the importance of good website design in business, outlining all benefits it can bring (longer time on site, increased visitor engagement, more sales, etc.), you'll demonstrate your value even further.

Of course, when it comes to landing speaking gigs, you have to start small. But as you build up credibility as an amazing speaker, it's even

possible to get paid to speak at events. You need to know that speaking engagements strengthen you as an expert in your field. They also provide the opportunity to get in front of new potential clients.

Be Active in Social gatherings:

As a Virtual Assistant or freelancer, you should always be ready wherever you are. You never know when you might bump into a potential client. It's a delicate art however, to bring up the fact that you are a freelancer without coming off as too pushy. But if you are at a party and the conversation turns to work, it would be natural to mention you are a VA or freelancer and are always on the lookout for new clients.

Sometimes just mentioning what you do will put the idea in someone's head and they will think of you the next time they need your services. Above all, make sure the situation is appropriate. A funeral is not the place to be discussing projects or work-related stuff.

It's always okay to talk about what you do for a living at social gatherings or events. Find out if there's an organization in your industry that hosts in-person events where clients and freelancers get together. Face-to-face meetings are always more memorable than meeting a client online. Being self-employed can be a bit lonely, so joining a business association or industry group could be good for your social life!

Connect with other freelancers in your field

You don't have to think of other freelancers as the competition. When you are overloaded and can't take on more work yourself, you can still stay valuable to your client by saving the day and recommending another great freelancer. It's also a good idea to form alliances with freelancers in a related field. For instance, forming a connection with a web developer who can recommend you when a client needs someone to design web pages could bring in some great gigs, and vice versa. You could even link up with other freelancers to offer a more comprehensive solution to a client, such as a writer-designer team that can tackle both the content and look of an annual report.

Networking with other freelancers is also a great way to learn the tricks of the trade. Most people are quite willing to share best practices and offer solutions based on their experience. Stay in touch with classmates and former co-workers who are in the same industry as you. Ask for advice and learn as much as you can from others. Knowledge is power!

Business Cards:

We know business cards can seem outdated. And if you're purely in the digital space then this might not be for you. But you'd be surprised by how many people still ask for business cards, and you want yours to stand out from the crowd.

Create an eye-catching business card template using online tools like Canva, Vistaprint and MOO. Aim for clarity and uniqueness. Accentuate with colors and images that speak volumes about your VA or freelance services.

CHAPTER TWO

Online



When clients are looking for freelancers, social media is one of the first tools they often reach for. It just makes sense. It's fast, easy, and free, and they can access it from anywhere. That's why it's important to make the best of the social media platforms you use.

Comment and respond to conversations on social media in an authentic manner. People love to interact with peers who add value to discussions, especially on sites like LinkedIn and Twitter. Providing advice or recommendations demonstrates your expertise in your chosen field. This may lead to enquiries and, at the very least, can lead to invaluable lifelong connections.

Here are the most effective social media platforms you can utilize:

LinkedIn: Build business connections

Since LinkedIn was specifically created for business and employment connections, take the time to create an impressive profile and keep it up to date. Not only do recruiters and Human Resources professionals use LinkedIn to search for both full-time and freelance talent, LinkedIn profiles usually show up near the top when your name is searched. So if a client is checking you out for a freelance gig, it can help you make that stellar first impression.

LinkedIn also offers you the choice to post articles and comments, so you can keep your name top-of-mind. You can also use it to search out any connections you might have at companies or organizations you'd like to

freelance for. A valuable contact can give you insider information on how to get work, or even help you get your portfolio in front of the right person.

Facebook: Let friends know you are freelancing

It seems pretty basic, but just letting your Facebook friends know you are freelancing widens your circle of contacts and can lead to new clients and great projects. You can also post interesting work you have done, or provide links to compelling articles to show how plugged in you are.

There also might be a Facebook group you can join where people in your industry share tips and best practices, or your neighborhood might have a community group where you can promote your skills to local businesses. In addition, the choice to join a Facebook alumni group can help you find out where your classmates have landed, and see if you can help each other out with job prospects.

But beware! If you are looking for freelance work make sure your Facebook page doesn't contain any embarrassing or objectionable material. Many clients scan social media before hiring freelancers. Don't let a careless remark or risqué photo prevent you from getting a great job.

Instagram: Where a picture can be worth a thousand words

If you work in a visual field—such as graphic design, photography, or as a web designer—Instagram is a fantastic way to showcase your work. You can also use Instagram to post other interesting projects that show off your

creativity and originality, which you don't always get to use to the fullest in your work assignments. And don't forget to use hashtags so lots of people will find your posts.

Twitter: Follow the right people

Twitter is another good way to build connections. Follow people and companies you'd like to work for to gain valuable knowledge about their business. This will come in handy when applying for freelance work. And by commenting on the topics they tweet about, you could end up on their radar and have the chance to tell them what you can do for them. You can also follow other freelancers in your industry to build relationships that could lead to referrals.

Take a freelance website out for a spin

Freelance websites shouldn't be ignored for finding work. In fact, some companies use only these platforms for finding the freelance talent they need. Before you take the plunge and sign up, make sure you completely understand the fee structure, as this can vary from website to website. Also, find out if there is an exclusivity policy, which means you can only work for their clients through their platform, even if the client wants to work with you after you leave the website.

If you are a graphic designer or writer, there are specific websites that deal with freelance jobs in your industry, but all the large freelance websites

offer projects in many areas. Here are four popular websites to check out:

Upwork

This freelance website is probably the most well-known. It says it posts 8,000 new jobs every day and is the largest network of freelancers in the world. It also prides itself on finding a good fit for freelancers and employers thanks to its sophisticated algorithms.

It's free to join Upwork, but you'll pay a sliding service fee of 20% to 5% of your billings, depending on the amount of work you do for the client. It's important to note that those charges are in effect for as long as you work on freelance jobs with that client.

SolidGigs

This is different from other freelance websites. Instead of listing your services for clients to see, it reviews websites, freelance job boards, and work ads to find the best freelance positions, and then sends you daily updates and weekly emails listing the opportunities specifically suited to your freelancing skills.

It not only takes the time-consuming toil of searching through job listings off your hands, it also has a pretty low fee of only \$19 a month. If you find at least \$500 a month in work from SolidGigs, that's less than 4% of your earnings. You can also try your first month for \$2.

FlexJobs

As its name suggests, this website caters to other kinds of “flexible” jobs besides freelance assignments, such as remote full-time and part-time positions and jobs with flexible schedules. Its claim to fame is the fact that it thoroughly researches each job posting to ensure good clients and accurate job requirements.

Besides partnering with a variety of companies, FlexJobs has a team of researchers that digs through employer sites, industry blogs, and freelance job boards to find good freelance work.

Freelancer

Freelancer has high-profile clients and more than 1,800 freelance categories, but it also has a complicated fee system. Even though it's free to sign up and create a profile, you can only bid on six projects per month. If you want to bid on more you have to pay a fee, or sign up for a monthly membership.

To name more, check down below:

- For developers – GitHub
- For designers – Dribbble and Behance
- For photographers – Flickr and Photo Critique

- For videographers – Vimeo

There's an app for that

It turns out there are even some apps that can help you find freelance work. There is one called Shapr that works like a dating app. Instead of finding true love, it connects you with people who can help you in your freelance career. Based on information from your profile, they use a machine-learning algorithm to suggest 15 people to meet each day. These range from potential clients, to fellow freelancers offering tips, to others that can inspire you as you build your business. You just swipe through the people and they let you know when there is a match.

Hang out on social networks and freelancing sites where potential employers are looking for talent. Make a memorable first impression by keeping your online accounts updated and polished.

It may take some time until you land a lucrative job, but it's still worth building a presence on these platforms in order to attract clients. Always remember that your ideal clients are busy looking for a freelancer like you. The key to capturing their business is to be *findable*. Therefore, having a presence in all these platforms is vital.

On top of these platforms, there are other avenues on how you can expand your audience.

Blog/Articles about you

Add a blog or article about you in your portfolio or online resume. Writing about topics relevant to the field you want to work in gives you a chance to demonstrate your expertise. There is an art to this. Here's a quick example: You are a WordPress web designer/developer. You may think it makes sense to write WordPress "how-to" articles. These articles are super helpful...but only to those wanting to learn WordPress themselves, not those interested in paying *you* to build a site for them!

Instead, write articles that will appeal to *the people you want to work for* and be more likely to lead into a sale. For instance, post an article about how making a website responsive can generate X increase in sales. That'll catch the right people's attention, and will be more likely to get you a new gig.

Blogging is another way to passively market yourself and your services. But make sure to write about topics that'll appeal to your target client.

Cold Calling:

If there is a company you respect and would love to freelance for, find out who to contact for the type of work you do, and reach out. Cold calling is always hard, but you never know what you can achieve unless you try. Send out an email explaining why you want to work with them, and what you can do for them. Let them know you understand their business and have some great ideas for making it even better. They will see you've done your homework and

have really thought hard about how your specific expertise can help them.

How to refine your email pitch

- Keep it short.
- Tell them who you are and what you do, and how you can help with solutions for their business.
- Include a link to your portfolio, which of course you have tailored specifically for the client.
- Add in a testimonial from a similar type of client, if you have one.
- Prompt a follow-up meeting by ending with a friendly statement like, "Let's schedule a call in the next few weeks to discuss how I can help your company meet its goals."
- If you don't hear back in a few weeks, send a quick email to check in to see if they received your email and would be available for a call.
- Don't give up, but don't be a stalker either. Think of valid excuses for emailing them, like, "I just wanted to let you know I will be on vacation from Monday to Friday next week, but I'm available any time the week after if you'd like to learn more about my freelance services and what I can do for you."

Undoubtedly, social media and other online platforms allow you to gain referrals, large audiences, and form lucrative partnerships for future projects.

CHAPTER THREE

At The Market Places



In times where the cloud is taking over the development world and many of the mundane tasks, it only makes sense that companies and businesses would see outsourcing as a potential increase in productivity, especially in areas that would previously be slow to catch up to the rest of the business plan.

As you may be aware by now, online platforms such as freelancing websites allow you to reach potential clients. Therefore, you'll learn about more marketplaces where you can locate millions of clients who are looking to hire someone to get business projects done for them.

1. Upwork

- Freelancing type: brand marketing, programming, website design
- Pros: payment protection, credible clients, budget-based projects
- Cons: lengthy selection process, high service fee

Upwork is a freelancing website that connects clients and freelancers from across the globe. The platform provides a wide range of categories, from web design and software development to customer service and accounting. Clients and freelancers have multiple ways to connect – clients can choose to post a job and hire talent or buy a predefined service from the **project catalog**. Similarly, freelancers can access the job board and offer a service to sell.

To get started as a freelancer with Upwork, begin by creating a profile. Ensure it includes details about yourself, your expertise, and your work experience. Keep in mind that clients will decide whether you're qualified by

scanning through your profile whenever you bid for jobs or pitch a project. Upwork has a sliding scale, meaning the more you work, the less money you pay. For example, the commission fee starts from 20% for the first bill of **\$500** and gradually reduces as you receive more money.

There are several options for withdrawal, including direct transfer, PayPal, and wire transfer.

2. Toptal

- **Freelancing type:** software development, financial consulting, interim management
- **Pros:** top-tier companies and talent, free invoicing and payments
- **Cons:** extensive screening process, big projects only

Toptal is a freelance website that connects highly qualified freelance industry experts with companies. Toptal has a broad range of freelancers, from web developers and web designers to finance consultants and product managers. Applying to Toptal as a freelancer requires passing five steps of the screening process, from a comprehensive English evaluation to a project assessment. This process ensures only the top **3%** make it to the platform.

After passing all of the steps, you'll have access to various job postings from top clients and companies, such as Motorola and Airbnb. However, failing the test will put your application process on hold for up to a few months. Toptal has a dedicated service for time tracking and invoicing called **TopTracker**. With this service, freelancers will get the total price they offer and receive payments via Payoneer, Paypal, or direct local bank

transfer.

3. Fiverr

- Freelancing type: digital marketing, web development, social media
- Pros: diverse category, free registration, online courses
- Cons: high commission charge, long payment process
- Fiverr is a platform that connects freelancers with business owners looking for services in various digital projects, including website design, content writing, and voice-overs.

This freelance website provides a streamlined method for both freelancers and business owners to interact with one another. Note that on the website, freelancers are called sellers, their services – gigs, and business owners – buyers. Instead of sending out bids, sellers can sign up for free, list their gigs, and set their prices. Meanwhile, buyers can simply browse through different categories to purchase.

Whenever a buyer purchases a gig, the system automatically charges their account and puts the money on hold. The system will then take a commission fee and send freelancers 80% of the offered price. Depending on each freelancer's seller level, it can take up to 14 days to withdraw their earnings. There are multiple options to withdraw the payments, such as debit card, PayPal, and wire transfer.

4. Freelancer.com

- **Freelancing type:** content translation, web development, social media marketing

- **Pros:** progress tracker, live chat, 24/7 customer support
- **Cons:** complex interface, spam applicants, and fake clients

Freelancer.com is another freelance website where professionals and companies from around the world collaborate on various projects. Thanks to the wide range of expertise, clients can easily find an expert of any type. You can sign up as a freelancer or business owner. Signing up as a freelancer will require you to fill out a short registration form. Provide detailed information, including your skills, educational background, and work experience.

In addition to projects, there are many contests, such as visual or design work. Freelancers can benefit from these contests by earning money along with reviews on their profiles. Every freelancer will receive full payment after completing a job. However, the platform takes **10%** of your total earnings for contests and fixed projects. Like most freelance sites, you can choose to use PayPal or wire transfer for withdrawal.

5. Flexjobs

- **Freelancing type:** writing, content marketing, transcription
- **Pros:** scam-free, 30-day money-back guarantee, reliable support
- **Cons:** some premium jobs can be found outside the platform

Flexjobs is a website that specializes in flexible and remote job opportunities, including freelance, part-time and full-time jobs. There are broad categories, from education and training to journalism and writing jobs. Flexjobs ensures every job listed on the website is legitimate. It verifies and screens all openings, filtering out scams and fake companies. Unlike other

online job boards, this freelance website doesn't display any advertisements on its page.

To find freelance jobs, users need to sign up for a **subscription**. There are four plans available, starting from **\$6.95/week**. Every subscription gives unlimited access to the job listings, along with a personalized work portfolio, career advice, and free skills testing. Users can pay for their subscription with a prepaid card or PayPal. There is a 30-day satisfaction guarantee, meaning you can get a full refund if you're not satisfied with the service.

6. SimplyHired

- **Freelancing type:** human resources, finance, data entry
- **Pros:** email alerts, **helpful guides**, free job tools
- **Cons:** spam from unreliable third-party websites

SimplyHired is a job board where companies can post job opportunities for free. It also collects job offers from all over the internet into one page. The site has a clean user interface, making it easy to browse jobs by category. There are various freelance opportunities in different fields, including finance and marketing. To find a specific job, simply fill out the search box with related keywords. To have more relevant results, narrow it down by filling out your city, state, or ZIP code.

Job seekers can also access the company pages to learn more information such as a salary overview of a company, a list of benefits offered, and reviews submitted by its real employees. People can browse through

SimplyHired without a profile. However, signing up for an account will give you access to various job tools, such as a salary estimator and resume builder.

7. Guru

- **Freelancing type:** marketing, programming, administration
- **Pros:** secure payment, customized job listings, free membership
- **Cons:** potential fake clients

Guru is a place for freelancers and companies across the globe to work together. Companies can hire professionals with various skills, such as programmers, graphic designers, and product managers. This freelance website makes it easy to browse job listings and submit quotes to clients. Start by signing up and building a freelancer profile. The system will give job recommendations based on your skill-set and work experience. Freelancers can bid for long or short-term projects and give a fixed price for each project.

There are multiple withdrawal methods to receive your earnings, including PayPal and wire transfer. More importantly, the site ensures freelancers get paid timely with **SafePay** protection. Every freelancer that signs up on this freelance website gets a free basic membership. However, **paid membership plans** include more tools to make your profile stand out.

8. Behance

- **Freelancing type:** illustration, photography, web design
- **Pros:** large audience, networking opportunities, personalized content

- **Cons:** competitive environment, limited image file size

Different from previous freelance sites on the list, Behance is a social network for creative talents. People worldwide use this website to build portfolios and share their creative work, ranging from animations and illustrations to website and graphic design. Whether you are a freelance graphic designer, web designer, or animator, Behance provides a place to get discovered by potential employers. Start by signing up for an account and establishing your profile. As it's a networking site, the more profiles you follow, the more posts will appear on your feed. It gives a chance to discover more freelance work opportunities.

Behance also provides a **job list**. Every freelancer will get a personalized job recommendation according to their skill-sets and category, making it easier to find freelance work that matches one's expertise.

9. 99designs

- **Freelancing type:** web, logo, and graphic design
- **Pros:** dedicated environment, payment security, active community
- **Cons:** high service fees, the designer level can be limited

For freelance designers looking for jobs, 99designs offers plenty of options. It is a freelance website specially tailored for designers and businesses to collaborate. There are various design projects available, from logo design and book covers to clothing and merchandise. Upon signing up,

you'll be instructed to build a profile and include your work experience. The curation team will review your application and determine your designer level. The higher your level, the more visibility you get on the platform.

99designs makes looking for freelance jobs of your expertise easy. By selecting industries, styles, and design categories, you will have access to a list of jobs to choose from. Whenever you work with a new client, 99designs will charge an introduction fee of **\$100** and a platform fee ranging from **5%** to **15%**. Freelancers get paid via PayPal or Payoneer within three business days and sooner for people with higher profile levels.

10. Dribbble

- **Freelancing type:** mobile design, illustration, animation
- **Pros:** large network, global community, abundant design inspiration
- **Cons:** lists of freelance jobs are only available with a pro version

Dribbble is one of the most popular platforms for creative talents to meet, connect, and interact with each other. Designers and artists use this website to build portfolios and promote their brands.

Creating a work portfolio on the website can increase your chances of getting hired. Do so by signing up for an account and uploading your designs.

Another way to find work opportunities is to open the job board on your browser. There are various types of jobs on the website, including UI/UX design and content creation. However, access to freelance job lists is limited to premium users. Dribbble premium version ranges from **\$5 to \$15/month**. With a pro version, users can upload videos and multi-shot images to their

profiles. A premium account will also get priority placement on the hiring search listings.

11. People Per Hour

- **Freelancing type:** programing, journalism, branding
- **Pros:** automated invoice, location-based listings, secure payment
- **Cons:** free bids are limited to 15 per month

As the name suggests, People Per Hour helps businesses find professional freelancers to hire by the hour or project. There are millions of freelancers from different industries, such as public relations, marketing, and journalism. Freelancers can create an account for free and start setting up a profile. Note that the moderators will review each application before approving it. Once approved, freelancers can start browsing for jobs in multiple categories.

When working on a project, freelancers can send offers and set their prices. Once they finish, they can easily raise an invoice from their dashboard. Like most freelancing sites, People Per Hour charges freelancers a service fee per client. For **\$350** earnings, the freelance website takes a service fee of **20%**. Fortunately, the fee will decrease as you work more.

12. ServiceScape

- **Freelancing type:** academic writing, document translation, manuscript editing

- **Pros:** custom pricing structure, flexible scheduling option, effective communication
- **Cons:** high commission percentage and limited field of expertise

ServiceScape is an online job board specializing in freelance writing, editorial, and translation work. The platform helps freelancers build profiles and promote them to a growing client database. What sets ServiceScape apart from other platforms is the hiring process. Instead of placing bids or sending proposals, freelancers simply wait for work offers from clients. Thus, it's crucial to have a profile that stands out.

Freelancers and employers can connect easily via ServiceScape. Both parties can send messages and schedule a conference call. ServiceScape distributes income every month via PayPal, check, and Gusto. Freelancers can set a custom pricing structure, project-based or hourly. However, the platform charges a commission fee of **50%** for every completed work.

13. DesignHill

- **Freelancing type:** website, brand, and merchandise designs
- **Pros:** built-in online store, no service fees, live chat support
- **Cons:** not a good option for non-designers

DesignHill is a creative marketplace where businesses source quality design from professional designers and artists. There is a broad range of design jobs available, including logos, websites, and brochures. Signing up for an account will bring a wide selection of freelance design jobs and various

design contests. It's an excellent chance to grow your work portfolio and establish relationships with clients.

As a freelancer, on this website you can build your own stores and start selling globally, using tools such as a **profit calculator** and **business card maker**. DesignHill only charges service fees to clients. Thus, a freelancer will receive the total amount of money into their DesignHill account from design jobs, contests, or store sales. As for payment withdrawal, the website supports PayPal and Payoneer.

14. TaskRabbit

- **Freelancing type:** delivery service, house cleaning, personal assistant
- **Pros:** custom hourly rates, no service fees
- **Cons:** only available in certain city areas

To earn money from doing grocery shopping or assembling furniture, check the TaskRabbit website. TaskRabbit is a same-day service provider that connects clients with freelancers to help with various day-to-day tasks. Unlike most freelancing sites that list professional jobs, TaskRabbit provides a list of simple errands, such as household chores, lighting installation, and delivery. To get started, simply create an account, select your area and category, and set an hourly rate.

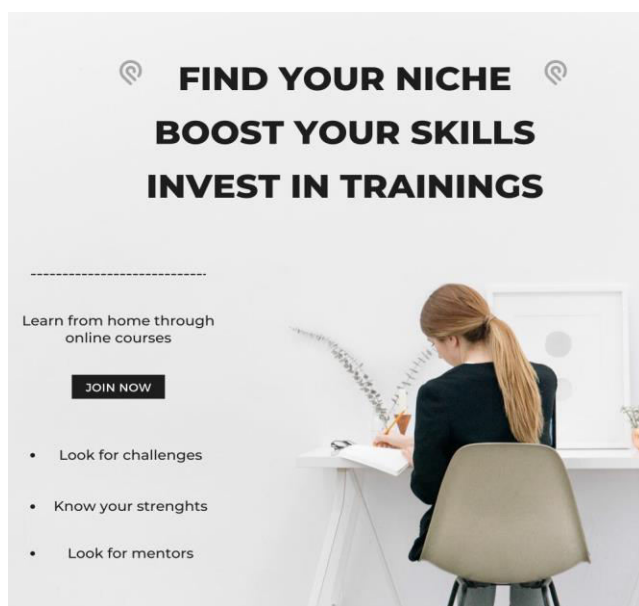
With every application, the TaskRabbit team will do a review and background check. Once a profile is approved, the freelancer will have to pay a registration fee of **\$25**. Then they can start discovering jobs and managing

work through the mobile app. Whenever freelancers complete a task, they send an invoice for the hours worked. Clients will then directly deposit money to the registered bank account. TaskRabbit only charges service fees from clients, so freelancers will receive a full amount of the rate they charge.

Finding freelance work doesn't have to be complicated. Most sites only require you to sign up for an account and build a profile. Just don't forget to double-check how each of them works before signing up for an account. Consider the payment system, withdrawal method, and service fee.

CHAPTER FOUR

Find Your Niche, Boost Your Skills and Invest in Trainings



While a typical employee only has to be good at their primary skill, as a VA or freelancer, you need to learn all sorts of other skills to accommodate an increasingly demanding workload. It's certain that overtime, you can take your career to the next level by learning new skills. Doing this helps you develop in your field and stand out in competitive environments such as the Freelancing industry.

In order to determine which abilities to hone and what courses or training to pursue, you must first assess yourself and determine your area of expertise. Firstly, write down at least 5 personal interests, then write down 5 industries that you'd like to perform work for. If one interest matches an industry, boom you have a niche. If more than one match, order them by what interests you most. Secondly, you can ask the following questions to yourself.

1. What kind of work do I enjoy most?

While this list of questions is not in any particular order, I think it's critical to address the question of work satisfaction first. For me, everything hinges on this question. If you choose a freelance niche you don't enjoy, you're stuck doing work you hate for the foreseeable future. In fact, you could even become known as the "go-to" person for work you despise. That would be an utter failure.

Start by asking yourself: what kind of freelance work could I see myself doing for the rest of my career? Of course, you don't have to stick to it forever (that's a long time), but it's good to start with work in a freelance niche you actually enjoy.

2. What kind of work already pays me well?

Enjoying your work doesn't pay the bills. And your freelance career is a business after all—not a hobby. So the next question to ask yourself is which freelance niche has the highest revenue potential. Depending on where you are in your freelance career, you probably already have clients that hire you for a variety of different services. I know one freelancer who offers video services, social media management, and copywriting—three very different skills. But as you're trying to nail down your freelance niche, consider which services you already get paid more for.

If it's also a work you enjoy, you're well on your way to finding the perfect freelance niche. If not, take a look at the second and third most lucrative services you offer. If there's still not a match, you'll have to hatch a game plan to slowly transition your current high-paying services out of your repertoire as your new freelance niche takes priority.

3. What do clients come to me for?

It's important to ask yourself which freelance niche service your clients already come to you for. If you're already known in some circles, finding clients becomes much less difficult and word of mouth marketing can become a huge source of new business for you. You don't have to stick with the same niche you've already got clients in, but it can definitely be a major advantage if you're already known as somewhat of an expert in a certain area.

4. Who can I already effectively reach?

Once you've identified a few freelance niche ideas that clients already come to you for, it will be helpful to determine a freelance niche in which you have easy access to potential clients. If you already have a great presence in a certain social media group, consider identifying what that group might hire a freelancer for and explore related freelance niches.

5. Which freelance niches are currently growing?

If you plan to freelance for a long time, it's smart to do some research to find which freelance niches are growing—and which are declining. For example, a freelance designer could opt for a freelance niche in UX/UI design (which is booming) as opposed to print design (which has been on a steady decline for years).

Of course, some declining specialties also cause a sort of exodus of freelancers from that particular niche, which could put you in a nice place. But when the overall pie is shrinking each year, even a larger slice of pie eventually has an end.

After you figure out your niche, you need to invest in learning. If you're thinking "I don't need to improve, I already know what I'm doing," you are making a big mistake. It's our responsibility, as professional freelancers, not only to stay on top of our market but also to upskill our knowledge and, if possible, to add skills that can be beneficial to our daily job. In a competitive world like the one we live in, the only way to stay afloat is by continually improving in what we do and, at the same, by increasing the skills we have to

find more opportunities. Hence, you can learn from the following ways to boost your skills.

FIND THE GAPS IN YOUR SKILLS

Finding a gap in your skills is well needed because it allows you to focus on what you should improve. If you are a digital marketer, you may not know anything about affiliate marketing or PPC. If you are a Virtual Assistant, you may don't know anything about invoicing. The gaps are the things you may want to improve to get better at your jobs.

KNOW YOUR STRENGTHS

Aside from checking your skill gaps, it's also a good idea to focus on your strength, both personally and professionally. Finding your strengths will allow you to decide what you want to improve or learn, based on how strong you feel you'll be in that specific area. If you find yourself reliable with numbers, you may decide to improve your analytics skills, for example.

By combining all of these analyses, you'll have a full picture of yourself, your career and what your next move(s) could be.

LOOK FOR CHALLENGES

The more comfortable you are in what you do, the less you will grow personally and professionally. Once you've understood what your strengths and weaknesses are, it's time to be bald: challenge yourself in a way that is tangible, and that can offer you rewards both on a long and a short term. You may decide to learn a new coding language and give yourself milestones to

reach every time you learn something new. Or even a new language, to see the signs of progress over time.

Or to start a new side project to gain experience in sales, if you don't have any and you want to open up your horizons. Challenging ourselves is one of the best things we can do as freelancers, and it's something that will give us the strength to become better.

LOOK FOR MENTORS

Mentors are a fundamental part of the learning process: none of us has information and skills on everything, and for this reason, having the support of someone competent in something you don't know but that you want to learn is a move you need to consider.

There are two types of mentors: the famous and well-known and the people behind the curtains. The first species is what everyone is looking for: they're famous, well-known and they seem to have all the skills you may need. They're usually expensive, and very often they're way less competent in what they do than what we think.

The reason is that these people love to call themselves "guru," and the majority of what they do is positioning themselves as guru and working on their brand. **Focus on getting mentorship from someone that may not be famous** but has the skills that you don't have but also the proof of these skills: you'll notice that your knowledge will improve quickly.

Also, you may consider becoming a mentor for someone else, to exchange knowledge and improve together.

STAY CURIOUS AND IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS

Curiosity is fundamental for a freelancer, and only if we stay curious, we can learn new things and improve our skills. Being interested means being able to be surprised by something unexpected, by people and their ideas, by items and products that we don't know, simply by real life. Sometimes, learning lessons are hidden in things we know very well. Still, **if we don't train our eyes and our minds to be curious and explore**, we will easily forget how everything influences our life, personally and professionally.

ENROLL IN COURSES, WORKSHOPS, MASTERCLASSES

Courses, masterclasses, and workshops are the ideal solution to pick up additional skills or improve existing ones. You can go for an in-person class or an online class, for something that will allow you to earn a certificate or for something that will only be for your good.

If you've decided to improve your skills as a freelancer, **these are a few websites you should consult and use to move forward with your career**. Choose the one(s) you like the most or the ones that are more connected with what you do and explore at your pace to find the best resources for you.

- **UDEMY**

Udemy is one of the best online places where you can learn new skills and improve existing ones. There are a plethora of courses for everyone at

every level and in every possible niche. Some of the courses are extremely thin and useless; others are worth the investment and the time. Make sure you choose Udemy courses with high ranking and a good number of students and read the reviews: these are the best ways to get valuable directions. You can buy every class you want, without a recurring subscription.

- **COURSERA**

Coursera is a different type of online “school”: in fact, it collects courses organized by Universities Worldwide, and for this reason, the quality is quite high. Users can avail of a 7-day trial period and start one of the courses before signing up for a subscription that will include as many classes as they like. The majority of the courses can give you a certification of completion, and there are also many specializations and full-time courses that will provide you with a valid certificate for your career.

- **SEMRUSH**

If you work in online marketing, you want to check SemRush’s masterclasses that are offered for free. They are mostly focused on content and SEO. Still, they are so easy to understand and to digest, that enrolling is a good move also for people not in this industry or for people interested in improving with content.

- **TEFL CERTIFICATE**

If you want to improve your chances to find a job as a freelancer and eventually make money teaching English to others, get a TEFL Certificate

online. There are three institutes I recommend: The TEFL Academy, Premier TEFL and TEFLPros. Go for the one you think best suits your needs.

- **SKILLSHARE**

Skillshare is another platform where you can enroll in classes and courses of every type. Skillshare's focus is on creatives, so you will find a lot of content created explicitly for freelancers to give them not only skills but also new ideas.

Gaining fresh ideas and a new set of skills, or revamped skills, will undoubtedly become more and more desirable and your chances to find a remote job will be way higher than the usual. So, even if learning and improving skills require time and dedication, the end result can be extremely good.

CHAPTER FIVE

Consider Project-based Jobs



Assuming that you've already put forth all of your effort in sending out applications, but no clients have expressed interest in them. Apply for some project-based positions. It may not be the long-term work you were

hoping for, but for some beginner Virtual Assistants or freelancers like yourself, the experience and abilities gained from these project-based tasks are crucial in securing your dream clients.

In fact, applying for project-based jobs is a good back up plan not only for beginners in the freelancing industry but also to those who already have existing clients. Why? If you unexpectedly lose your full time client now, project-based jobs can help you to recover and can serve as your other source of income.

For example, if you are working with one client and you're paid regularly. You can never be certain how long you'll be working for him. No one knows about the future. The contract period of a VA or freelancer with a client always has a termination point. If a client does not renew your contract, then your income suffers a setback. Some may continue to acquire work, but the payout from these remaining clients may not be enough to justify the amount of time spent on these projects.

The career of a freelancer always has uncertainties. Unless you have secured a guaranteed long-term engagement with a client, financial independence may remain elusive. Thus, you must have contingencies in place in the event that the volume of work decreases. These contingencies are options that you should consider as alternative sources of income until freelance work becomes regular again.

1. Part-time employment

As much as freelancers enjoy the freedom of working in their own hours and in the comforts of their own homes, financial distress may require them to go back to the brick-and-mortar world. Some companies offer part-time work. By definition, part-time work is any job that is fewer than eight hours per day. The outsourcing industry offers several opportunities for those seeking part-time work.

BPO companies are open to hiring part-time workers because the cost per head is low. Moreover, the volume of work per campaign constantly increases. Companies need to fill these seats as soon as possible. The compensation in BPO companies is among the best in the job market. In addition to salary and the usual benefits, incentives and other bonuses are offered to motivate agents to perform well.

The BPO industry is definitely a good source of income for freelancers, and the nature of the job is closely related to what they do. The Philippines also has one of the best career/succession planning programs in global BPO.

2. Business consultancy

If you believe that you have the skills to guide businesses through turbulent times, consultancy can be your calling card. Your skills can be validated with your track record from your clients in freelancing or previous work experiences from the corporate world.

If you already have a website, rewrite the contents to highlight your new service offering. Utilize social media channels and other online platforms to promote your consultancy service. Lastly, go old school and use traditional networking tactics: Call up friends and associates and offer your services or ask for referrals, go door-to-door and leave a marketing kit, and attend networking events and business forums and offer your services.

If your performance record is great and clients give written testimonies, you can make good income as a business consultant. In addition to testimonials, case studies and portfolio can also help you close sales and gain customers.

3. Blogging

When people think of the writing profession, they assume that writers must have a degree in literature, English, or comprehensive writing. Although having the requisite skills in writing is a must, delivering relevant and engaging content is more important than these skills.

Blogging is a skill that you can develop with consistency. If you have a website, make sure that it has a blog page with functioning social media sharing buttons. Then, follow a strict blogging schedule of posting content at least once a week. In general, the more often you blog, the higher the probability of returns is. However, you need to remember that unless you work really hard on promoting your blog, there's no way that you'll achieve success with it.

The statistics on blogging are very encouraging for businesses. It may take a while, but you can be assured that with consistency, your efforts will yield positive returns on your career. You can also offer blogging services to

friends, associates, and existing clients. Many people understand its benefits, but they do not have the time to write.

Depending on your skills and interests, you can find many alternative sources of income or side hustles. However, this requires you to manage your time well. It may be difficult at first, but once a system is in place, you can work efficiently and productively from the comforts of your small home-office.

If there's any tip that you should take to heart, it is this: Be patient. Side hustles, alternative sources of income or project-based jobs are sometimes hard to come by. When you get a project, you'll have to deal with tight deadlines and even difficult clients. Therefore, you need to be very patient and ready to take in feedback, and to act quickly. Good communication skills will come in handy in dealing with clients or customers. Who knows? You might deal with the same people again, and they can even recommend you to others. You'll establish a network of potential clients in the future.

Be kind and helpful in every interaction. This will elevate your personal brand as a pleasant person that's always willing to go the extra mile – for clients and peers alike. Helping people, even if they don't seem like the ideal client, builds goodwill within your industry. Remember that how you act and what you give out to the world will come back to you ten folds.

CHAPTER SIX

Avoid Applying to Agencies or Clients Whose Offers Aren't What You Deserve

AVOID APPLYING TO AGENCIES OR CLIENTS
WHOSE OFFERS AREN'T WHAT YOU DESERVED

NO TO LOWBALL OFFERS



BE AWARE OF SCAMS



It is true that you can easily gain clients if you apply to most agencies but as much as possible, refrain from applying to one. If there's anything that sucks about everyone in the world deciding to become a freelancer, it's the

fact that there are agencies and clients who pay less than what you really deserve.

Oftentimes, these types of agencies and clients pay less because they know or assume that since you are new in the industry, you're inexperienced for the position or project. Therefore, most of them take advantage of that fact. Understandably, some inexperienced VAs jump at the chance to work for some agencies or clients even if the pay is very low because of the comments or ratings they can get from the clients but if you can, never settle for less.

Another common instance is when another freelancer, such as a friend of yours, assigns you a task from one of their own clients. Your friend is likely to offer you less money than the original offer from his or her client. You'd rather acquire project-based work than accept a low-paying offer. Never lower yourself if you don't deserve the offer based on what you can do, even if you are inexperienced.

Satisfactory or better pay exists. They're everywhere. You may be looking at one right now. They're on freelance job sites. They're in your community. The person sitting next to you at the coffee shop might have good, even high-paying work for you. The possibilities of getting paid — and paid well — as a freelancer are endless. Not as endless as getting asked to work for cheap or free, but endless nevertheless. Hold out for these opportunities.

You're better off getting a server gig in a restaurant or bar a few days a week while you wait for your freelance career to take off than you are falling for the trap of "we're not paying you, but you'll get a ton of exposure!" This is

unacceptable. The only exceptions I can think of — your own blog or content platforms where you have to build a track record and audience to generate the views and engagement necessary to produce meaningful revenue. If you're starting a business outside of content, the equivalent might be doing work for people to get some word of mouth going. Just be careful and make sure you have a strategic plan. A path to revenue, not a desperate attempt. In the latter scenario, you'll just get taken advantage of.

I have found that saying no leads to one of two things — the same client coming back with a reasonable offer or another opportunity that pays well-appearing out of nowhere. Most of all, you want to set a reasonable rate for yourself in your head and the marketplace. There's no better way to get stuck in low-paying jobs as a freelancer — particularly in content — than to crush your self-esteem by taking low-paying jobs.

Though you have control over whether or not to apply for agencies, there are instances that clients would reach out and convince you to accept their projects with low or unacceptable offers. When this happens, you don't necessarily have to turn them down right away and close your doors. You can get ideas below on what to do and what to say.

When they ask you to work for free

One request that truly makes my blood boil is the request to work for free. If you've already done a consultation call, interview, and sent over a proposal, and the client then shares that they don't have a budget for this and asks you to work for free, here's how you can reply.

"Thank you for your interest in working with me. At this time, I'm not taking on any unpaid work. However, here's where you can check out a resource that shares client testimonials and the immense value that comes from working with me. I hope to work with you in the future and if now isn't the right time, feel free to keep me in mind for the future."

Recently, I shared this exact script twice. One potential client was able to find \$2,000 in their budget to pay for my services. The other potential client wrote back saying that they'd be in touch if they could afford it — I never heard back from them.

When they want you to accept a lower rate

If you receive emails from potential clients who ask you to negotiate your set rate to a very low price, you can respond by using the script below.

"Thank you for your reply and for reviewing my proposal. We've carefully constructed all of our pricing to reflect our value, experience, and unique set of offerings. This is the best price we can do for the scope of work we are offering. If you'd like to revisit the proposal, we can find ways to adjust the services to meet the price you're suggesting."

This response allows you to save time and weed out potential clients who aren't willing to pay you what you deserve.

When they agree to your rate but want more services included

Occasionally potential clients will agree to a set rate but ask that a handful of additional services be included for free. When that happens, here's how you can respond.

"Thank you for your reply and for reviewing my proposal. This is our set rate for the scope of work we're offering and we're happy to construct a new proposal with updated pricing that reflects those additional services and their set costs." This reply shows your boundaries as a business owner or freelancer, and allows the potential client to see that from the start.

Stay firm on your pricing and be willing to let clients walk away if they don't want to pay what you're asking for. Succeeding in your career is knowing your value and getting paid in a consistent way that reflects that.

Client negotiations can be difficult, but it happens all the time. One thing you should remember is that just because a client throws out a low number, it doesn't mean he or she is being cheap; rather, it just may be that they may not know the value of your expertise. Also, it doesn't always mean that the client is trying to insult you, either.

If you can't have an agreement that is fair to both of you, offer options in your services that can match the client's realistic budget or professionally decline the project. Even if a client low balls you, you still want to be professional about it. Whether or not he or she ends up becoming your client, you can still have your reputation intact.

On top of low offers, VAs or freelancers often fall into scams as well. Finding a project and bidding for a client's work can be an exciting process. Yet occasionally a fraudulent client will post a project, causing you trouble. As a freelancer, it is important that you are able to spot the red flags and early

warning signs of these projects. Here are the most common scams you will encounter.

Client is asking money or registration fee for you to get the job

Never agree to send money to a client. You should get paid for accepting and completing the project, not the other way around.

Asking lots of free work samples

Be wary if your client is asking for more than one or two samples of your work. Although it may be important to demonstrate your ability to a potential client, it's easy to fall into the trap of giving away free work to scammers. Avoid agreeing to too many free samples - negotiate on a price and then have a Milestone Payment created for it.

Refuse To Accept An Agreement Or Contract

It should be common sense for freelancers to ask for a work contract or agreement before starting any work. There might be some exceptions if you can be sure that the employer is trustworthy. The only way of knowing that is by asking other freelancers about the employer in question. Many freelancers assume that because they are getting work through a work platform, that they can simply accept work without any agreements in place. That's simply not true. That's why it's important to always communicate with an employer through the internal messaging system of your freelancing platform, that way it all stays recorded.

Unclear payment agreement

If your client refuses to start a Milestone Payment or avoids questions about their payment, then it may be best to think twice before accepting the project. Don't fall into the trap of starting a project without an agreed upon Milestone or Secured Payment. Ensure that you've spoken to your client about their budget, how much you will be awarded at the completion of the project and have a Milestone Payment created for you.

Being asked to pay for tools and company softwares

Never start a project with a client if you have been asked to purchase particular software or equipment from them. All resources should be easily accessible to you without needing to pay for them. Be sure to clarify this with your client if he or she has asked you to purchase any equipment.

Client has many negative reviews

One of the most important things you should do before accepting a project is check their user profile and any reviews that they have provided for previous projects. If the client is fairly new to the site or has received negative reviews, it most likely means trouble. Steer clear of clients that have received negative reviews and don't be afraid to ask questions to new clients.

You're requested to provide your IDs for verification

Do not provide any form of ID or documentation to a client even if they are asking for it. Scammers are oftentimes successful when they have asked

to “verify” an identity and are given access to ID and other documents. Avoid starting a project with a client if this is one of their prerequisites. You can tell them to check your account which has already been verified by the freelancing platform you have signed up for.

Client is asking you to click and access links

Be mindful if your client has asked you to access a link that requires you to enter your login details. Scammers often attempt to obtain sensitive information including usernames and passwords for malicious intent. Avoid a phishing attack by being proactive and aware of your client's behavior.

When it sounds too good to be true

The biggest red flag when looking for freelance work is when a job sounds too good to be true. For example, the employer offers very easy work for a high pay rate. It's easy for a company to find simple work for low cost, so there is no reason why they would pay a high rate for it. What they are doing is trying to make you feel special and excited that you've found such an easy opportunity. Look deeper into the employer profiles and you will surely find more red flags.

Many times when we get started, we are so excited to get new jobs that we forget to look at the red flags. But once you know what these are, it's easier to feel confident with getting work. You simply have to be prepared.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Self Care



When you're on your game as a freelancer, there is nothing that can stop you. However, burnout can happen quickly, and it sneaks up on you. Ask any seasoned freelancer. They've had to learn the hard way how it can adversely affect a thriving career. The good news is that you don't have to wait for burnout to happen to you. You can check below the simplest yet most

effective self-care tips that can help you go a long way in making you and your career more sustainable.

Put aside time for people in your life

We're social animals, like it or not. And some social connections are pretty meaningful. Don't get so lost in your freelance hustle that you forget to get in some face time with your family and friends. That means putting the laptop away, or whatever your primary freelance tool is, and talk with your spouse, or your children, or parents, or roommates, or an old school chum. Whoever you choose to make face time with, make it a priority. This will realign your brain a bit and pull you out of work mode. The result will be a more creative and engaged mindset when you go back to work, plus the added bonus of knowing people are out there.

Time with other people can be therapeutic. Take advantage of that. And time is not an endless commodity. It'd be a shame to waste it. And while you're taking some time to be with your loved ones, remember that you, yourself, count as a loved one. Step away from work from time to time to just be with yourself if that's what will work best for you.

Get enough sleep

This is something many people find way too easy to forget or ignore. I know many freelancers, and it's a little alarming at times how working around the clock has become some kind of fetishized ideal. I place a lot of the blame for this with those Instagram hustle gurus who shame people for not working every waking moment to "build their wealth" or "build their brand." Of course,

if you end up burning out because you're overworking yourself, then — boom — no more brand. No more worth.

Look, I get it. Being a VA or freelancer needs hard work — especially during those early years as you're putting together a dependable client list and reputation. The hustle seems nonstop if you want to keep the lights on. But doing all of that takes energy, and energy is not limitless. We already talked about how scheduling time for yourself and time with your loved ones is necessary to avoid burnout. Scheduling sufficient time for sleep is equally as important. Maybe even more important.

You'll be more productive if you get up an hour after the sun rises, nicely refreshed, than you will if you try to drag yourself out of bed two hours before dawn. You could work 12 hours of exhausted, sloppy, shoddy work, or you could enjoy eight hours of well-rested, refreshed, and quality work. Seems like a no-brainer. Sleep deprivation is not a badge of honor. You don't have to prove yourself to anyone by denying yourself a natural need such as sleep. If you want accolades and better-paying clients, give yourself the rest you need so you can produce the best work possible.

Proper Food and Exercise

You really can't get this piece of advice often enough. It's a toss-up which freelancers suffer more from. Lack of proper sleep, or a lack of adequate nutrition and exercise. Like sleep, it's easy to forget to eat properly and get some exercise from time to time. The danger with this, though, is that forgetting now and then eventually turns into forgetting quite often. Then, before you know it, nutrition and exercise are forgotten ghosts of the past.

Then you start to spiral into all sorts of health and energy issues that affect the quality of your work and productivity.

Fifteen or twenty minutes a day to take a walk around the block doesn't seem like too much to ask, does it? Do it early in the morning, and you'll get your blood pumping and your energy levels up to attack the day. Choosing snacks that aren't full of carbs and empty calories will sustain you when you need that energy the most. And drink plenty of water. Hydration counts. Save the unhealthy snacks for the weekend or your next day off. Try to eat healthier on your workdays, and remember to move around from time to time. Your body and your work will thank you.

Indulge in a hobby

How often do you think about your work? Maybe a better question would be... How often do you not think about your work? Diversifying the focus of your attention is a useful tool to maintain your stamina in the freelance world. Time spent on an activity not related to your freelance gig, side hustle, or work from home situation is not time wasted. Instead, it's an opportunity to strengthen your mind and your creativity.

If you can spend half an hour a day on a hobby, that's good enough. If, perhaps, a couple of days a week you give a hobby or other interest even more time, then all the better. If you're not sure what you could be doing each week as a way to take a mental and spiritual break from the daily grind, consider taking up reading for pleasure (no business books), painting (watercolors take up little space), learning an instrument (lots of videos on

youtube to get you started), doing picture puzzles, or even backyard archery (hey, if you have space, why not?).

Put the work down for a little bit and go do something else. Your freelance tasks will still be there when you get back.

Treat yourself

You work hard. You deserve a reward. Really, it's as simple as that. Your self-indulgence doesn't even need to cost money. It could be something as simple as a day off. Or taking a morning or two to sleep in. Or spending extra time with your family. A reward system — even a simple system — can bolster your spirits and keep you going even when things have been a bit of a grind lately.

Meditate

Self-reflection and self-meditation are some of the most effective methods for rejuvenating ourselves. Meditation is a mindfulness and concentration activity that can help you learn more about yourself and the world around you. It can help you relax your thoughts and properly assess your life if you want to better understand yourself and experience self-discovery. We can think of things, critical details that we need in our profiles, cover letters, and other documents if our minds are quiet and

There are times when our minds and brains are inundated by difficulties, situations, or other aspects of our daily life, causing us to lose

concentration and see a clearer image of what we want in our lives. If your mind is racing with ideas, take a break.

"I've already submitted impressive cover letters and portfolios, but no one ever bothers to contact me or even show any interest in my work? ". You may wonder whether something is wrong with your skills, or if you are unsuitable for the position you are looking for. If you're worried about a situation, take a deep breath and practice self-meditation in your spare time. This exercise can be completed in one hour per day.

How to Meditate: Simple Meditation for Beginners

1. Sit or lie comfortably. You may even want to invest in a meditation chair or cushion.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Make no effort to control your breath; simply breathe naturally.
4. Focus your attention on your breathing and on how your body moves with each inhalation and exhalation.

Taking self-care into account isn't a new idea, but it's one often lost in the mad shuffle of the never-ending hustle of freelance life. Just remember that you set the pace. You're the boss. And like a good boss, you have to be able to think a year down the road. Is the way you're living right now sustainable? If not, how can you make things better? You owe it to yourself and your clients to be just as functioning a year or two from now as you are today. That starts and ends with self-care.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Never Give Up on Your Dreams and Don't Lose Hope



When things seem to be getting worse, there will be times when surrendering or giving up seems like your only option especially if you have done everything and yet, clients are not responding. We could wonder what's missing, or why no one has ever bothered to reach out or show interest in our applications.

As for me, if I want to do something significant in my life, I will put in the necessary effort. Never give up on your aspirations and dreams. You can take a moment to admit you're tired, relax a little, unwind a little, and then return with great self-confidence and a good outlook. Perhaps breathing fresh air near the coastline would help; the sea breeze will neutralize the negative ions in our bodies, allowing us to relieve stress that has built up over time. A nature hike or at least an hour of exercise per day will also benefit you since it is a terrific way to boost our brain and body performance. After you've completed all of these, return your attention to the things that matter to you.

Pray and seek wisdom from the Almighty above. We don't know what He has planned for us yet. Perhaps He is planning something far more remarkable for us than we can imagine. Have faith in Him. But don't give up on what you've already started. Always keep Him in mind in all you do. Don't ask Him why you aren't successful right now. Trials, rejections, and failures are not meant to discourage us from pursuing our goals. Instead, those are meant to make us stronger and better people in the future.

When you're just starting out at something, the first few months would always be difficult. Sometimes you just don't quite understand *how* difficult it is until you're desperately trying to keep your head above water while you learn on the fly. You heard that it takes months to land a job as a VA or freelancer and that you barely make anything for the first year (or more!). You understand that you'll be facing rejection here and there. You'll feel demoralized, your courage will take a knock, as well as your self-esteem. You'll have moments of incredible self-doubt. There will be days when you will

feel like you don't have what it takes to be a freelancer and you'll want to give it all up.

But don't. Really! **You have to keep going and you can succeed — there's no reason to abandon your dream.** Here are what you can do so you can keep going when everything gets rough:

1. Put the voices into a box (and lock the lid)

You know those voices in your head, the ones screaming horribly malicious words at you? Those voices that keep telling you that you're not fit to be a freelancer and you need to quit? Those are just thoughts in your head and the best thing to do is pack those voices in a box and lock the lid tightly. Almost everyone believes their doubtful internal voice every now and then.

Here's a meditation trick: turn your discouraging thoughts into clouds in the sky. Watch them as they drift by. They don't have any bearing on your actual being because they're just thoughts. It'll take practice, but the imagery can help.

2. Take a deep breath

Really. Right now. Take a deep breath. Take another one. Deep breath in, deep breath out. Breathing helps you take a step back. It allows you to step out of your current head space so you're not so lost in your thoughts, the details, and your emotions. Sometimes all you need is perspective to keep the dark thoughts at bay and keep going.

3. Just keep going

When all else fails, just keep going. It's true what they say — creating a successful freelance career takes a lot of work and a lot of time. You'll hit countless bumps along the road and there will be many times when you feel like giving up. Even though it may not seem like it, you'll get there. **Every “yes” gets you closer to your goal.**

CONCLUSION

As you are all aware, as Virtual Assistants, you have the freedom to work from wherever you like. You can work from home, a local library, or a café, and you can use any available device, including cell phones, laptops, and netbooks. There was nothing unusual about it. To have your own success story in this industry, you only need the correct mindset, attitude, and skills.

Following what you learned from this ebook can help you stay on track, motivated, and be successful as a freelancer. Keep reminding yourself that choosing to freelance is a great decision, envision all the accomplishments you may achieve and keep working hard. It will all be worth it in the end.