**30.04.2025 - Video\_Transcription**

[Attendee 2] (0:10 - 0:12)

It's warmer outside than in my house.

[Richard Evans] (0:13 - 0:18)

Yeah, yeah, good stuff. So, good to see you Francine, how are you?

[Attendee 4] (0:19 - 0:23)

I'm fine, I'm fine. Up here in Bonney, Scotland, I have the blinds on because it's so bright.

[Richard Evans] (0:24 - 0:24)

Really?

[Attendee 4] (0:24 - 0:26)

Sometimes I have to wear sunglasses in the house.

[Richard Evans] (0:28 - 0:30)

That's a rarity in Scotland, I would imagine.

[Attendee 4] (0:30 - 0:35)

Yeah, well, yeah, yeah, yeah, when the sun shines it's really bright, I don't know, for some reason.

[Richard Evans] (0:35 - 0:38)

Yeah, yeah. And how's your week going?

[Attendee 4] (0:39 - 0:56)

Good, busy, busy, I think, because I do my online stuff with Jamaica, so I was saying to Daniel, Jamaica is just waking up now, and today's the last day of the month, so lots of different little things, admin, accounting-wise, that I have to get on top of.

[Richard Evans] (0:57 - 0:59)

Danielle, you're going to be fed up with seeing the sight of me.

[Attendee 2] (1:01 - 1:15)

Yeah, it's actually perfect timing after some of the things we discussed on, Yeah, good. So, there I am, talking about what I'm going to be handing over to my EA, and then I've come home and thought, hmm, how do I actually do that? So, this is really good timing.

[Richard Evans] (1:16 - 1:26)

Good, excellent. Yeah, well, we're going to cover some of that, some of that stuff off today. And what's the time?

Have we, 12 o'clock, so we'll give it a couple of minutes to allow people to join.

[Attendee 2] (1:27 - 1:29)

There's usually about a dozen of us, isn't there?

[Richard Evans] (1:31 - 1:35)

Yeah, yeah, I think so. It's always the same people, isn't it, generally?

[Attendee 2] (1:35 - 1:36)

Generally, yeah.

[Richard Evans] (1:36 - 1:43)

Yeah, and more from the programme than from Advanced?

[Attendee 2] (1:43 - 1:44)

Much more, yeah.

[Richard Evans] (1:44 - 1:50)

Yeah, yeah, good. No, well, we'll give them a few minutes.

[Attendee 2] (1:56 - 2:01)

Well, it'll be of greater benefit to us if it's just the two of us. It'll be like private coaching.

[Richard Evans] (2:01 - 2:03)

Do you like my virtual background?

[Attendee 2] (2:05 - 2:06)

Is that virtual?

[Richard Evans] (2:06 - 2:07)

It's a virtual background.

[Attendee 4] (2:08 - 2:09)

Really? I thought it was your office.

[Richard Evans] (2:09 - 2:27)

It is my, my office is like, you know, this looks like a bomb's hit it all the time. There's stuff all over the place. No, so that is actually my front room.

It is my lounge. So, I thought, well, I'll take a picture of my lounge so that it reflects my personality.

[Attendee 2] (2:28 - 2:29)

That's a great idea.

[Richard Evans] (2:30 - 2:50)

And then use it as a virtual background. And the idea with the TV there is that when I'm doing some video recordings, it can be used to put like PowerPoint presentations on and things like that and run video clips. I've not actually got that, you know, that into it yet, but that was the intention.

[Attendee 4] (2:51 - 2:52)

Perfect.

[Richard Evans] (2:52 - 2:53)

Yeah.

[Attendee 5] (2:53 - 3:03)

Hi, Neil. Good to see you. Hello, everybody.

How are we all doing? Yeah, all good. How's your week going?

[Attendee 6] (3:04 - 3:06)

It's going all right, actually. Sun's shining. Can't be better, right?

[Attendee 5] (3:07 - 3:08)

Yeah, yeah, indeed.

[Attendee 6] (3:10 - 3:17)

Indeed. Very excited for this. I haven't been on a midweek mentoring for a while.

So, you're a privileged man. Well done.

[Richard Evans] (3:17 - 3:19)

Ah, wow. I do feel privileged.

[Attendee 6] (3:22 - 3:23)

Hi, Freddie.

[Attendee 5] (3:24 - 3:31)

Say again. How's it going? All right?

Yeah, all good. Thanks. I'm working.

[Richard Evans] (3:31 - 3:32)

How about you?

[Attendee 3] (3:32 - 3:32)

Yeah, all good.

[Richard Evans] (3:33 - 3:38)

All good. Excellent. Get this to work.

Yeah, we're good. Yeah.

[Attendee 3] (3:39 - 3:48)

I thought you were on your phone. Are you on your phone? Yeah, whenever I connect onto Zoom, it does it on my phone automatically.

And then I'm just sort of trying to figure out how to get it back to my computer. But we're there.

[Richard Evans] (3:48 - 4:00)

I think you can set your default camera, which can be your phone. Yeah. Oh, yeah, I probably, wow.

Let's give it another minute or so.

[Attendee 2] (4:03 - 4:05)

You look like you're in a site office there, Freddie.

[Attendee 3] (4:07 - 4:09)

Yeah, unfortunately, it's just my office.

[Attendee 2] (4:10 - 4:13)

Is that a home or is it actually a site somewhere?

[Attendee 3] (4:14 - 4:26)

I know, it's like a sort of co-working place. And yeah, they just leave it ready for you to sort of kit out and make your own. I just haven't got around to it yet.

Yeah.

[Richard Evans] (4:28 - 4:29)

Good. Hi, Kate.

[Attendee 1] (4:30 - 4:30)

Hi, there.

[Richard Evans] (4:31 - 4:31)

Hi, welcome.

[Attendee 1] (4:32 - 4:37)

Thank you. Are we all enjoying the sunshine?

[Richard Evans] (4:39 - 4:43)

I will later. I've been stuck in the office all morning.

[Attendee 2] (4:43 - 4:48)

I'm actually cold in my office. I've got my jacket on. That's why I'm outside.

[Richard Evans] (4:51 - 37:47)

It's like that, my office in the morning, it's in the shade. So it's cold. And then in the afternoon, the sun's streaming and it gets roasting hot.

Right, I think we will make a start. I am, I think this is down for half an hour. But I haven't got to rush off.

If you need to go at 12.30, that's absolutely fine. I won't take offence if I'm still going. But if I am running over slightly, I've got a bit more than half an hour that I can give you.

So thank you very much indeed for coming. I'm excited today to talk to you about world-class executive assistants. I'm going to run a bit of a PowerPoint presentation.

So I'm going to share my screen. And there we go. So for those of you that don't know me, it's clicked all right, has it?

You can see my screen? Yeah, good. Okay.

So just a little bit about me, if you don't know me, I have been investing in property for many, many years since about the mid-90s. At the same time as building my property portfolio, I also held a senior job in the corporate sector. And in 2017, I decided that I wanted to quit the rat race and focus on my property business.

And one of the things that I had heard about was virtual assistants from the Philippines. I knew that if I wanted to grow and scale my business, I couldn't do everything myself. I knew I had to outsource.

And I'd heard about virtual assistants. So I thought I'd try a VA from the Philippines myself. And I really applied everything that I knew, my experience from the corporate world, to working with my VA and building the business.

And that meant not just having a virtual assistant, but having systems, processes, using technology, et cetera, to really automate as much as possible what was being done. And a lot of people at the same time, I did mastermind, Simon Zich's mastermind. And people were saying to me that they tried working with a virtual assistant and it hadn't worked out.

And could I help them put the systems in place? So I started initially doing a bit of mentoring and just helping people put things in place so they could grow and scale. And then people started asking me, could I help them recruit a virtual assistant and train them up?

So that all led to me starting Bababum, which was 2019. From completing PIN, I then went on to Property Entrepreneur in 2018. So back then, there was no program in advance.

It was just one. I started on that. And then the second year, advance started.

And I've been on that ever since. I get a massive amount of value from Property Entrepreneur. And just following the blueprints.

So that's me. So what we're going to cover today, we're going to be talking about what exactly is an executive assistant? And what's the difference between an executive assistant and a world-class EA?

We're going to be talking about how their mindset is different to just a general type VA. We're going to be talking about recruitment and training. We're going to be talking about tools and technology.

And then at the end, I'm going to be sharing my number one game changer with you. OK, it's the most important thing that most people don't know. And I'm going to share a success story.

And then we'll do some Q&A at the end. So everybody happy with that? Good stuff.

So this, by the way, you've probably heard Adam talk about this lady here. This is Marielle. She is Adam's EA.

She's also my EA as well. So what exactly is an executive assistant? So simply put, an EA is a highly skilled remote professional who can support people like you, busy entrepreneurs, handling the high-level admin and also strategic tasks.

So vision, long-term tasks so that you can really focus on growing your business. Specifically today, I'm going to be talking about Philippines-based VAs. The Philippines is the global capital when it comes to outsourcing.

And there are many reasons why. A lot of people have this misconception that you go to the Philippines for cheap people. That is not the reason to go to the Philippines.

The reason to go to the Philippines and why it is so popular is because you get fantastic people that have got a fantastic work ethic. They're hardworking. They're honest.

They're loyal. You will get great results. That is the reason why the Philippines is the global capital.

If you're looking for cheap people, then you can go to the Philippines and you can recruit them off the internet, but you're not going to get good people. You get what you pay for. So if you want value, that's the reason to go to the Philippines.

But pay a decent wage and you will attract decent people and they will be loyal and they will perform wonderfully for you. You can expect them to stick around for a number of years. You know, when you are recruiting, when you are taking people on, you are going into a business relationship where both people have to win.

Now, to get somebody of the caliber, I just googled this on Google before we started. According to Read, to get a top executive assistant in the UK, you now have to pay between £85,000 and £97,000 per annum. And that's just the salary.

That doesn't include national insurance and all of the other costs that go alongside that. So, you know, these are high caliber people that you're getting and they do represent a cost that is affordable for people like us that are running small businesses. So what are the sort of things that an executive assistant will do for you?

So typical admin tasks will include things like managing your calendars, inboxes, schedules, drafting out communications for you, preparing and presenting reports for you, coordinating meetings, making travel arrangements, supporting project management, and acting as a liaison between you and your stakeholders. There are two sides to a world-class EA. Okay, first of all, there's the admin stuff, the day-to-day repetitive things that need to be done to a high standard, but they're quite routine.

But then there's the strategic stuff, okay? So this is when they're helping you plan and execute so that you can grow your business efficiently. So the main difference between an EA and a world-class EA is a world-class EA, they are in front of you and they're not behind you.

So your typical VA, you are turning around to them and you're giving them tasks, you're giving them things to do and they're going away, they're doing that task, they're completing it and then they're coming back to you once that's done. A VA, sorry, a world-class EA is doing stuff before it even gets to you. So they are very proactive, they're thinking ahead, they're not just responding to what you're giving them.

They've got a very high discretion level, so they're handling sensitive and confidential information and your business is your business and nobody else's, so they expect that confidence. They are implementing systems for you, they're running through checklists, so if you've got My House, they're running that for you, they're making sure that things are getting completed on time, efficiently, they are, and costs as well. So they can be, as a project manager in a project management role, they're making sure that things are getting done on time but also within the budgets that have been set up.

And they're using technology as much as possible to do this, so they are AI tuned, so they're using AI, they're using the AI tools to be highly efficient and to complete work to a very high level. But on Property Entrepreneur, they talk a lot about AI and the main thing that you need to be thinking about with AI is you need to have an AI tuned business, you need to have working for you AI tuned people. Everybody now needs to get AI and to be using it and if you don't, you're going to get left behind.

So virtual assistants that are working the old-fashioned way and not using the AI tools, not even, they need to be experts in using AI tools. If they're not, then their career is going to be very, very short-lived. So when you're recruiting, do make sure that you are finding out what is their level of knowledge.

It needs to go beyond chat GPT. When you are communicating or your EA is communicating with you, they need to be very clear and precise in those communications. They need to have good writing skills.

They need to, again, be using tools such as Grammarly to make sure when they're creating emails, drafting emails, they're running them through Grammarly to make sure that they read correctly and punctuation and everything is all correct. So as I say, they're in front of you, not behind you. They are reacting to stuff before it comes to you and in a lot of cases, they will be dealing with stuff that you're never even going to know about because they are reactive.

When you're recruiting these people, you want to look far beyond their skills, their experience. What you want to be, the most important thing that matters when you're recruiting world-class executive assistants, mindset. It is their mindset.

How do they show up? You know, on time is late. Do they show up early for the interview?

Are they fully prepared? Have they got a good background before you, a good background behind them? Have they got good technology?

Is their camera nice and clear? Is it looking straight at you rather than the camera pointing at the side of their face? Have they got good sound?

Are they asking you lots of questions about your business? Are they really engaging? Are they interested?

Or are they just giving you the answers to your questions that they think you want to hear? A world-class executive assistant is your business partner. They are not just an assistant and they will balance execution with judgment.

So they'll be able to think outside the box and they will be able to think about what do you need to know about and what do you not need to know about? We are entrepreneurs. One of the challenges that you have with executive assistants is they are going to be, generally, they're going to be stills.

Okay, they love details. They want to think things through. They like processes.

They follow those processes. It's unlikely that you are going to get a world-class executive assistant that's a dynamo or a blaze. They are generally going to be stills or possibly tempos.

So they love details. Now, we as entrepreneurs, generally, we're going to be blazes or dynamos and we don't like these details. So this is what I mean that they need to understand that balance between execution and judgment.

They need to understand what do you need to know? What do you care about? And they give you that information.

And they filter out the rest of the stuff, the stuff that you're really not interested in. And it's very hard to find those sorts of people. They think in terms of outcomes, not tasks.

So when you're working with your executive assistant, you don't need to tell them what to do. You don't need to tell them how to do it. You need to tell them this is the outcome that we're looking to achieve and let them go away and worry about how to do it.

They're going to bring you the solutions and not another bunch of problems. So how do you find these people? Well, you can find them on the internet.

There are sites like Online Jobs. PH is probably the biggest one in the Philippines. And you need to be very, very thorough in this recruitment process.

OK, now it all starts off with you're going to identify what are the key things that you want your EA to do for you. And then you've got to write. So did somebody speak?

No? OK. Then you need to write a really thorough job description.

OK, because you're going to get hundreds and hundreds. If you've done a good job description, you will get hundreds and hundreds of applications from people. And nearly all of them will not be appropriate.

So when you do your job description, you want to word your job description to, you know, to really say if you're this sort of person, don't even bother to apply. We are only looking for world class. And then when you get those applications, you really do need to screen them thoroughly.

We get typically, I would think, six to seven hundred applications per month coming to us. Now of those, we probably get 10 maximum that are suitable to come and work for Bum Bum Bum. Of those, world class EA role.

Well, generally, we only get we attract people that can be world class EAs when we do specific postings for those people. And then we have to put them through a lot of training. And once we've done the screening, a lot of training to make sure that they are of the right of the right caliber.

These people are hard to find, very hard to find. As I said earlier, mindset comes first. Also, when you're recruiting, you need to think about, are they the right cultural fit for your business?

OK, so hopefully you've all thought about your business. Who is your client? Who do you want to attract?

What are your values? You've come up with a set of values to attract those clients. Well, your team and your executive assistant, they are representing your business.

So they need to echo those values that you've got. And again, when you're interviewing people, if you don't feel that they're the right cultural fit, you don't think that they can represent your values or they have the same values, their own personal values align with your values. Then again, it's never going to work out.

You need to set for them clear KPIs. On the program, have you covered KPIs yet? Yeah, good.

So you don't need to have lots of them. You know, you just need to have a few. You need to set those KPIs out.

You need to be discussing KPIs when you're interviewing so they know what they're going into. And then you need to monitor those KPIs. If you haven't got standard operating procedures and operation manuals, then you need to get them in place.

Standing SOPs, these are the way that you do things and you don't deviate from that. The only thing that you will do is improve it. You're always going to go forwards and never backwards.

So your standard operating procedures are detailed out in your operations manuals. Now, I've never written an operations manual in my life. So when you've got an executive assistant, this is what they do.

This is a task for your executive assistant as well. They will work out with you what the SOPs are and then they will get on, write the manual. And then as new people come into the organization, then they can train them up.

Tools and technology. So as I said earlier, your EAs, all of your VAs, they need to embrace technology. The world is changing.

And one of the challenges that you're going to have is that typically VAs, EAs, PAs, they're paid by the hour. So that means that when there are tools that are coming along that are allowing them to be highly efficient, AI tools and do things a lot quicker, for some VAs, they start thinking to themselves, well, hold on, I'm now not going to be working so many hours. I'm going to get paid less.

So when I'm talking about mindset, it's the wrong mindset. So you need to have teams, VAs and EAs and PAs that are thinking about how they want to be highly efficient. And by using tools, they can do more for you.

Their hours don't necessarily have to reduce down. What they can do is they can have a lot much higher output and do more to a higher level by using these tools. Some of the other tools that you're going to need.

So WhatsApp or Slack for communications, Zoom for having meetings. And of course, with Zoom, use Fathom so that you are recording everything. Every single Zoom call that you have, you should be recording on Fathom or something similar.

So you've got AI generated notes that you and your VA, EA can refer back to. When you're communicating with your remote teams, you know, in fact, when you're communicating with anybody, you always want to communicate at the highest level that you possibly can. OK, so what I mean by that is, you know, that most of when we're having a conversation, when we're communicating, most of the message is coming across through body language.

Yeah, nodding of the head. You can see if somebody is paying attention, if they're really grasping it or if they're looking out the window. So body language is really, really important.

So if you want to have a conversation with you, supposing it's somebody you live with and you're going to have a conversation with them, generally, you're going to go into the same room and have that conversation, not shout through the hallway. Now, obviously, you can't do that with a virtual assistant, but you can have a Zoom call. So if you need to have a conversation, do it on Zoom.

When you're communicating, the next most important thing after body language is tone of voice. So if you really, really can't have a Zoom call, then do it over WhatsApp audio or Facebook audio, something like that. But make sure it's a voice call so that there's the tone of voices in that conversation that you're having.

So if you can't have a conversation with your over voice or over video, save it till later. Okay, it doesn't matter how many Zoom calls you're having a day, save it for later and have that call when you can. Don't rely on WhatsApp sending messages, texting when you're trying to have a conversation.

How many times do you get messages from people and they've tagged it out quickly, they've not read it back, they've sent it, you've got to decipher it. Because there's no tone of voice, sometimes it can sound aggressive. You know, you think you might have upset them, but you haven't.

Messaging is not the way to have a conversation. Make sure that you have got OneDrive, Google Drive, any of those, iCloud, whatever it is where all documents are being stored there. So you've both got access to these documents.

Do not allow any remote worker to be saving documents on their own machine because you've got no backup there and you can't work collaboratively on documents. So really important that everything is stored in the cloud. A couple of AI tools here to help you with the Ops manuals.

Scribe and Notion. So they will allow you to, or your EA, to easily and quickly create these operations manuals. They can be doing things on the computer, recording it, and then it will take those recordings and it will create the words and images to go alongside those recordings.

So it saves an awful lot of time. The next tool I would recommend to everybody, you certainly need to be using some kind of password protector. Password management software, okay?

So we all know that we should have individual passwords for every site that we go on to. A lot of people don't do it. A lot of people have one code, one password, or they write more down in a little black book.

You can't do that when you're working with remote teams. So there are various different ones. Some are better than others.

LastPass has been hacked so many times. I would really not recommend it. We used to use it.

NordVPN, very, very good, especially when you're working with teams and it's never been hacked. So it's very secure. And have an AI-tuned CRM system.

Again, absolutely imperative that when you're working with an EA or any kind of remote team that you are using a CRM system. AI-based now, it will save massive amounts of time. It's the way you serve.

You share notes on customers, their details, follow-ups, setting diary appointments. All of that can be done through AI-tuned CRMs. If anybody wants me to make some further recommendations to you on what we use, then just reach out to me later. Okay, so before we go into some Q&A, I said I'm gonna share with you the number one game changer.

This is where most people get it wrong. Okay, it is so, so, so important that when you're working with people from another part of the world, you understand their culture and they understand our culture. The Philippines is what we call high-context culture.

Can I just ask, I don't think I can see everybody, but has anybody here got VA from the Philippines? Right, I can see a couple of hands going up. Yeah, I think, Donna, I think I know that you have.

So, okay, so if you've got a VA from the Philippines, you will notice that their behavior is different to ours. Okay, so they don't question a great deal. They're very selective in their word choice.

They rely on less words and much more facial expression and tone of voice. This is how very much how they communicate with each other. And the attitude in the Philippines is that responsibility starts at the top.

So in the corporate world, it is normal for a Philippine worker to take instructions from their boss and not to question it. If their boss tells them to do something, they're the boss, they just get on and do it. Okay, we are changing that culture, that we want contribution, that we wanna hear their input, we trust them.

Okay, so my VAs, my senior leadership team, I empower them by letting them get on and make decisions, not me telling them what to do. So it's really, really important to understand that. You will find we have this private space around us, this circle, when somebody steps into that space, it makes us feel uncomfortable.

In the Philippines, with Filipinos, they do have a personal space, but it's much, much smaller. They will stand much closer together. In the Philippines, relationships, they build slowly, but they become much stronger relationships than we're used to.

So they take time to build trust. So we are low-context culture. So we're quite explicit.

We use lots of words. We use thorough words, da-di-da. It doesn't mean anything.

We throw these words into our conversations. Our words are about quantity and not quality. Okay, so we have lots and lots of words that are unnecessary that we use.

And responsibility is not concentrated at the top. We want to drive responsibility out. We want people to take ownership for what they do.

And that's how we empower people. So it's really important to understand that. In the Philippines, sorry, with us, we have lots of relationships.

Did you know in the Philippines, divorce is, you can't get divorced, it's illegal. So we don't, sorry, we have lots and lots of relationships and they can be short-lived. You know, how many people are still in touch with people that they went to school with?

Or maybe they're in touch with one or two. When you were at school, you had lots and lots of friends. And then maybe you go to work and you make new friends and you forget about the old ones.

That's how we are. So yeah, it is really important to understand those differences in culture so that you can understand why perhaps they're behaving the way they behave. And you can adjust your behavior to match that.

And it's really important that they understand our culture. So we're really big on culture when we're training people. That is the number one thing to understand and that's where most people get it wrong.

So I said I'd share a success story with you just quickly. So we all know Adam. Adam came to me, that's been a couple of years ago now.

And he said, Richard, he said, I've got an executive assistant. They're South African based. They've been fine, but now the price, they're charging me more and more and more all the time.

And the output is coming down. So I'm getting less bang for my buck. Can you help me find a world-class executive assistant?

So I said, yeah, not a problem. So we lined him up with Marielle. And after about a month, she went to Adam.

She said, Adam, you know, I like being your EA. However, you're not really giving me, you're giving me tasks that are below me. You know, I think your expectation level of what you can get from me is a little bit too low.

And I'd like you to give me higher value tasks. I'm worth more to you. And what I can do is I can build a team under me that I'll recruit them, I'll lead them.

You only have to deal with me. But it would be saving you money because it's the task triangle. You'll be paying somebody less to do the tasks that are below me.

And I can focus on doing the real high-level tasks. And, you know, Adam was sort of blown away by this. He didn't think that you could get an executive assistant that would be making these sorts of recommendations to you.

And that is how we are. Okay, all the things that you're learning in Property Entrepreneur, we execute on them. We use the task triangle, right person, right role, right task.

And you pay them the right money. Don't try and get cheap BAs. So I hope we're going to go to some questions.

I hope you found that of high value. Here's a QR code that'll take you to my LinkedIn page. And where you can either book a discovery call, you can look at the website, see what we do, find out a little bit more.

And, you know, we've got free content, videos, how to do stuff. So, you know, have a look at that. And if you just want to chat, need some help, I'm happy to take your calls.

Okay, let's do some Q&A. Yeah, okay, Freddie.

[Attendee 3] (37:49 - 37:59)

Yeah, thanks, Richard. That's really, really helpful stuff. I just wanted to ask a question about UK hours and being a gatekeeper for phone calls during UK hours and how you navigate that.

[Richard Evans] (37:59 - 42:50)

Yep, okay. So first of all, so nine o'clock in the morning is, I think at this time of year, it is four o'clock in the afternoon, I think. They don't have British summertime like we do.

Obviously they don't have British summertime, but they don't, you know, it's the same time all year. And so they're either seven or eight hours ahead, depending on the time of year. When they take these roles, they know they're going to be working for UK companies.

So they know that their shift is likely to start towards the end of the day for them. And so it's a given. And for many, it's actually works out for them.

So they may have other things that they need to do during the day. It may be that they've got children that they need to look after and the children towards the end of the day, perhaps, you know, their partner comes home, can look after the kids, take over, and they can get on with their work. So yeah, it sort of slots into their needs.

They know that that's going to happen. We have VAs that are working 24 seven. For some of my team, they like doing the graveyard shift and I really don't care, you know, for some tasks.

So for instance, IT team, you know, they can be building websites and doing stuff like that anytime of the day or night so they can choose their own hours. And actually that flexibility is also one of the things. The fact that they're working from home and they've got flexibility is one of the attractions for VAs to actually come and take the role in the first place.

As far as phone answering is concerned, so you don't really want to be answering the phone at all. Okay, so my business mobile number is not answered by me. That is always being diverted to the Philippines.

My EA does not answer my phone. Okay, again, that is something that is probably below them. So it's diverted to other people that are answering the phone.

We do actually have Answer for Business is another service that we provide. That is a virtual call answering service. So that's available 24 seven.

So when VAs are off shift, it could be answered by Answer for Business or another call answering service. But I wouldn't recommend it. It's a good use of your world-class EA to be answering phone calls.

I've got a couple. I'm going to come back to you guys with your hands up. I'll answer those ones on the chat.

CRM information. So there is the one that we're using and we've got an agency account for is called Go High Level. It's more than a CRM.

It's a marketing platform. It replaces Kajabi. It does all sorts of things.

It's got an online appointment scheduler. You don't need Google Forms because it's got all built in to Go High Level. It's got loads and loads of features.

We're about to bring that out white labelled as Bar Bar Bun Assist in various different formats and packages. So yeah, you can subscribe yourself. I will say it is because there are so many moving parts to it.

It's not easy. So you do have to know exactly what you want out of your CRM. And you don't want to be learning it yourself.

It is definitely an EA or VA task to be managing the CRM system for you. But we'll be letting people have more details of the packages that we're doing at a later date. Do they usually work full time?

No, I would not recommend full time at all. So your EA, you will never need an EA to be working full time. If you've got a full time EA, you've got a big business with lots of people in it.

So for an EA role, that would definitely be part time. And your EA is the person towards the top of the task triangle. So they don't want to be doing many hours.

They're delegating down to other people below them. Don't have full timers because you're relying on them. And when they leave, you've got a problem on your hands because you've got to replace them quickly.

So build teams of part timers where you've got more than one person that can do the role. You've got cover when people get sick as well then, or if they take time off. Right, okay.

Let's some of you guys with the hands up, Danielle.

[Attendee 2] (42:52 - 43:03)

Hi Richard, a very practical question here, please. I've started to look at using Loom to do some videos on managing my email inbox so I can pass it over to an assistant.

[Richard Evans] (43:03 - 43:04)

Yeah.

[Attendee 2] (43:04 - 43:17)

So I'm using Outlook. My business emails are diverted into my Outlook on my laptop. How does that then apply to an EA?

Because what system would she be using?

[Richard Evans] (43:18 - 44:36)

So you can give them sharing login details to Outlook, first of all. So they can, you know, they've got the username and password so they can run your inbox on their desktop. There are also AI tools that will simplify this as well.

But so what we do is we have got lots of different email. Obviously, we've got a number of different businesses. We have an accounts app.

We've got a recruitment app. We've got this app. We've got that app.

So we have lots and lots of different email addresses. Different people have access to different inboxes. For my own personal stuff, I don't look at emails at all.

So it's not Mariel. It's somebody else who is my email handler, again, she'd be overpaid if she was doing it. So they are checking my emails.

They're unsubscribing where they can. They're responding where they can. Then I have a Slack channel.

And if there is an email, there's you get two different types. One is where they just need to draw my attention to something. So they send that to me on the Slack channel, just a screenshot of it.

And then the other one is where they don't know how to respond. And so they're asking me, how do I respond to this, please? So I'll just address that again on Slack so they can respond to it.

[Attendee 2] (44:37 - 44:38)

Okay, thank you.

[Richard Evans] (44:38 - 44:44)

Okay. Excuse me if I pronounce this wrong.

[Attendee 1] (44:45 - 45:48)

It's okay, it's fine. Even people who know me keep getting it wrong, but it's fine. Number one, email.

So right now my life is like, I've had the same email for 20 years. I subscribe to it. I mean, it's completely overcrowded.

I subscribe to everything. I know all my family stuff comes on it. How do you separate out the business?

Because I wouldn't want a VA to access my full email. It just wouldn't be appropriate. And the other question I have really is about a VA having a phone.

Because they need a UK number to fill out some forms and things and come up against this. You know, some companies want a phone number, a UK phone number, or they say reply by phone. And I don't suppose they want to use their probably quite expensive system to phone from the Philippines to the UK.

So what do you recommend in terms of them having a UK phone access and a UK phone?

[Richard Evans] (45:50 - 49:06)

Right. Okay, so first part of the question, which was emails. Right, okay.

So first of all, do not be using your personal email address for business. Okay, so it doesn't look professional. And as you just said, you can't separate your personal life from your business life.

So you should have a business name. You should have a company registered. And you should have a domain that is the same as your company.

Well, it doesn't have to be the same as your brand. Okay. Your brand and your company can be different.

So then you want to give your teams email addresses that are using your domain. A number of good reasons for this. First of all, it looks so much more professional.

And any communications that they are sending out on email, you own them. So if they leave or get hit by a car, you haven't suddenly lost all of those emails because they were using their own Gmail account or anything like that. Okay, so that's the first thing.

And yeah, so... And also the other thing is they feel valued. You know, when you actually take them on and you do the onboarding, you want to have your domain set up with their email address meliel at.

Okay, already done. So as you onboard them, you say, here, this is your email address. We've set it up for you and we'll get it set up on your Outlook for you so that you can then access all of these emails.

Far more professional, they feel valued and you're keeping work and personal life separate. Secondly, and as your team grows, you would probably want to have generic ones. Like I just said, accounts app, recruitment app, training app, whatever it is, support app.

Then when it comes to the phone, so landlines are going to be history very soon. And what you will be using are what are called VPNs. Sorry, not VPNs, VoIP, voice over IP.

So it uses internet protocol rather than a landline. And that means that you can have any number that can be accessed from any device anywhere in the world. So you can have a local number using your local code and then that can ring through to a person, a device, anywhere else.

They can pick it up. They can answer it on your behalf. They can make phone calls on your behalf and the person they're calling will never know that they're talking to somebody on the other side of the world.

And WhatsApp, so the CRM I just talked about, you can have WhatsApp numbers attached to the CRM system. And that means then that somebody in your remote team can be receiving and answering WhatsApp messages on your behalf as well.

[Attendee 1] (49:08 - 49:10)

Which provider would you recommend?

[Richard Evans] (49:10 - 49:32)

We use GoTo and we can set you up with that. So again, if you just drop us an email, there's a bit of technical setup. Okay, so if you drop us an email, you would enter into a direct agreement with GoTo but we can sort of hold your hand in getting it set up.

[Attendee 1] (49:33 - 49:35)

Would you recommend a landline number or a mobile number?

[Richard Evans] (49:36 - 50:31)

Both. You'd recommend that your business is open, that they answer both. Yeah, so the landline number gives you credibility.

So again, it's a bit like having a domain on your website and on your email signatures and things. If you're showing a domain and a landline number, that gives you credibility. But the perception with people is that if they can see a mobile number, they're going to get direct to you straight away.

So for convenience, have a mobile. But like I say, you're going to get to a point where you won't want to be answering your mobile phone. The last thing I want to be doing is walking around Sainsbury's thinking about what I'm going to have for dinner tonight and all of a sudden, somebody rings me on the mobile and wants to talk about Ba-Ba-Boom or whatever it is.

[Attendee 1] (50:32 - 50:44)

It's really hard when you've had like, you know, like sort of decades of operating that way to kind of to shift in your perception. Certainly, I find anything, I mean, trusting, I don't know, I find it really, really difficult.

[Richard Evans] (50:45 - 51:11)

It is challenging. It is challenging. You know, this stuff isn't necessarily easy, but, you know, that's part of the reason why people come to us is we help you.

We give you support, answer your questions, give you people that are trained by us that know how to do this stuff. So they're, you know, your VA is, like I said, they're your business partner. They're a consultant to you.

They will know more about doing this stuff than you do by far.

[Attendee 1] (51:13 - 51:15)

Mm-hmm. Thank you very much, Fisher. That's very helpful.

[Richard Evans] (51:15 - 59:16)

Okay. How does the VA contribute to your bottom line? So our headline strategy for this year is bottom line time.

So it does depend, of course, you know, what the role is that your VA is in. And again, a recommendation here is that you niche as much as possible. So you want to pull away as soon as you can from general VAs that are just doing general admin tasks and have people that are focusing on one thing.

So for us, we have a recruitment team. We have a training team. We have a finance team.

Marketing is broken down so that we have graphic design team. We have technical team. We have content writers, et cetera.

So as your business grows, you niche as much as possible using specialists. So our finance team, they run the finance function. Have you had yet Josh's world-class finance function?

You have. Right. Okay.

So that is what you want to be running. And then you want to be using Xero for all of your accounting. Your finance team are doing your reconciliation.

If they're doing invoicing, they're doing credit control. If you've got payroll to be done, they're doing all of that. They're making purchases for you.

Procurement, you don't want to be doing that yourself. As soon as you can stop doing this stuff and letting go of it, you want to. So your finance team, that's their niche.

They know how to use Xero. They know how to prepare the three pillars of reporting that Josh talks about. Now, what your finance team will not, your VA finance team are unlikely to be are FDs.

We use Ultimate FD because we found that the taking that data and making informed decisions was beyond the finance, my internal finance team and beyond me. And even though I understand accounts and businesses and everything else, I am not an FD. So we went through a bit of pain last year and we then started working with Ultimate FD and that's been a game changer.

But they will very, very much contribute to your bottom line, and looking for where the wastage is. What are the things that you can unsubscribe for? What do we need to do to hit the performance targets that we need?

So they will help you very much with that. But as you, again, you wouldn't need somebody like Ultimate FD unless you have reached a sort of half a million pound plus turnover level. But then they're worth their weight in gold.

Can I give you an overview of the timeline process for hiring? Yeah, okay. The cost and roughly how many hours per week you suggest.

Okay, right. So timeline, that very much depends on who we have at the time. Okay, so as I said, these people do not grow on trees.

When we need to recruit more, we go on a specific campaign. So if we have got people, and in fact, we are actually just completing some training and mentoring on world-class EAs with a batch now. So I know we do actually have some.

And when I say some, it's like one or two available currently. But yeah, when they're gone, they're gone. You know, so it can take longer then to place a world-class EA with a new client.

Cost is, so the cost there is a setup, recruitment, onboarding, mentoring cost. So that's one off, which is 595 plus that, I believe. And then you then would be paying by the hour.

It equates to 15 pounds per hour, I think. So you're gonna be looking at around about 375 to 400 pounds per month, that'd be 18, to have somebody that's doing your EA work. They're probably gonna be doing sort of five hours, five to seven hours per week, something like that.

And then once you get to that level, then they should be delegating down. You have more than a team of just one. How do you delegate purchasing?

Do they have a credit card or other? Right, okay. So again, a lot of this stuff does depend on the scale of your organization.

So if you've just got you and a VA that is doing purchasing for you, then you're probably going to send them a message to say, this is what I need. This is where, in the early days, this is where I suggest you get it from. And then they'll go on the internet.

You're gonna give some details of your Amazon account and this sort of thing. And then they will just get on there and they will purchase them. For some sites, obviously, they've got your details, your payment details stored.

If it's more sort of one-off purchases, then we use a WISEcard. So we top up the WISEcard on a monthly basis. And with WISE, you can have teams that then have access to...

They have their own WISEcard, sorry, which is linked to your business. And you set the limits on it. So you set the limits.

You top up their WISEcard and then they can make payments. And you can set a one-off purchase limit of perhaps 500 pounds. And you can set a monthly limit of maybe 2,000 pounds so that once it gets up to 2,000, then it needs further approval before they can spend any more money.

So very safe and secure way of doing it. We also, with us, we have... So one person can set the payment up and then somebody else needs to approve it.

So there's two people involved in making payments. There's lots and lots of different options with WISE. But that's what I would recommend you use.

So, and then again on the purchasing. So as your organisation grows and you've got lots of people, then what we operate is a purchase requisition form. So whoever it is that's requesting the purchase, they will fill out the form, details of what they want, when they need it, what the budget is, et cetera.

If they know the supplier, where to go for it. And then they send that over to the VA that deals with procurement and they can then purchase it. And for certain things, it may mean going out to get two or three quotations from different suppliers to make sure we're purchasing efficiently.

Okay, have I covered all the questions? Any more for any more? No?

Okay, right. Good. Well, thank you very much indeed, guys.

Hope you found that useful. And hope to see you all soon.

[Attendee 6] (59:17 - 59:18)

Thanks, Richard.

[Richard Evans] (59:18 - 59:19)

Take care.

[Attendee 5] (59:20 - 59:21)

Thanks, Richard.