



5-Steps to Launching A Successful VA Business



Robin Stephenson, M.Ed.

INTRODUCTION



My name is Robin Stephenson and I'm an Executive Virtual Assistant. In my previous career life I served as an educational trainer. One of my favorite offerings was to provide training to office assistants on how to make themselves indispensable to their supervisor. After "retiring" from the education world, I started my own professional virtual assistant service.

7-years later, I have clients from California to Pennsylvania, and from Washington state to Hong Kong. My business has grown large enough for me to serve exclusively C-Level clients and to allow my staff to serve the rest of our clientele

Virtual Assistant services are one of the fastest growing businesses around the world. The rise of minimum wages and associated taxes, are causing employers to hesitate the hiring of additional workers. Instead, they are looking for project based administrative services. While it is true there are cheap overseas services available, many of my clients report they might consider using them for quick one-time short projects. However, most prefer US based workers for ongoing projects with whom they can easily communicate and who understand the US market.

So now I want to share with new, and existing virtual assistants, how they too can succeed financially in their own virtual assistant business. Especially military spouses. Wouldn't you love to be able to own your own business and take it with you when you move? I love the ability to choose the amount and type of work I do, and who I work for...

I AM LIVING THE ENTREPRENURIAL DREAM!

We all want to get where we want to go, as fast as we can get there. This free report will provide you with the 5-Steps to Launching a Successful Virtual Assistant Business, Your Way!

OVERVIEW



It's great to dream. Dreams give us inspiration, sometimes they motivate us, and hopefully they give us the impetus to take a risk and turn our ideas into reality.

What is your dream? What do you want to do with your life? What's on your bucket list?

We all have things we want to accomplish in life and you have the ability to set your business to be in alignment with your life goals. For instance, if you want to travel, a

virtual assistant business is a great fit as you can pace your work around your travel schedule. You might also choose to target travel agents, hotels, and other travel related businesses as clients to fit in with your interest and gain additional benefits and rewards for upcoming trips.

If your dream is to earn BIG money, then look to building your business to maximize as many services as possible which are targeted to larger accounts. Serving as a virtual assistant is a great match for military spouses who move every few years too.

Your dream begins with a plan and the following 5-Steps to Launching a Virtual Assistant business will get you going.

1. Know what you want to achieve
2. Know what services you will provide
3. Know how you will provide services
4. Know your target audience
5. Know how to attract your target audience. (I'm going to share a few specific ideas later in this report on how to attract your target audience.)

What I am sharing in this report is how I built my virtual assistant business and now service clients who pay over \$2K a month for my services.

If you find this report helpful, you might want to take advantage of my free online webinars on individual topics that will help you grow your virtual assistant business.

NOW LET'S GET STARTED

THE MAP



If you want to get to a place that is unfamiliar to you, you need a roadmap or a navigator. If you want to get where you are going with the least number of bumps in the road, use both a map and a navigator!

Your map is your plan, and begin your planning with the end in mind. In other words, think through what you want to achieve. Is financial gain most important? Is it the number of hours you work each day? What is your “Why”?

Watch Simon Sinek’s [Ted Talk](#) on *Start with Why*.

Your framework should help you develop the following for your business:

1. Annual, monthly, weekly, daily financial goals. What do you need to be financially successful for your life goals? Some people are looking to earn more money to do more things, others are looking to do less and have more free time. Financial goals, and one’s measure of financial success, are different for everyone.
2. Your financial goals help to set the number of hours you work. Divide the amount of your needed income by the cost of the average amount you earn hourly to estimate the number of hours you will need to reach your financial goals. Remember to calculate a number of hours to build your business and maintain clients in your cost analysis.
3. After determining how much money you need to earn and how many hours you have to give, you are now able to determine the basics of your service prices. The more you expect to gain financially for your services, the more services you will need to offer and the higher level of clientele you will need to attract.

WHAT SERVICES WILL YOU BE PROVIDING?

SERVICES



How do you determine what services you will be providing to your virtual assistant clients? First you begin by reviewing your strengths and weaknesses.

1. What administrative skills do you excel at?
2. Which admin responsibilities would you need to learn or sharpen a bit?
3. What tasks/projects will you not offer?

Knowing what you do well can help you attract certain clients who need support in an area in which you specialize. For instance, virtual assistants who are skilled in the development of Excel spreadsheets, (entering formulas and the like), are always in demand. If you have experience in an industry, your skills and knowledge is especially valuable in that particular industry. Virtual assistants who know how to use and enter MLA data for realtors have an advantage over those who have never worked in the real estate markets.

If you need to learn a new skill, or sharpen one that you haven't used in a while, online classes abound. Lynda.com is one resource and it comes free with many library cards. You can pretty much Google anything you want to learn and find free or low-cost classes.

It is equally important to know what services you are not willing to provide. We provide call center services at my company, however one of the things we don't provide is Cold Calling. We don't appreciate getting cold calls and therefore as a company, we choose not to provide a service (such as Cold Calling), which is against our philosophy.

One way to ensure you never lose a client simply because you don't have the skill to provide a requested service is to enlist the aid of a sub-contractor. If you don't know how to formulate an Excel Spreadsheet, but you have a colleague who does, pay them to provide the service as a sub-contractor.

How will your services be provided?

How Services will be Provided



How you provide services will depend on how much or little you want to interact with your clients.

Small limited projects can be ordered online. You provide the mechanism for the client to upload the details and payment portal for a predetermined charge for the specific project or amount of time the client wants to pay for your work.

Those who choose to work with US based virtual assistants often do so because they can build a relationship with their VA and easily communicate as needed. Remember, if you want repeat business, your clients need to get to know you (what you do and how you work), then they begin to like you (your style of communication, etc.), and finally they learn to trust you, (ethics, philosophy, confidentiality), which opens additional opportunities for you to provide services to them and their company. It's a relational process that grows over time.

Phone: Provide your clients with a number they can reach you at. You may want to think about adding a second number on your cell phone where your clients can text. If you are going to take calls for your client, you will need to have a number/phone system that will allow them to forward calls to your phone.

Internet: Most of your communications will be provided over the internet and most likely through email. Develop a set of folders to house all communications from clients. In this way, you are able to track the assignment, deadlines, and completed projects.

Proprietary Accounts: If you will be using your client's login information, provide your client a confidentiality statement from you and develop a system for ensuring account information is not accessible to anyone other than yourself.

Business Hours: If you set business hours post them for your clients and let them know that if they call/text before or after hours, you will respond the very next business day. If you take a call/text outside of business hours, you may be setting a precedence that will be interpreted by the client as you are available on demand.

So just who is your target audience?

TARGET AUDIENCE



Your target audience is determined by all the factors you've previously reviewed in this report. Your financial needs, how much time you want to spend on the job, what your skills are, and the type of services you want to provide each will help you decide who will most likely be attracted to your services. The more you offer, the wider your audience. However, more is not always better. Depending your business design, you might do

better with a few clients who need ongoing services. On the other hand, some virtual assistant models are designed to serve a large audience with quick turnaround, small projects.

Have you discovered your "Why"? Perhaps it has helped you determine why you chose the virtual assistant field and who you want to support. The following are a few ideas to help you target your specific audience.

Short-Term Projects: Entrepreneurs and small business owners are great audiences for virtual assistants who will provide one-off or short-term projects. Many are not looking to hire employees. Social media posting, customer relation management, blog writing or posting, presentation projects, etc. are samples of what an entrepreneur might need.

Special/Seasonal Projects: Small businesses have seasonal spikes that often put a larger than normal workload burden on their staff. Virtual assistants can help relieve the burden without the stress of adding a new employee to the business. Lawn care services, heating and air conditioning companies, and property management services are a few examples.

Executive Services: C-Level clients demand a higher level of services and they are prepared to pay a bit more for the service. Calendar management, appointment setting, phone messages, document development and proof reading are a few responsibilities of and executive assistant. Many times, you are the sounding board for an idea or asked to be a part of a confidential conference call to take notes. Confidentiality is essential. Executives expect timely, quality, services. If you can't meet their demands, it's best to target this audience after a great deal of experience in the field.

Customer Service: Virtual assistants often perform a variety of customer service projects for all types of businesses. Sending thank-you, birthday, and sympathy cards can be hand written for high impact. Mass messages might be sent through an automated card company such events as Christmas. Virtual assistants might also send be asked to send documents, samples, or gifts to their client's customers.

Specialty Services: If you have a background that offers specific industry knowledge, you have a goldmine niche market. Medical, Real Estate, Property Management, Website Design, HTML Coding, etc., are a few of the services for which you may be able to charge at a higher rate.

The person or business who needs what you have to offer +
will pay for what you can do for them +
in the timeframe you are willing to work =

YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE



How do you find your target audience?

FINDING YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE



The reality is you have to build relationships, pay some dues, and toot your own horn to get noticed and hired.

Before you can make a sale (be hired as a virtual assistant), you will want to build as many relationships with people in your target audience group and with those who know or work with people in your target audience.

Here are a few ideas:

Facebook: Let your friends, family, and colleagues know what you are doing. You may need to explain the services you are providing as a virtual assistant. Keep posting about your assignments, however make sure you never post anything that would identify a client or cross the line of confidentiality. Keeping what you do in front of your social contacts allows them to share your business when they are conversing with someone who mentions they need to hire someone who does what you do. The last thing you want to hear is, “oh, I didn’t know that’s what you do!” Facebook ads also help get you in front of your target audience. Do your homework so you know how to make sure you hit your target.

LinkedIn: You can make great business to business contacts on LinkedIn. Make sure your profile is set up to show your expertise in the field. Write a few short articles to post that highlight a specific skill or share a case study. Join groups where entrepreneurs hang out and give free advice and help when appropriate to gain a following.

Networking: Small business and entrepreneurial network meetings are everywhere. Visit as many as possible to find where your target audience is meeting. Take advantage of one-to-one meetings and really listen to what your colleague does and what they might need. If they are a potential prospect, and you are confident they do a good job, refer them to others. Send them information that might help with a project they are working on. When they are ready to hire, you will be the one they call. They can also be a great referral for you.

Referral Program: Let your colleagues, friends and others know about your referral program. You might offer coffee cards, free services, or other rewards for referrals that become clients. Even if you give out a reward for a referral, still try to send a new business contact to keep the referral connection strong.

THAT'S HOW I GREW MY BUSINESS, MY WAY!



What I shared in this report is how I built my virtual assistant business and now service clients who pay over \$2K a month for my services. There are more businesses out there than ever before, with more folks looking to hire project based virtual assistants.

If you are interested in becoming a virtual assistant, I hope this report will propel you on your way.

AND TO HELP YOU SUCCEED ...

I invite you to view my free webinar:

10 Ways to Keep your Virtual Assistant Clients Happy!

It's my gift to you! Just send me at robins@vap-yourway.com
and I'll get it right out to you!

Robin

For more support & resources visit:

vap-yourway.com