

# What it takes to be a virtual assistant



Becoming a successful virtual assistant (VA) requires a deep sense of commitment and a host of skills. Essentially, as a VA, you are the Swiss Army knife and the adjunct business manager for every client for whom you work.

What does it take to be a successful virtual assistant? A good start is to join the International Virtual Assistants Association (IVAA). The IVAA provides networking and advice, a shared code of ethics, and is one of the main stamps of approval for VAs. You can also join regional groups or their counterparts in your area, as well as the Administrative Consultants Association and the International Association of Online Business Managers. Your membership in these will let potential clients know of your abilities and that you're in touch with new developments in your industry.

Bernadette Raftery, whose website, [A Virtual Success](#), has excellent advice for virtual assistants, says: "I think two important skills for an aspiring VA is first, to listen, and second, be prepared to respond. Take notes, and learn to mentally highlight the key needs the client is communicating. Then, be prepared to respond with the priority solutions." How? Here are more suggestions from other VAs:

- **Design a custom package of services** for each client's direct needs. This list is both a mission statement and an agenda.
- **Constantly back up all documentation** manually and in the cloud.
- **Execute all projects from beginning to end** without requiring "hand-holding" from your client; be a problem solver, never waste time, and always meet your deadlines.
- **Practice complete confidentiality** and a strict code of business ethics.
- **Knowledge means everything.** For proficiency and competence at your assigned tasks, consistently update your software and prepare contingency plans for interruptions, outages or natural disasters.

## Resources

- [International Virtual Assistant Association](#)
- [New England Virtual Assistants Association](#)
- [Administrative Consultants Association](#)
- [International Association of Online Business Managers](#)