**How to Start Your Own Virtual Assistant Business**

Virtual assistants are in demand worldwide. As a virtual assistant you could find clients in your own community or half way around the globe. It’s a great way to make a living and work from home.

You’ll meet interesting people, learn new tasks and responsibilities and perhaps best of all, enjoy the freedom that comes with being your own boss. Here’s how to start your own virtual assistant business.

**1 SWOT** - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. This is a personal assessment. Take a look at what strengths you have that will contribute to a successful virtual assistant business. Communication skills, organization skills, professionalism are some strengths. However, you likely bring a lot more to the table. List your strengths.

Take a look at your weaknesses as well. You’re not looking for reasons to not go into business for yourself. You’re simply making sure you’re aware of all you’ll need to do to run a successful business. If you have a weakness, and we all do, then you’ll want to create a plan to manage it.

For example, if your weakness is writing and you need to have sales and marketing copy for your business website, you can learn to write or you can hire someone to do it for you. Knowing your strengths and weaknesses helps you create the best business for you.

Opportunities and threats are the next part of this assessment. Opportunities can be anything from the fact that you have a friend who designs websites to a growing demand for virtual assistants.

Threats are things that may challenge you, like competing virtual assistants and a sluggish economy. When you’re fully aware of your assets and challenges, you can plan for them.

**2 Create a business plan**. Plan the services you’re going to offer and how you’re going to offer them. For example, will you charge by the hour or by the project? Will you offer a discount for ongoing clients? Research your competition and decide whether you want to specialize.

You can specialize in a certain task, for example transcription. Or you can specialize in an industry like real estate.

Specialization is a way to demonstrate expertise and adds credibility to your business. That being said, there are many clients who want a one-stop solution and would prefer a virtual assistant that can do a number of tasks.

3 Set up your business. You’ll want to create a website to market your virtual business. Most of your clients will be online and they’ll often find you through online searching.

A website is also a way to demonstrate your expertise. You’ll also want a business address, a phone number, email and a way to accept payment. PayPal is an easy way to invoice and track your income and expenses.

Once your business is established, the next step is to spread the word. Consider social networking, advertising, SEO and article marketing to market your business. A blog is also a good way to demonstrate credibility, enhance your brand and drive traffic to your website.

Virtual assistants are in high demand. Whether you’re looking for full-time work or a part-time income, it can be the perfect solution. Create your business and start making money from your skills.