

LIFE-LONG LEARNER

presents

HOW CAN I HAVE A
VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
MAKE MY LIFE
EASIER?



SCOTT BRITTON

If you're anything like me the idea of having a virtual assistant work for you while you sleep and do all the non-fun boring stuff sounded like a dream!

*But where the heck do you start?
What can they do for you?*

I get these questions a lot and remember having them myself. So I decided to create this quick and easy guide to jump-start your virtual assistant adventure...

Inside you'll find all the tasks that I had my Virtual Assistant do for during 3 months of working together. You'll also find some processes I've used to make sure our relationship was efficient and effective.



TYPICAL TASK REQUEST STRUCTURE

All tasks were promised a 24 hour turn-around, but still there were certain things that were more urgent than others.

I found the following to be the most effective structure for prioritizing tasks and making sure they were completed effectively to an email that looked like the following:

Subject line: [high] Make Dinner reservations

(5) Josiah - Can you call X restaurant in Midtown and make a reservation for 8pm Eastern? If they don't have anything at 8 ask for 8:30 or 9.

This email contains 3 important components beyond the actual request itself.

1. **An urgency connotation** - you'll notice the word [high] in the subject line. For every task, I'd indicate an urgency level of [high], [medium], or [low] to make it easy for my VA to prioritize and complete the task in appropriate fashion
2. **Max time of task pursuit** - one thing that's important when working with VA's is to make sure they don't spend too much time on something. The (#) serves as a maximum amount of time that you want them to spend on something should they run into an issue. If they go over this time, you'll want to establish a protocol of them checking in with you on whether they should spend more time on that particular task once they've eclipsed your maximum time of task pursuit.
3. **Contingency Actions** - You'll notice that I proposed 2 other times reservation times should the original request not work out. When working with VA's you want to limit the back and forth as much as possible while maintaining the efficacy of the task. I found the best way to do this is to pre-empt any "it didn't work out" back and forth by providing 1-2 alternatives should your initial request fail.

Bonus - Utilize Screencasts

A lot of times tasks can be more nuanced, especially when dealing with things on the computer.

I've found one of the fastest and most effective ways to demonstrate a task you'd like to be completed is by providing a computer screencast where you talk through and demonstrate exactly what you want.

In order to accomplish this, I use a software called Screenflow for Mac.

I'll record a demonstration of the instructions, upload the video directly to YouTube (keeping as unlisted), and then send the link directly to my VA.

This works like a charm and doesn't take much time at all!

Okay, now let's get to what most people want to know...

WHAT CAN I HAVE MY VA DO FOR ME?

I find real-life examples to be the most powerful teaching tool. Below you'll find a list of tasks from 3 months of working with one of my dedicated assistants.

Month 1:

- Find contact at my student loan company to chat with about adjusting my student loan payments
- Find exact process and phone number for getting a new debit card from Wells Fargo
- Volunteer Research: Find Out the Process and Availability for Volunteering at two places I selected
- Schedule a call with someone using my calendar availability (7 instances)
- Restaurant reservations (4 instances)
- Adding things to my calendar (4 instances) - I'd forward an event message and ask him to add it
- Find a tutorial on how to download SoundCloud files locally onto my iPhone
- Book a Dr's appointment within a date range given my preferred availability
- Reschedule Dr.'s appointment...shoot.
- Isolate all the pictures of my family's Dog in Dropbox and put them into a folder. Sometimes I need a cheer up. It happens.
- Data Entry from photos into excel sheet (2 occasions). I'd take a screenshot of unstructured data and have him log it into a Google spreadsheet so I could sort and manipulate it.
- Find out the return policy for a electronics purchase
- Find articles on all the benefits of joining the freelancers union. Turns out there's a ton of sweet discounts and anyone can join
- Call and see if some coupon my mom emailed me for Banana Republic applies at non-factory stores
- Invite everyone whose requested to join my Google group HackingNYC every 2 weeks (recurring)
- Find Google+ Communities on Business Development, Sales, and Productivity for me to check out
- Find tutorials on how to extract audio from a video clip using screenflow
- Download the audio files from a membership site into my Dropbox so that I can add them to my iTunes
- Sign me up for rewards accounts on 3 airlines I use occasionally. Log the credentials in a Google docs spreadsheet.
- Find 5 Google Analytics/SEO experts for an Odesk job I created

Month 2:

- **Coordinate a call (2)**
- **Download all files from a membership site I belong to and put them in a Dropbox folder so I can put them on my phone**
- **Add members to my Google group HackingNYC (2)**
- **Make restaurant reservations (3)**
- **Add something to my calendar (1)**
- **Found out when I get my Zirtual credits applied and let me know the policy on them**
- **Bottle service inquiry for my friend that's getting deployed to Afghanistan who visited NYC.**
- **Go through all my Skillshare classes and export all the emails of past students into CSVs so I can email these people about new online classes**
- **Call the Chinese Consulate and find out the best way to get my paperwork taken care before my trip**
- **Call Wells Fargo and confirm the reimbursement policy on my use of non-bank ATMs**
- **Find 10 most popular Google+ Communities on Online Marketing, Internet Marketing, and Blogging**
- **Call Horizon Blue Cross and see if they cover me for insurance abroad (More China trip nonsense)**
- **Upload 4 videos I put into a Dropbox folder onto Youtube**
- **Figure out the easiest way for me to order checks for a new bank account I opened**
- **Remove the duplicates in a spreadsheet I was working on**
- **I lost my fur hood to my Helley Hansen coat on a ski trip. Do research to see if you can find another hood online.**
- **Copy a framework I liked in a slideshare and put it into an excel spreadsheet so I can apply it**



Month 3:

- Add event to calendar for AUS TV interview
- Add videos from udemy Library to udemy class (cold emailing)
- Create PDF files from PowerPoint slides (Cold emailing course)
- Leave a review for Cold Emailing course
- Contact Yesware to figure out how to cancel account
- Contact Netflix to figure out why credit card was charged
- Contact Mint.com to figure out why credit card is not showing up on your account
- Research an unknown charge on your credit card
- Add event to calendar for Portuguese training session
- Calculate the average star rating of Cold Emailing course
- Contact Aweber with questions about suppressing a list
- Research which of your credit cards do not have international transaction fees
- Research the fees to withdrawal money from Wells Fargo checking internationally
- Find plugin that works as a countdown clock for email confirmation page
- Contact Italki.com to figure out if you can store credit card data on their site
- Research if you won FIFA tickets
- Research for 15 minutes where there's Wifi on the beaches
- Research for 30 minutes where to attend private salsa dancing lessons
- Contact Delta to figure out if you can get a refund for unused plane ticket
- Contact Twitter to figure out how to fix "Tweet" button on "About" page
- Find guest blog submission email addresses for 8 websites
- Organize 2014 goals list into daily, weekly, bi-weekly and monthly goals
- Call with Aweber to receive clearer answers to question
- Research problems logging-in to Citibank checking website



Woahhh.
There's a lot of different things in here!

Guess what? Once upon a time these are all things that **I WAS DOING** instead of focusing on what was most important in my life and business.

Collectively offloading these type of tasks **saved me more than 25 hours over these 3 months...** which also means 25 hours more output!

This is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of what's possible when you leverage the power of having a virtual assistant, but should give you an idea of what's possible.

In terms of options there's plenty of different ways you can find your own VA.

But if you'd like to use the service I started out with which I highly recommend...



Get your own Zirtual Assistant Here

*This is an affiliate link to their service. But hey, it'd be lame if I told you all about how awesome something was and then didn't tell you exactly how you can get it!

Cheers,
- Scott