
How to Hire a Virtual Assistant

When hiring a virtual assistant, it's very important to get someone whose skills, work habits, and personality is a good match for your needs. Hiring someone to help with the administrative tasks of your business is an important step, and it is one that makes many small business owners nervous at first. However, if you choose wisely, you just may find that adding a virtual assistant to your team is the best investment you could possibly make in your business.

Is the Candidate's Background Appropriate?

Before you start interviewing prospective virtual assistants, it's a good idea to come up with a job description that includes a detailed list of the tasks you would like your virtual assistant to perform. When you have a clear picture of what your virtual assistant will do, you'll be able to generate a list of questions that can help you determine whether or not individuals you interview are good candidates.

Virtual assistants often perform a wide variety of tasks, depending on client needs, so it's important to find out what type of work candidates have handled in the past. Ideally, you will find someone who has a background performing the types of tasks that you need. The questions you ask should tap into the type of experience each applicant has, so you can figure out if the person's background matches the position you have available. .

If you primarily want an assistant to handle public relations for your business, someone whose only virtual assisting experience is in handling bookkeeping tasks might not be the best choice for you. Conversely, if you need someone to handle your bookkeeping functions, an assistant whose primary experience works experience is in sales or web development isn't likely to be very helpful to you.

What Do the Applicant's References Say?

Before hiring someone to work as your virtual assistant, it's a good idea to ask for and check current and past client references. You can learn a lot about applicants from hearing how their clients describe them. If a candidate is hesitant to provide you with recent client references, that may be a sign that you need to keep looking before making a hiring decision.

When speaking to a candidate's references, be sure to ask questions about the virtual assistant's reliability, ability to meet deadlines, and problem solving skills. You should also ask about the nature of the duties the candidate performed for the person providing the reference. This will help you ascertain just how closely the person's past experiences match your current needs.

Making Your Decision

Any time you are hiring someone to work with you, whether on a part-time or full-time basis, there is always a chance that the person won't be a good fit. However, there is also always a possibility that you'll hire the perfect person for the job. You can increase your chances of making the right decision when hiring a virtual assistant by putting thought into your needs before you begin interviewing, planning your interview questions carefully, and being diligent in checking references.