

# VIRTUAL ASSISTANT CHECK LIST

- **Determine what kind of business you want to start** - look at your skills and see what you enjoy doing, make a list of jobs you have done in your career, say you did e.g. Typing, Transcription, PowerPoint Presentation, you are an excel expert, you love social media etc. and that is what you enjoy doing, so start your business by offering the services you enjoy doing the most and expand your business from there as you get to learn and know other jobs.
- **Learn about the industry for your business** - do Internet research around the world. There are many VA sites worldwide that you can visit to see what the industry is about. Search for 'Virtual Assistants' via Google etc.
- **Here are some sites to do research from; the ladies who run these sites are leaders within the VA Industry worldwide:**
  - <http://vadirectory.net/> owned by Kathie M Thomas
  - <http://www.execstress.com/> owned by Lyn Prowse-Bishop
  - <http://oivac.com/> owned by Sharon Williams
  - <http://www.vanetworking.com/> owned by Tawnya Sutherland (This site is packed full of information)
- **South African VA Groups to Research**
  - TAVASA – The Transcriptionists and Virtual Assistants of South Africa, <http://www.tavasa.co.za>
  - Be Virtual Wise - <http://www.be-virtual-assistant-wise.com/>
  - Be Virtual Wise Blog: <http://be-virtual-assistant-wise.co.za/>

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- **Check out the market for your business** - study your competition, speak to other experienced VAs, ask how they started up, etc. And if an established VA will assist you as your mentor, grab her and don't let her go.
- **Educate yourself on running a business** - Learn what a Business Owner is and what Business Owners do, you have your company books, invoicing, customer liaison, quotations, networking, marketing, debt collecting etc. There is more to running a business than just taking in typing jobs. A Virtual Assistant runs a business/company.
- **Join Associations** - Chamber of Commerce, small to medium business networking groups, women's business groups etc. for networking purposes, locally. (Check your local newspaper for networking groups in your area; this is the place they usually advertise in).
- **Name your business** - have a business name that reflects what you are doing and who you are. Design a company logo and a company slogan.
- Perform a **business registration** search in the internet, on the name you choose for your business to make sure no one else is using that name.
- **Register a domain name for your website** - first check that the name you have chosen is not used by someone else. My domain name is [www.amftyping.co.za](http://www.amftyping.co.za), the domain being 'amftyping'.

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- **Design/Acquire a website/blogging site** <http://alison-fourie.blogspot.com/>, this is a great marketing tool, you can list your website on search engines and add your website and company details to search engine listings, classified sections, and in directories via the internet worldwide. Your website and blog are your internet advertising tools; they portray you on-line, make sure your content is good and draws clients to you. If it's not working within 3 months relook at your content and change it. **Website:** <http://www.amftyping.co.za>
- Create a presence on **social media sites** - Linked In, Twitter, Facebook etc. A good Linked in profile can be used as much as your Website can be used for marketing your services. Linked In is one of the best social media tools to use to market your business, it is free to use. **Linked in:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/amftyping>
- **Determine business structure** - sole proprietor, partnership, or corporation.
- **Budget** - know what your budget limits are, and work within these limits.
- **Write a business plan** - list your objectives and values, create your mission statement, update as your business grows. Set up the way you are going to run your business (Procedures/structures), document it, edit, as you need to, but put it in writing.
- **Write a Networking and Marketing Plan/Strategy**
- **Register your business with the Deeds Office** - (for South African VAs only, VAs from other countries must check their own country regulations) Have a choice of at least 3 company names; check out your company names via the internet, because if you find someone with the same business name you will have to change your name as they were there first.

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- **Organise** your office and office space.
- **Order signage** - I have a sign attached to my gate with business name and details. Place signage/magnets on your car, as you drive around, you are advertising your company.
- **Obtain business tools** (computer, printer, fax machine, office supplies, and fixtures, ADSL line, Broadband/wireless connection). (Make sure you have the bandwidth to cater for your job, if you are doing transcription/typing you will be receiving and sending large files, you need to be able to download and upload these files so **your bandwidth must be adequate**.)
- Order/Create business stationery (business cards, letterhead, brochures, forms etc.). You can create your own office stationery via your computer, it saves money.
- **Set a launch date** - organise a press release worldwide, advertise it everywhere.
- **Plan a grand opening event** - create press releases, flyers, and notices. Send announcements to everyone you know that you are opening your business. Let people know about this, advertise strongly that you are opening your business, let other VAs know, report it on forums, Facebook, networking sites/social media. But **get your opening information out there**.
- Evaluate your **marketing/networking strategy** and **business plan** often.