

Administrative assistant roles

The Role



Administrative assistance refers to virtual assistant roles which specialise in administrative tasks such as scheduling meetings, organising transport, receiving and directing phone calls and emails, and maintaining office supply stocks. The tasks remain much the same as traditional administrative roles; however, they can be done from the comfort of your home or wherever you choose to work from.

A Day in the Life

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT



Computer & software skills



Management of schedules for co-workers & office events



Clear, friendly verbal & written communication



Great attention to detail



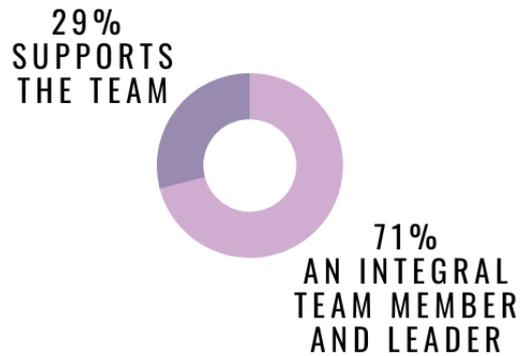
The Changing Role of the Admin

ALL ABOUT ADMINS

HOW **DIFFICULT**
WOULD IT BE TO FIND
A GOOD ADMIN?

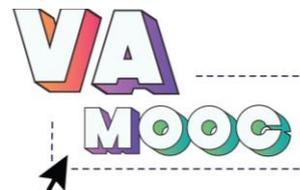
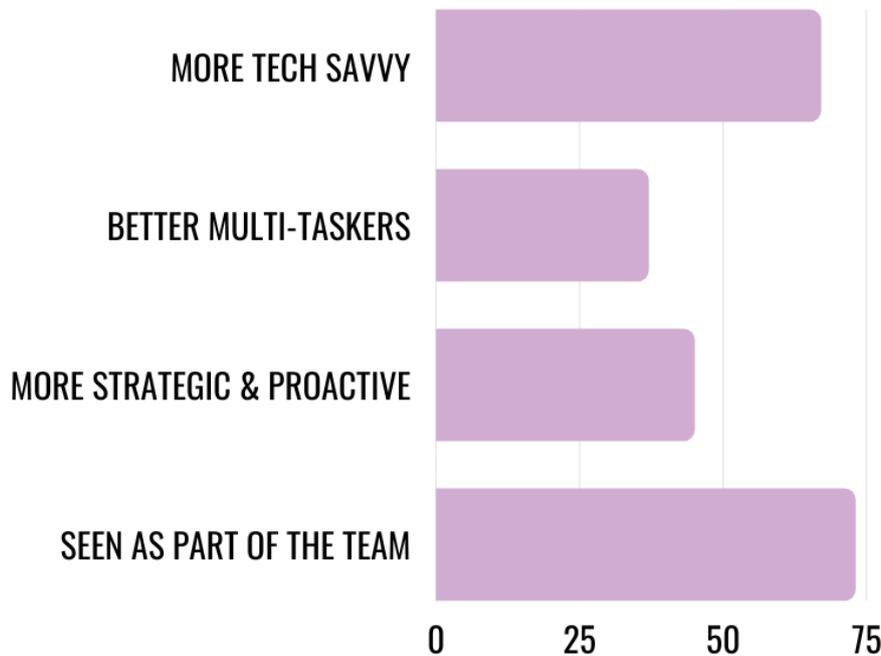


THE ROLE OF YOUR
ADMIN ASSISTANT
RELATIVE TO YOUR TEAM



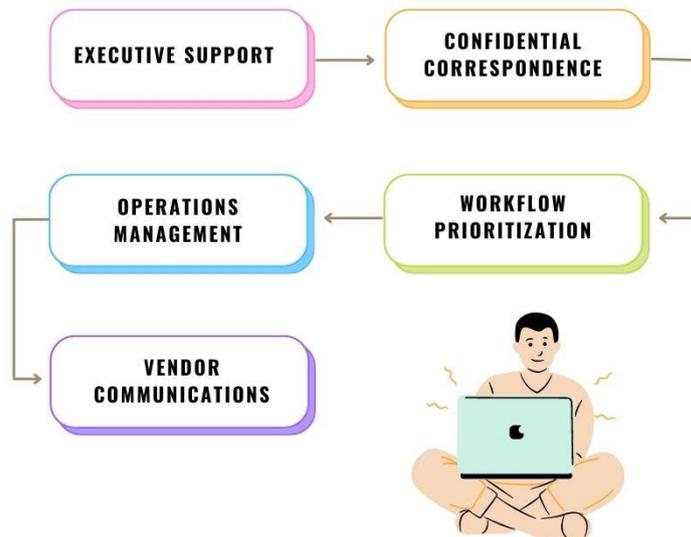
98% of respondents see the best admins differently than 5-10 years ago.

HOW ARE THEY DIFFERENT?



Top 5 Skills

TOP 5 ADMINISTRATOR SKILLS OF A VA



Cost of entry

Cost of Entry: Low - Medium Cost €€

Administrative assistant roles can be a cost-effective way of entering the remote workforce. Many organisations will offer access to the necessary platforms on a company account. The company can provide a work phone or a bill pay plan. In some cases, they may also offer a work laptop. Typical costs to consider before starting are:

- Laptop costs; a high-spec laptop may be required for some roles (€€€)
- Wifi with a secure server, depending on local area rates (€)
- Mobile Phone bills (€)
- Software Subscription Costs (€€)





Environmental Impact

Environmental Impact: Low Impact

If approximately 4 million workers adopt remote work, there would be a reduction of 3 million tons of greenhouse gases, the equivalent of planting almost 92 million trees. Remote working reduces the carbon footprint in many ways.

- Less daily commuter traffic reduces CO2 admissions and improves air quality in built-up areas. 
- Less use of single-use plastics and coffee cups as workers typically eat and drink from home. 
- Less energy waste from computers, lights, printers etc. being left on unnecessarily for prolonged periods of the day. 
- Less printing and paper wastage as e-files and PDFs are used as standard. 

Ongoing energy consumption (heating houses, water usage and electricity usage) remains a concern.



Good Practice

- **Be a Great Communicator:** Administrative assistants require excellent written and verbal communication skills. Correct use of language, active listening skills and good grammar are core administrator skills.



- **Organization is Key:** Administrative assistant roles can be demanding and require excellent organisation, multi-tasking and time management skills. Good organisation ensures that administrators can stay on top of their workload and reach optimal performance.
- **Expect the Unexpected:** As administrators are often the key link in organisation communication, they can foresee potential pitfalls before they happen. Showing initiative and identifying these to employers can cement administrators as being the essential team players they are.
- **Demonstrate Resourcefulness:** Administrators are often jack of all trades. The ability to think outside the box and jump in when challenging situations arise is always in demand.



Challenges

- **Not Enough Hours:** Administrative assistants are often at the beck and call of an entire office, with their already long to-do lists often disregarded. Work days can be busy and feel never-ending. Strong task-prioritising skills are required.
- **The Blame Game:** When something goes wrong, administrative assistants can often be the first blamed. When working remotely, isolation



can further amplify this. Keep in mind that even though you are working remotely, you are still a crucial member of the team and any disrespectful behaviour towards you should be brought to your manager's attention.

- **Unnecessary Tasks:** Historically, administrative assistants have been given inappropriate and unnecessary tasks by co-workers. These can vary from picking up personal dry-cleaning to organising family holidays to even simple coffee runs. Thankfully as a virtual assistant these tasks are less likely to occur.



General Advice/ solutions

- **Communication is Key:** Ensure your colleagues are aware of what the remit of your role is. Share your to-do list, your calendar, and your leave schedule with the entire office. This way colleagues are aware of realistic task deadlines and won't contact you during protected time.
- **Keep a Record:** Keep a clear communication record with co-workers and 'To-Do list records' of all tasks assigned. This ensures you can stay on top of your workload and enjoy a better work-life balance.
- **Learn Ways to Say No:** Ensure when taking on a role that your job spec is clearly laid out. Get comfortable in politely telling co-workers when tasks assigned are not appropriate or if you do not have the capacity to take them on. In some cases, less tech-savvy co-workers can assign



inappropriate tasks based on their own lack of knowledge. Creating cheat sheets or links to relevant videos can support co-workers in completing these tasks independently.



What skills do you need?

Virtual administrative assistant is a great role for individuals who:

- Are highly self-motivated and have strong multi-tasking skills.
- Have a good awareness of core administrative software such as MS Office, Google services and virtual meeting platforms such as Skype or MS Teams.
- Have good interpersonal skills and enjoy engaging with people and the public.

Many people who work in the creative sector use virtual administrative roles as a way to get their foot in the door with organisations with a longer-term goal of pursuing their specialised creative field. Once working in an administrative role, individuals can highlight their other skill sets, such as content creation, copywriting, and visual media skills.

Conclusion



- Administrative assistant roles are an excellent entry point for individuals with strong communication, multi-tasking, time-management, and organisation skills.
- General start-up costs can be low depending on the nature of the role and technology and software already available to you.
- Becoming a virtual administrative assistant is good for the environment. It can provide an improved work-life balance and offers a stable income compared to freelancing alternatives.
- In being a strong communicator, a diligent organiser, and an intuitive problem-solving machine, an administrative assistant can excel in their role and seek out opportunities for further career development. This is especially true for creatives looking to gain remote working experience in their specialised field.
- Administrative assistance roles do not come without challenges. Building good boundaries and personal relationships with colleagues can help to overcome them.

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