

Virtual Assistants Become a Little Less Virtual

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Toronto, Canada ... North American Virtual Assistants and particularly Canadian VA's have never before had the opportunity to meet and exchange views in this kind of forum and on Canadian soil. Barb Lang, a Toronto based Virtual Assistant specializing in Event Planning, saw a need for new and seasoned VA's to meet in person in order to exchange ideas and business expertise in a mastermind / workshop type event. Other successful VA conferences, generally held in the U.S., have followed the traditional conference format where participants listen and learn from guest speakers but very little interaction is expected.

“There is an incredible amount of talent and expertise already among the VA community. We should tap into that ‘real life experience’. The entrepreneurial freedom of Virtual Assistance is becoming a very desirable alternative to the corporately employed admin or executive assistant. I get people calling me weekly to find out more about the profession and how they might start out.” At the same time, experienced VAs who have successfully been in practice for more than 3 - 5 years, are looking for ways to move their businesses forward.

Barb decided that it was time to bring VA's together in a stimulating and safe environment where judicious and relevant business issues and information could be exchanged and debated. “I want delegates to leave the forum with a solid plan in hand to take back to their businesses and implement immediately” says the organizer. “Personally, I'm not interested in hearing about ‘Laughter Therapy’ or having my ‘Colours done’. I work in my home office wearing my slippers and what I most need to know about is what a ‘wiki’ is and how my clients can promote their businesses using the latest Webinar technology or what the best way is for me to earn some residual income. I want to know why my ACT! database doesn't play nice with my Adobe software and what are others do when they run into problems. Based on the positive responses from the VA community, it appears that I'm not the only one who needs to know these things.” Forum delegates, new or experienced, will take home practical and actionable step-by-step plans to start or grow their VA businesses immediately. The forum will be based on a dual track system so that delegates, no matter what level they are at, can get the information they came for.

“I also hope to get some big players to help sponsor the event. Office supply chains, courier companies, printers, banks, marketing companies, software, hardware, service oriented businesses... you name it, we buy it and so do our clients. The more Sponsors brought on board to support this event, the bigger the event which in turn means more businesses shopping in their stores or using their services. It's a win win!” Says Barb.

The Forum on Virtual Assistance or FoVA will be held in early May of 2008 and is expected to become an annual tradition.

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Barbara Lang is a bilingual VA and owner and operator of Virtually Anything-Administrative Services. With more than 18 years of corporate experience, Barb left the financial industry in 2002 to launch her business and has never looked back. Barb is a trainer for the VATP and briefly taught (online) for Red Deer College in AB. She serves on the Advisory Board for Georgian College and often speaks at Employment Resource Centres about the viability of VA as a career option. Barb has been guest on CKDO's Small Business, Big Ideas Radio Show and is an active Committee Member for the Canadian Virtual Assistants Network (CVAN) and coaches/mentors emerging Virtual Assistants for CVAN and the International Virtual Assistance Association (IVAA) and is an AssistU Alumni and former Canadian Chapter Leader.

[You can find this press release here](#)