

# How Virtual Assistance Can Help Your Small Business

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My name is Brian Gladu and I am the owner of LongerDays.com, LLC. Thank you for requesting this report on virtual assistance. I know you are busy so I've tried to make it worth your while to read it.

Over the past couple of years, I've had the unique opportunity to observe hundreds of small businesses use our service and interact directly with just as many small business owners. From my desk in South Carolina, I saw their struggles, their victories, and as a fellow small business owner, I was right there beside them dealing with many of the same issues.

Over time, I noticed a time management and priority problem shared by myself and many of our clients that was holding us back and limiting the progress of our companies. To be honest, I saw it as a problem for our clients long before I was able to realize it was also a problem for me. I think it is characteristic of small business owners that we are blind to it.

Almost all business owners have heard about the problem, it is touched on in popular business books authored by small business coaches like Michael Gerber ("E-Myth Mastery.") But awareness isn't enough, it is something that is difficult to comprehend at the deep level that would cause us to change our approach to managing our time and running our business. To make matters worse, limited funding traps us - even once we acknowledge the problem and want to change it, there is only so much we can do about it.

I think my position as an observer of the world of small business has given me a unique vantage point and something to add to the conversation already taking place. Rather than just point out the problem, I want to show you exactly how our service addresses all of the issues I will bring up. I hope to also offer a realistic solution to this problem, offer clear guidance on how to get the most out of our service, and help you get started in a way that virtually guarantees more forward progress for your business.

I often talk to clients who want me to share any information that would be helpful to them when working with us. I hope this report accomplishes that. My goal is to pass on what I've learned about virtual assistance from owning and operating our company so that you have the best possible chance of succeeding.

But, I can only talk about how to best leverage our service in the context of the problem it solves. So, in the first part of this report I want to discuss what I call the "the dark side" of the entrepreneurial spirit and how this interacts with the combined problems of limited funding and limited resources.

# It's difficult...

Owning your own business is exciting - you get to make the decisions, you don't answer to anyone, and you have the opportunity to make a lot of money. It's the promise of freedom and, eventually, a significant financial reward that motivates thousands of people to open the doors of a new business each year.

The downside, and what keeps many people from taking that leap, is that it is extremely challenging and risky... and that's probably an understatement.

As a small business owner, you have to keep dozens of balls in the air at any given moment - juggling deadlines, managing cash flow, and delivering on your promises - all while making decisions based on limited information and under relentless pressure and financial stress. It's common knowledge that, statistically, the deck is stacked against you: the overwhelming majority of small businesses will eventually fail at enormous expense to the business owner.

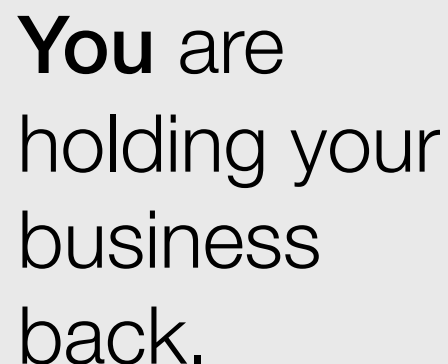
There are a lot of factors that make it so difficult to build a profitable, lasting company - anyone could easily list off ten - but the biggest challenge is actually you. You are holding your business back. Not because you want to, obviously no one wants your business to succeed more than you, but because you are trapped by the very thing that caused you to start your own business: your entrepreneurial spirit.

# You are the constraint...

Every business has a single limiting factor at any given moment. It may be cash on hand, supply of a particular part, or a website that is converting poorly. Whatever that constraint is, once it is addressed and removed, the business can function at a higher level and something else becomes the new limiting constraint holding the business back. Improving your business can be looked at as a constant process of identifying constraints and then taking steps to remove them.

In a small business, the owner is typically a constraint. Their time and attention is the most limited, precious resource the business has at its disposal.

In spite of this, most small business owners behave as though the opposite were true, as if they had all the time in the world. They pile their plate to the ceiling with everything they come across almost without discretion - bookkeeping, ad writing, website maintenance, customer service, inventory management, etc. There is nothing they will say no to, nothing they can't do.



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The business owner gets careless with their time and, long before he or she realizes it, their attention is spent on everything but those few things that lead to progress and growth.

They have fallen into a productivity paradox - getting a lot done, but not the things that matter, spinning their wheels, but making no significant forward progress.

# Alignment with “the goal...”

A business exists to make money and all activities should be aligned with that goal. There are certain activities that are responsible for bringing more money into a business and every business owner should know exactly what those activities are. There probably aren't many. Unless you've got more revenue than you want, someone should be spending as much time as possible on these few key activities throughout the day.

If the goal of a business is to make money, any time spent NOT doing these things can be viewed as a waste of time<sup>1</sup>. In spite of this, the business owner's mile long list of to-dos is probably focused on the details that keep the business functioning but do not directly contribute to its bottom-line. It's an inconsistency between what should happen and what actually ends up happening that should smack us in the face, but it doesn't.

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<sup>1</sup> It is true that these other tasks, that don't necessarily bring in money, are important because they need to be done eventually just to keep the business running. But, they don't need to be done by the business owner.

# The double-edged sword...

It's actually the same positive quality that prompted you to start your own business - your entrepreneurial spirit - that is trapping you. The same ambition, confidence, and belief that hard work pays off, that initially inspired you to take this path is actually preventing you from making it very far. It is the dark side of the entrepreneurial personality we don't hear much about.

The entrepreneurial spirit creates fertile ground for a Superman Complex which is typified by the belief that you are always the best man for the job, you can do everything, and anyone else's efforts will fall short in comparison, so you might as well do it all yourself.

Entrepreneurs typically:

... **take pride in their work** - making other people's work pale in comparison. They set the bar for quality and don't expect anyone else to be able to measure up. Why delegate if no one else is as capable?

... **have confidence in their ability to do it all** - making them take on more than they should, take on things they shouldn't, and spend time on the wrong things.

... **believe strongly in the benefits of hard work** - leading them to believe that working longer hours is the solution to every problem the business has.

The entrepreneurial spirit, as wonderful as it is, needs to be tempered by a realistic appraisal of your capability and an

understanding of what your role should be so that you can begin prioritizing, saying "no" to certain activities, and delegating. It is this, and this only, that removes you as the constraint on your business.

You are not a superhuman but the entrepreneurial spirit leads you to behave as though you are and that is your Achilles heel. The entrepreneurial spirit blinds you to the fact that more of a good thing is not necessarily the solution.

Yes, hard work is good and will eventually be what brings you success. Yes, being confident in your abilities allows you to act on your motivation in a way many others are scared to so you can seize opportunity. Yes, you probably can do many things well and this is what let's you perform as the jack-of-all-trades and keeps your business functioning from day-to-day.

But, you are one person. You cannot single-handedly run an entire business and expect it to grow indefinitely. At some point the business will plateau simply because one person can only do so much and will inevitably become the constraint.

After that point, small businesses do not grow when the owner takes on more work or works longer hours. They actually grow when the owner realizes what his strengths and weaknesses are, admits that a certain portion of his workload is never going to be touched, and acts accordingly.

As counter-intuitive as it seems, it is the owner doing less that permits the business to grow to new levels.

# Do you have a choice?

Improper use of our time is often something we do out of necessity - we may feel like we simply don't have a choice in the matter.

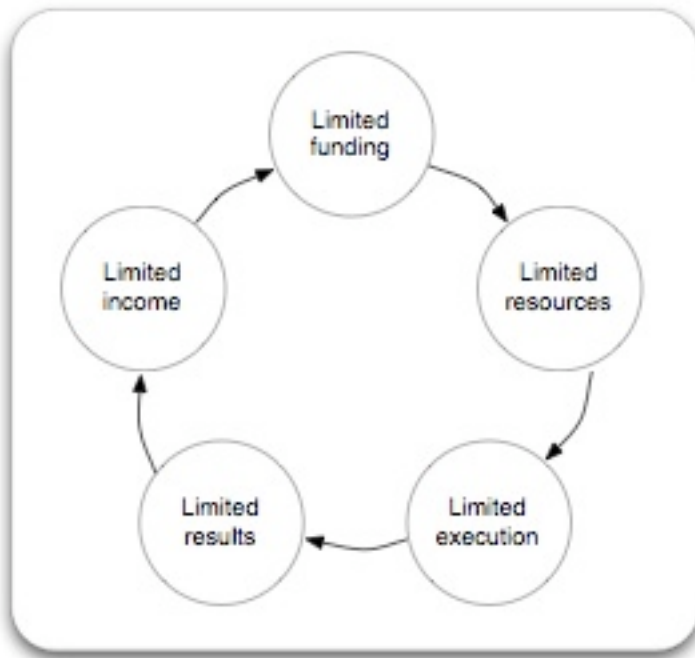
Sure, if you had unlimited funds you could hire people to do everything for you - experts to fill each role inside your business - and you'd sit back and watch the money pour in. Assuming you have a good business model, this would probably work but it would take a lot of money up front, easily hundreds of thousands of dollars, to get the business up to speed and returning on that investment. Most small business owners simply don't have the funding to get up and running this way.

Limited funding precludes this from even being a possibility so we small business owners are forced to limp along with only our limited ability and resources, frustrated by our slow progress, but unsure of what else to do.

In spite of our realization that we should not be doing a lot of what we are doing, we may feel there isn't much we can do about it. What I hope to show you in the following pages is that this isn't true anymore, there is a solution.

# The limited funding cycle...

The following diagram illustrates the feedback cycle between limited funding and limited resources:



Our limited resources lead to limited progress which leads to limited income and so limited working capital and back to limited resources with which to work with and so on.

It's a vicious, debilitating cycle and escape is not necessarily a matter of keeping your nose to the grindstone. Most small business owners will try to solve the problem with hard work on their part

(the Superman Complex at work) but sometimes, elbow grease and burning the midnight oil just isn't enough.

The obvious way to end this cycle is to get access to more resources. The more resources you have at your disposal, the more important work you can get done that will grow your business, bring in more income, and then you have more working capital to invest back into your business.

By increasing resources, you can increase results, giving you more funds to work with and get yourself free of this cycle. What our service

offers is a cheap way to get access to the resources that will grow your business.

# A way out...

When people hear about virtual assistance, their initial reaction is, "That's neat." They can intuitively see how useful it would be to have a group of people on hand to help them as needed. It's a flexible service anyone could use and get value from - from college students to busy parents to jetset corporate executives.

But, it is my belief that small business owners stand to benefit the most. In fact, I would go so far as to say that it is revolutionary to the world of small business and very few have realized that yet. It's more

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than just "neat," it's potentially life-changing, and it can easily be the catalyst that takes your business to next level of profitability and automation, allowing you to completely sidestep the problems we have talked about.

But you need to understand what makes virtual assistance truly unique before you can appreciate that. The real strengths of virtual

assistance - what set it apart from any other service out there - are two major things:

- 1.) the ability to purchase small quantities of time and use them flexibly over the course of a month and
- 2.) gaining access to the skills and talents of many people with relevant small business experience.

# Small quantities of time...

You may not have enough work to justify hiring someone to work at your company. Even if you did, it is a risky proposition. Once you've made that hiring decision, you are responsible for that person's salary and all the costs associated with having another worker onboard - software, workstation, taxes, insurance, etc. They probably won't agree to a "work as needed" arrangement so you are committing to spending a certain amount of money each pay period whether you have work for them or not.

Virtual assistance is unique in that you can buy a small quantity of time - starting at only 10 hours a month - and use that time flexibly over the course of 30 days. For example, you could send a lot of work at the beginning of the month and none for the rest of the month.

Buying a small block of time is what makes it affordable. Our service starts at only few hundred dollars a month. That's not much money considering the benefit - you can free yourself from the limited funding cycle and begin moving your business forward in important ways.

It's an investment in the literal sense of the word - if you use the service properly, to have us accomplish important business goals on your behalf, you'll get a significant return and break free of the limited funding cycle.

# Access to many people...

Virtual assistance gives you access to the resources you need to grow your business at an affordable price. You are no longer limited to your own skills, abilities, knowledge, time, and other resources due to budget constraints.

If you were to hire someone to come work at your company, you would get the skills and talents of a single person. By using our service, you get access to a team of people (our entire office in fact, including me). People with diverse backgrounds and skill-sets capable of completing a dizzying array of tasks in support of your business.

I don't know of a service other than virtual assistance that allows you to overcome this barrier so elegantly and for so little. We truly are a one-stop-shop, a small business swiss army knife, if you will. The idea is if a small business needs it, we can do it - from keeping the books, to executing whole online marketing campaigns.

Working together at an office, as opposed to having a network of people working remotely from home, is what allows us to really work as a team and leverage the strengths of everyone in the office. When someone needs my opinion or guidance, all they have to do is walk into my office and we can work together. I don't know of another virtual assistance company in the United States that works together this way.

# Get important work done...

I actually dislike referring to our company as a “virtual assistant” company. You may have noticed that up to this point I said we offer “virtual assistance” instead. We are forced to use this moniker - it existed before we came along, and it is the term our market uses to find us. I dislike it because, what seems like a minor semantic difference, actually determines the value we can provide to our clients.

The term “virtual assistant” implies that we are only capable “assistant” work. Many clients come into the relationship expecting that we are can handle only low-level administrative work. This is unfortunate because we are capable of so much more.

If I could choose the term for us it would be “a remote worker” or, ideally, “small business partners.” When you work with us, you are getting a diverse team of college-educated, American workers who, collectively, have worked with hundreds and hundreds of businesses in a vast spectrum of industries.

We have the knowledge, insight, and capability to contribute to your business in important ways - strategy, planning, marketing, analysis, and execution. Ideally, we would be aligned with the same initiatives you are focused on so that we can help you move your business forward faster so that you reap the benefits sooner.

Especially in this economy, we ask that clients use us on work that will eventually pay off or, ideally, that directly contributes to your bottom-line. As the person who tells us what to execute, you are in complete control of the value you get out of this service. Please don't hinder our ability to give you as much value as possible by underestimating us.

# Taking the first step...

If you are anything like the typical small business owner, you are trying to do everything yourself and struggling with cash flow problems. You believe in your business, you know it can succeed.

You can see the light at the end of the tunnel, and it keeps you going, but that light never seems to move much closer. You are stuck in the Limited Funding Cycle and your Superman Complex traps you into the mindset that if you work just a little bit harder, things will improve.

What we offer you is the opportunity to break that cycle, to move your business forward in significant ways, by partnering with our company. When you do that, you'll get access to the a team of people on hand to accomplish whatever result your business needs and dedicated to helping your small business succeed.

If what I have discussed in this report rings true for you, if you can see yourself in any of what I discussed, please [go to our website](#) and sign up for our [free trial](#).

As soon as you can, get me on the phone: 800 - 507-1622 ext: 610. Together we will hammer out a three month plan for bringing your business forward, growing your profits, and give you more free time to enjoy life. After all, this is what being a small business owner is supposed to be about.

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