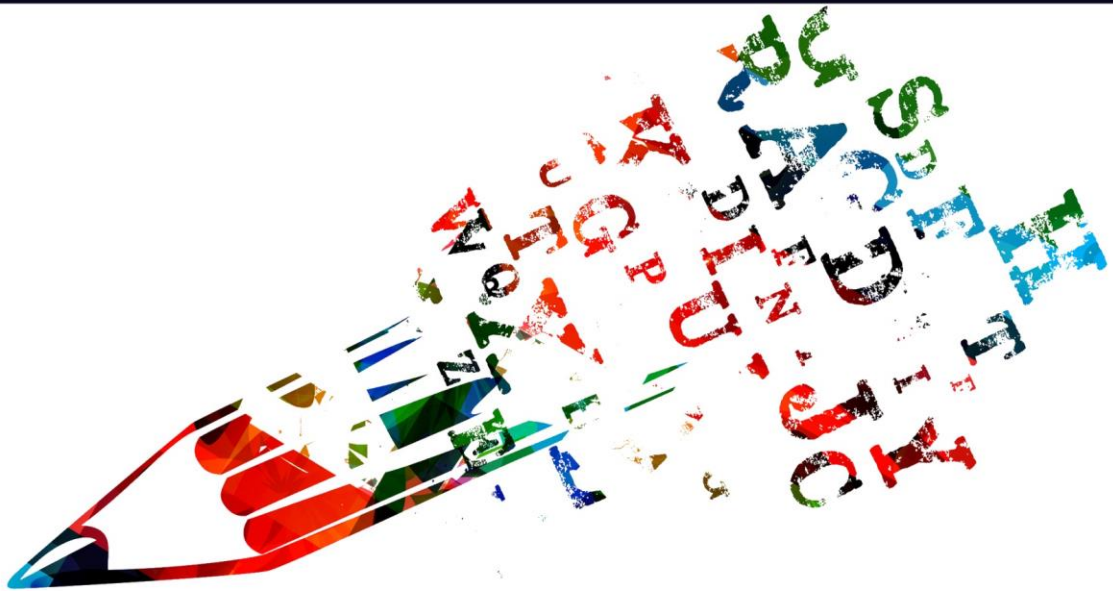


RFP CREATIVE WRITING TIPS FOR CLIENTS

WHO WANT TO WORK WITH
PREMIUM VIRTUAL ASSISTANTS



Janine Gregor

Dear Potential Clients,

I expect you may be reading this document for one of two reasons:

- 1) Your RFP submission did not attract enough *qualified* virtual assistants proposals to choose just the right VA
- 2) You want to learn something about writing an RFP that will attract qualified virtual assistants

My name is Janine Gregor and I am the author of an eBook entitled, ["The RFP Transformation - Take Your Virtual Assistant Proposal From Blah to Bling."](#) .

I am an expert Request for Proposal (RFP) specialist who assists VAs with composing winning proposals for small business owners like you.

In my eBook, I offer a list of **RFP RED FLAGS** and Tips for virtual assistants seeking new clients. My research extended into the *process* of writing the actual RFP from the *viewpoint* of business owners such as yourself, seeking VAs.

As a result, this eBooklet is a compilation of five articles, offering tips you can use to write the best possible RFP and find the right VA-

partner.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at YourVirtualWizard@gmail.com or schedule time with me at www.JanineGregor.com . I would happy to review your RFP and make suggestions.

To your business success in making the **BEST** investment you will make to grow your business!

Janine Gregor

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#1

Is Your Request for Proposal Designed to Attract Top Virtual Assistants?

Let me guess why you are here!

Like you, I spend hours marketing my business, which eats into the time I really want to spend with my clients. Just locating a photo for a blog post I have written takes more time than writing the blog post itself!

You need help with your operations. Submitting a Request for Proposal (RFP) is one means to finding the right person to help you out. Well-crafted RFPs can elicit the attention of one or more VAs from which to make a selection.

And as a business owner, you want choices. Submitting an RFP gives you these choices to weed out the tire-kickers and aim directly for

virtual assistants who are genuinely interested in partnering with you.

As a business owner, you will want your RFP to publicize specific skills and software knowledge that most likely won't require extensive training or hand-holding. You may want to 'hit the ground running' with your new virtual assistant. Or in some cases, you may not even know what virtual assistant services you need so your RFP will read more about what you want to accomplish and the advice needed from a VA about how to get there.

But you must write a clear and concise Request for Proposal expressing the best that you can those skills and requirements you need from a VA. So please carve out the time to plan your RFP to be complete and descriptive.

Comedian Milton Berle once said, "If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door".

You have created the opportunity and now it is time to build and open that door.

But how can you find someone with the qualities you and your organization need to move forward?

What is an RFP?

“An RFP is an online VA-Seeking system typically realized in a web form viewed on a website where a potential client indicates he/she is searching for a virtual assistant to perform specified tasks at a particular rate to be completed within a specific period of time.”

(Gregor, 2015, p. 10)

Virtual Assistant Ville and Virtual Assistant Forums are two reputable sites where web form exists to post an open opportunity for a virtual assistant.

My advice is to post an RFP at each one of these sites for the best

possible results.

[Virtual Assistant Forums](#)

[Virtual AssistantVille](#)

But *who* am I to tell you what needs to be done to locate the right virtual assistant?

I am Janine Gregor and the author of an eBook entitled, “The RFP Transformation - Take Your Virtual Assistant Proposal From Blah to Bling.” I am an expert Request for Proposal (RFP) virtual assistant consultant who assists VAs with composing winning proposals for clients like you.

In the process of writing the eBook, I interviewed perspective clients and website administrators to determine what should and should not be included in an RFP form. I researched a variety of sites that post RFPs for VAs, both paid and free and I evaluated these sites for ease of writing, reading and professional standards.

By an overwhelming response, ***'Not completing the RFP'*** was the prime reason most website admins stated as the most prolific problem with RFP submissions by potential clients.

One reputable administrator of a site known for offering good quality RFPs to virtual assistants summed up, “Business owners seeking virtual assistants who do not take the time to completely fill out an RFP (Request for Proposal) contact forms may be missing out on working with a great virtual assistant.”

Tip #1 – Complete the Request for Proposal in its entirety. Leaving information missing from the form leads the VA to believe the potential client (PC) is not a reputable business.

Know that most virtual assistants will use the links provided in the RFP to research the client background before writing a proposal. The more information you can provide in an RFP, the more helpful it will be to the VA as to whether the client is a good match.

Tip #2 - If the client cannot complete the RFP form use N/A or 'will supply' as the response instead of leaving the spaces blank.

Here is an example of an incomplete RFP heading which has made it difficult for the VA to determine if it is worth the time and the effort to create a proposal.

Client name: [X] House Cleaning LLC	Client email: anita@[X]housecleaning.com
Company name: [X] House Cleaning LLC	Company URL: http://
Company Phone: ---	Industry: House Cleaning
Company information: ---	

A diagram of an RFP form with several fields. The 'Client name' and 'Company name' fields contain '[X] House Cleaning LLC'. The 'Client email' field contains 'anita@[X]housecleaning.com'. The 'Company URL' field contains 'http://'. The 'Industry' field contains 'House Cleaning' and is highlighted with a red box. The 'Company Phone' and 'Company information' fields contain '---'. Black arrows point to the missing information: one arrow points from the 'Company name' field to the 'Client name' field; another points from the 'Company name' field to the 'Company Phone' field; a third points from the 'Company name' field to the 'Company information' field; and a fourth points from the 'Company URL' field to the right.

Tip #3 – Insert 2 separate email addresses in the RFP for a VA to contact you.

In some cases one email client will reject attachments, so offering two emails ensures that you will receive proposals from the respondents.

There have been cases where the potential client's email address has

been misspelled and if it were not for an alternative email address, my own personal proposals would not have been received.

#2 Mistakes Biz Owners Make When Writing an RFP for a Virtual Assistant

“If you don't drive your business, you will be driven out of business.”

B. C. Forbes

You are steering the business wheel; speeding at Mach one. Your windshield view is a blur. You cannot spare the time to pull over to the rest stop. You cannot plan time to spend with your current customers or establish relationships with new customers. Creating new products and services is stuck in the slow lane.

Your business is driving YOU!

Solution: Partner with a Virtual Assistant who can relieve you of those tasks which fuel your business.

You can start by asking your colleagues for a virtual assistant referral.

And that may very well be the solution.

Or you can expedite the process by submitting a Request for Proposal (RFP) describing all the skill specifications required to drive your business in the right direction.

I recommend two VA-centered sites; [Virtual Assistantville](#) and [Virtual Assistant Forums](#).

A potential client may only have a few seconds to capture virtual assistant's attention as they browse through RFP listings. So your RFP has to be sharp.

How can you write a strong RFP that will attract the very best candidates for the opportunity?

Here are two additional Client-driven RFP Tips in this 5-part blog post series:

- 1) Begin first and foremost by taking the time to create a good clear title.

RFP titles such as, “Dream Virtual Assistant Wanted” or “Virtual Assistant Wanted” or “Savvy VAs Only Apply” are vague.

Well-written RFP postings with titles such as, “Graphics Designer Virtual Assistant Needed”, “Social Media VA,” “Infusion Soft Customer Service Virtual Assistant Needed” or “QuickBooks Bookkeeping VA” capture the interest of VAs who can offer these skills. Potential clients can be even more specific by posting titles for project work, such as, “Looking for Someone to Move YouTube Channel,” and “Seeking a VA to Create PDF Document from Blog Posts” target precise areas of expertise.

From a virtual assistant’s perspective a well-crafted RFP posting title could be a strong sign that a potential client knows exactly what category of VA he/she desires. Clients who know what they want are often perceived as being organized and professional and therefore considered ‘ideal clients’.

The robust desire to work with ideal clients prompts VAs to respond quickly to the best written RFPs.

Expect greater responses to an RFP from virtual assistants whose skills match more closely with those requested by the potential clients that begin with a clear, concise title.

2) Not really knowing what services are desired of a virtual assistant is a common complaint stated by website administrators who review RFPs for their sites.

Business owners seeking the services of virtual assistants should have a clear understanding of the tasks to be accomplished. These tasks should be presented in the RFP along with goals to be achieved.

Listing detailed wants and needs and then categorizing these into specific groups of services can also assist in creating the aforementioned necessary clear RFP title.

For example, a business owner may want to increase opt-ins for an email list on his/her website to with a goal of selling X number of coaching services. This task can be accomplished through social media

interaction, blogging, or newsletter creation. Therefore, the RFP title could be, “Social Media Virtual Assistant with Business Writing Skills Wanted” and the opportunity written clearly spelling out what skills are needed and those goals desired.

#3- 2 Additional Mistakes Clients Make When Using RFPs to Find a Virtual Assistant

When reviewing Request for Proposal samples for my eBook, “The RFP Transformation” I would cringe at the below market rates being offered to virtual assistants in RFPs.

Sometimes the rate was so low, that it was inconceivable to believe that a business person could even expect to pay a professional VA fees equaling the price of a cup of coffee for one hour’s work.

Understand that if you want quality virtual assistant services, you will need to pay for this expertise. Posting below market rates for example, “...to write promotional content for a website” is simply absurd.

Writing is an expert skill and composing promotional content for the internet requires a greater level of proficiency. Understanding search engine optimization, keyword sources, formatting, length, action

words, marketing (understanding who your market may be) in addition to English fluency, grammar and punctuation takes experience and education.

In the spirit of helping business owners write the very best Request for Proposals, my first tip is:

Tip: #1 – Do the research. Check out virtual assistant websites for the copyrighting services you seek (using the above services wanted as an example). See what they are charging. Ask your colleagues for their advice. Know that in order for a Virtual Assistant to break even (taxes and expenses) the average per hour charge is \$35 per hour. Highly sought after technical skills pay much more.

If you post an RFP on sites such as Virtual Assistantville, the lowest rate they publish is \$15 per hour and is only as a courtesy to their newest

members who may be starting their rate at a lower than average market rate.

Understand that a professional virtual assistant is an investment in your business that will save you money! I save my clients thousands of dollars because they do not incur the expenses of an employee.

Red Adair said, “If you think it’s expensive to hire a professional to do the job, wait until you hire an amateur.”

Tip #2 – Do not ask for free or trial work, commission work or for services paid on a sliding scale.

Free work devalues a virtual assistant’s professionalism. You will not receive quality candidates for your RFP if you ask for free work.

If you do the legwork and research your virtual assistant candidates thoroughly using their proposals as a good foundation, choose your VA as you would to hire an employee. Check out testimonials in place of

references; ask for writing samples, or a portfolio. Look at websites, social media and an overall internet presence as a gauge. When you have your client consultation with your candidates, you can also determine if the VA is a good match.

Professional virtual assistants work with a signed contract. Be sure that the services you are seeking are itemized within the contract in an agreed upon timeline.

I add a 30-day termination clause to my contracts to protect myself and my clients. This gives us enough time to tie up loose ends if indeed the partnership does not work out.

#4 - 2 MORE Mistakes Biz Owners Make When Writing an RFP for a Virtual Assistant

While my eBook for VAs is entitled “The RFP Transformation” this post is #4 of 5 specifically written [U]for potential clients[/U] seeking VAs through Request for Proposals.

A VA can respond to an RFP with a glowing proposal but my research has shown that the odds decrease this will occur given the many mistakes potential clients make when submitting an RFP.

The virtual assistant proposal is only as good as the information provided in the RFP by the potential client.

Here are a few more tips you can use as a business owner to create a GREAT RFP that may secure the most skilled VAs for your business.

Tip #1 – Use industry-explicit titles when titling the RFP if you want to work with someone who has experience in a specific industry.

VAs are attracted to clients in specific industries as this develops an immediate sense of connection and commonality.

So if you are in the fishing industry and need a virtual assistant to assist with your business, title the RFP “Virtual Assistant with Fishing Tackle Industry Knowledge Needed for Administrative Projects”. Or if you operate a dance studio and would like to work with a VA who has dance experience then title your RFP, “Virtual Assistant with Dance Experience Needed for Social Media Project.”

Honing in on a specific VA target audience by industry draws in specialized talents often creates authentic and long-term quality VA-client partnerships.

Tip #2 – As obvious as this may sound...proofread your Request for Proposals for grammar, punctuation and spelling errors.

Potential clients seeking virtual assistants do not realize the negative implications a poorly formatted RFP will have on whether you receive qualified candidates for the virtual opportunity.

Poor grammar and spelling issues may often mean that the potential client may be 'sloppy' and 'careless' in their business practices. And no one wants to work with a business owner who offers these qualities.

It is important to remember that when a VA is reading an RFP, he/she looks for clues in addition to analyzing the information that has been provided in the RFP. Carelessness is a hint that this might not be a client that a VA would want to work with, which then translates to few candidates who bid for the virtual opportunity.

Tip 3– Insert this statement in your Request for Proposal, “My favorite type of person to work with is...” and then fill in that statement with 2 or 3 characteristics that have meaning to you. Here are actual examples from a virtual assistant site that accepts Requests for Proposals:

My Favorite Kind of Person to Work With is... This is what the actual form looks like in an RFP:

Budget*	<input type="text"/> What is your budget? Hourly, retainer or project
Availability	When do you need someone to be available? Daytime, evening and/or weekends? Do you have a preference for what timezone they are in? <input type="text"/>
My favorite kind of person to work with is...	(be as descriptive as possible here, so that potential team members can connect with you if they see themselves as a match) <input type="text"/>
How to Apply*	Specify via email, fax or online form and what specific information you would like from the applicants, and set a deadline as to when you'd like applications to be submitted. <input type="text"/>

These are actual responses from a business owner seeking a virtual assistant using RFPs and responding to the 'favorite kind of person' question as pictured above.

- My favorite kind of person to work with is...** - shows initiative
- creative
- works well both in teams and on their own
- My favorite kind of person to work with is...** someone who is:
- very organized
- tech savvy and learns new things easily
- shows initiative
- know I can trust them to get the task done
- works well in teams and on their own

If you include this information in your RFP, you are more likely to receive winning proposals from VAs who most closely match with your personality and professional requirements.

Tip 4 – If you have a large list of service needs, consider posting for 2 virtual assistants with separate specialties.

Tip 5 – Be courteous and respond to each VA who has submitted a proposal to you. Ask your new VA to send a courtesy note of thank you to the VAs who spent the time to submit a proposal. Keep a record of the email addresses and the proposal letters that were sent to you in a file as you never know if you may need to contact the applicants again.

#5 - Do You Want to Work with a Virtual Assistant? Read These Tips to Write an Effective RFP

“The only mistake you can make is not asking for help.” Sandeep Jauhar

While my eBook [“The RFP Transformation”](#) was published exclusively *for virtual assistants* using RFPs to connect with new clients, this post has been written *for clients seeking virtual assistants* who also use Request for Proposals.

I often hear potential clients complain that their RFPs do not garner the most qualified virtual assistants. And while I’ll admit some VA proposals are lacking, I believe this problem also lies in the incomplete ways that potential clients submit proposals.

The virtual assistant proposal is only as good as the information provided in the RFP by the potential client.

Here are a few more tips you can use as a business owner to create a GREAT RFP that may secure the most skilled VAs for your business.

Tip 1 – If you have a large list of service needs, be realistic about the timeline to complete these tasks. For example, if you desire a service that realistically will take 6 hours to complete but you only want to pay for 3 hours' worth of work this will pose a problem for any VA analyzing your RFP.

Tip 2 – If you have a large list of service needs and do not know how long the project will take consider asking for a packaged quote instead of an hourly rate. If there are components of the services you seek that fall in the 'unknown' amount of time zone to complete, and then consider a packaged rate and then an hourly rate for the 'unknown' services.

When I coach virtual assistants who want to submit winning proposals, I always explain how 'having your business in order' is so very important to securing new clients through RFPs.

If a client is seeking a VA most often they will do some background digging before deciding whether than VA would be suitable for a client consultation (the next step after submitting a proposal to a client).

So **Tip 3** – Have your client website and internet presence in order as well! I say this because virtual assistants who utilize RFPs to seek new clients will also research the client sites BEFORE they respond to an RFP.

A VA will look for website, social media, YouTube, interviews, podcasts, blog posts and Google the potential clients' name before writing a proposal just to ensure the potential client is legitimate AND determine if the potential client is a good match for the VA.

Tip 4 – I explain to virtual assistants who use RFPs that when they write their proposals, they must NOT write about themselves. Rather, they must write about the solutions they provide for potential clients. If a VA does not show any creativity in his/her response and the bulk of the proposal is about their lives, then reconsider contacting this virtual assistant.

Look for these qualities in the proposals you receive:

- ✓ Personality

- ✓ Professionalism
- ✓ Humor, some wit
- ✓ Flexibility
- ✓ Organizational Skills
- ✓ Trust and Dependability
- ✓ Superb Communication...and that includes spelling and punctuation

Tip 5 – When running through the list of services on the Request for Proposal form only check off those services you currently need. A number of potential clients will check off so many service requirements that this becomes overwhelming for the virtual assistant. Too many requested services can cause a virtual assistant to feel overwhelmed.



Contact me at <mailto:YourVirtualWizard@gmail.com> if you want an expert to create post and review your virtual assistant Request for Proposals.

I also offer consultation services to assist in finding a virtual assistant to partner with you! Schedule time with me on <http://www.JanineGregor.com/WorkWithMe>.