

Success stories – why I love what I do.
by Barbara Best
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You may have read my other article about what it takes to be a successful VA. It's all true – it does take commitment and perseverance. For all the things that running a successful practice is – all the hats you have to wear, the long days, juggling clients, associates' work, projects, deadlines, paying bills and all the rest of it, I wouldn't do anything else. I created this. I'm so busy because of what I've built over the years. I'm not just another number in a corporate job, and this is way more fun than working in a cubicle in some office building somewhere.

My office is the nicest one I've ever had. I got to decorate it the way I wanted to – the walls are a dove grey and all the decorations are in bold, primary colours like lots of red, black, cobalt blue.

I don't have to ask for vacation time, I just take it. I don't need to make sure my health care appointments are outside of working hours, I make them for during the day when it's not as busy. I get my grocery shopping done during the day for the same reason – I don't have to battle the crowds on Saturday morning. In my world, tasks scheduled and taken care of, and it makes for a much less stressful life, believe me.

I've worked with wonderful people through the years; most of them I've met, some of them I haven't. Some of them I've met after I had been working with them for some time. That's the other cool thing about what I do – I get to help people. People like the executive coach who has a consortium of 10 coaches. I help with the management of contracts, depositing cheques and invoicing; tasks that the owner doesn't have the time or inclination to do, especially when they're running their business from Mexico in the winter. How cool is that?! The great thing is that it actually works! Things like this can be done without the use of a commercial space!

We've done transcription work for a major corporation for the last three years. We transcribe from digital audio the proceedings from their annual conference. We've been doing this work every year, and yet we have never met...

I've set up a virtual office for a corporate client who wanted a Canadian presence before they actually moved here. It worked too – their (virtual) office here in Ottawa was operational within 2 weeks and operated for 6 months before they found a commercial space for their North American operations.

I totally love what I do. I get to help people and see them continue to pursue their passion, and at the same time, I get to do the things I love to do. Everyone wins!

Barbara Best is President of Virtual Works Administrative Solutions, a multi-VA practice based in Ottawa, Ontario. She has experienced many things in the last 5 years as a practicing VA, the highlight of which was being a finalist for the 2007 Ottawa Chamber of Commerce Professional Services of the Year Award, the first VA practice to be nominated in the Chamber's 150 year history. Visit www.virtualworks.ca.