

De-Stressing For and After the Holidays



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Christmas and Hanukkah are right around the corner and are supposed to be about God, family, and self-reflection. Too often, though, the holidays add stress to our lives that takes away from the happiness they are supposed to bring. Then when January 2 comes around and you feel it's time to relax from the holidays, it's time to review your business and personal life for improvement.

De-Stressing FOR the Holidays

Trying to be "everything for everyone" can lead to deadly stress levels. Make sure you set aside some "you time" to de-stress so you can have the most enjoyable holidays by:

- Taking a minimum of 5 minutes every single day to sit, breathe, and take a mental inventory of the wonderful things in your life: your health, family and friends
- Taking a few minutes every day to make a to-do list for the day and week—there is nothing more satisfying than crossing off tasks you have completed
- Making a note of the items on your list taking your precious time that you could be delegating to someone else

If your business or job or volunteer organizations are taking a ton of time out of your life on a regular basis, even the mention of the upcoming holidays can

seem like an insurmountable mountain to climb. There are many ways in which a Virtual Assistant/Virtual Office Professional/Virtual Business Professional (i.e., VA) can help you around the holidays. When I mentioned making that list above, you may also be making a shopping list.

Shopping:

- Sending gifts to clients/business associates: Provide your VA with a list of people, the amount you want to spend, and the type of gift. If you've been working with your VA awhile and he/she knows you, that should be all you need to do. If you're new at working with a VA, you may need to be more specific. We're virtual—not mind readers!

- Shopping lists for family members: Yes, we can shop online as well as the next person! I find a lot of my clients have me search for that perfect present or some special toy for the kids (at the best price). That's a HUGE time-saver and, therefore, stress reducer!

Event Planning:

Planning any type of event—including business meetings—can be extremely time-consuming. My clients count on me to coordinate schedules whether it's a small business meeting, luncheon, dinner, or large event. For the holiday season, it's just one more thing a VA can take off your plate.

I do find that more and more people are organizing holiday parties AFTER the holidays are over. It's much more relaxing to have a luncheon or dinner—with or without a gift exchange—once the stress of the holidays is gone. People seem to have more time available and are happy to recap their holiday stories.

If you do want to schedule an event before the end of the year, allow your VA to help you plan and execute the perfect event. An experienced professional VA will have quite an extensive network, so don't hesitate to have your VA plan and tend to every small detail—and, if she's not local, she can find an associate to

physically go to the event to make sure details are taken care of prior to and/or during the event.

Recap: De-stress, delegate, and enjoy!

De-Stressing AFTER the Holidays

It's January and you survived the holiday season!

OK, now sit down and get out that list. What do you need to do to improve your business in 2012?

- Website – Do you need a new one or does your current website need a facelift? Consult with a VA who creates websites as to which type of site would be best for you and your business. Ask about a Wordpress site.

- Logo – Are you still in love with your logo or does it make sense to rebrand? If you're not happy with your logo, you don't need to be stuck with it. A new logo can be a great first step in a rebranding your business to give it a kick start for 2012.

- Social media – Do you have a social media plan in place and are you keeping up with it? It's being said that if you're not using social media to further your business, you may not have a business within the next five years. I don't know if it will be five years, but it is imperative that you participate in social media for your business. Your name

needs to stay at the top of people's minds, and there's no better way to do that than with social media. Sit down with a professional social media VA who will design the perfect plan for your business and your budget.

- Marketing – What are you doing to attract new clients/customers into your business? Do you have a plan? Articles, press releases, social media, PR—again—keep your name out there!

- Administrative tasks – Are you still doing everything yourself—or just too much? In addition to the "normal" admin-type tasks, your VA can make client follow-up calls, do bookkeeping, provide email and calendar maintenance, make travel arrangements, handle CRM—and the list goes on and on!

Have a wonderful holiday season—and don't put off updating your business in 2012!

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