

The Essential Handbook For Personal Assistants

Tools For Becoming Or Hiring
The Ultimate Personal Assistant

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Tools for Becoming
or Hiring The Ultimate
Personal Assistant

By Craig S. Copeland

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To my dog North.
The best damn Personal Assistant
I ever had.

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Special Note

Throughout this book you'll notice that the words *Personal Assistant* are not abbreviated. The reason for this is that in the entertainment world the PA is known as a production assistant, and though the two positions hold many similar challenges, they are very different positions. This guide focuses on the many areas related only to that of the Personal Assistant.

Also, you'll notice that I switch between using *her* and *him* throughout the guide to indicate the employer.

[With the purchase of this guide you will also have access to many downloadable templates to help make your job more efficient and run smoothly.]

Introduction

Who hasn't dreamed of soaring through the skies in a private luxury jet, relaxing in a plush, soft leather seat that engulfs and surrounds you while being served poached salmon by a beautiful hostess at a thousand feet up?

Or imagine how cool it would be to have Carte Blanche access to exclusive, A-list Hollywood events or rubbing elbows with tomorrow's megastars?

Perhaps you've always wanted to be a liaison for the world's foremost diplomats, scientists, researchers, heads of States, or rulers of countries. You'd love nothing better than to attend a United Nations conference, shake hands with the President, or enjoy a front row seat while watching Congress deliberate over a heated issue.

The dream is real. You can do all of this and more. In fact thousands of people do every day. They're not rich, don't have celebrity status, don't own a fancy house, and they don't even possess a large bank portfolio. So who are these people? They are the Personal Assistants who work for the rich, the famous, the tops in their fields, the *crème de la crème*.

The world of the Personal Assistant can be exciting and fast paced. It can take you through a hundred new experiences in a week and promises to always keep you challenged. The job can make you laugh and it can make you cry. Its addictive nature can thrill you, making you beg for more. It can also devastate you and make you wish you never even heard the words *Personal Assistant*.

This is a book about the very essence of being a Personal Assistant. In it you will find the tools, the experiences, and the secrets about the lives of this elite

group. You will learn all you need to perform this job with confidence and success.

If you take the time and study the guide before you, it will teach you how to succeed in this amazingly frenetic but wonderful field; which is fast becoming increasingly popular, highly sought after, and more respected with each passing year.

The tools you walk away with are ones you'll be able to use in almost any job and almost any situation. It doesn't take money or success, but it does take drive, smarts, confidence, ambition, and hard work to obtain a great job as a Personal Assistant. The opportunity is there for you to take, but you must want it or you'll never get it.

I challenge you to learn and take as much as you can from this handbook and do your best! Because once you see how exciting it can be, you may never want to work in another occupation, again.

Outlined in this guide are the tools and techniques for getting, doing, keeping, and excelling at an exciting career working as a successful Celebrity Personal Assistant. And for those who already are working as Personal Assistants, there are useful sections inside that will increase your talents and secure your position in this field.

Employers will benefit by knowing who to hire and how to hire the right person for them, how to keep the best person, and never hire wrong again.

Part 1: History and Evolution of the Personal Assistant

Chapter 1:

What Is A Personal Assistant?

You know about them, you've heard of them, but rarely will you ever see them; at least not the exceptional ones. They run in the circles of the rich and famous in a "Where's Waldo"-like fashion. They speak on a daily basis to the A-list celebrities, heads of State, creators of multi-million dollar corporations, sought-after lawyers, doctors in demand, top athletes, powerful executives, and brilliant entrepreneurs, yet you rarely ever take notice of them, or hear of their amazing deeds. These little known yet integral parts of our society have been around for many years. They go by the often ambiguous title of *Personal Assistant*.

Some think this term fits a wide range of jobs from secretary to runner to administrative assistant. In fact, because this job encompasses so many skills, employers often assume that anyone can fit the role of Personal Assistant. This is not the case. Most often the untrained person who is hired as the Personal Assistant gets so overwhelmed that they end up leaving, or is fired because they could not keep up with all the high-pressure demands. A good Personal Assistant can do a variety of unusual tasks that require experience, knowledge, and a drive to succeed.

Can a secretary, runner, aide, gofer, pa (production assistant) administrative assistant, nurse, or seamstress, become a Personal Assistant? Yes, perhaps. But it takes more than just the fundamentals of these job skills. There is a mental attitude that goes into the mix. Part is a desire to serve and help others. Part is to derive a satisfaction after completing a tough or challenging task. Part is a unique ability to jump headfirst into a new challenge or situation

and be able to successfully get through it. Equally as important, are the abilities to work alone, unsupervised, and stay on top of things. The Personal Assistant can be part clairvoyant, part protector, part parent, and part caretaker. A good Personal Assistant must know how to drive any car, prepare meals on the fly, sew a button, be good with children, be a diplomat, know where to find a mean cup of coffee, or they may possess only some of these skills. Part of the draw is the excitement of being around power and money, but the bottom line is to always get the task completed - because however the results are accomplished, succeed or fail, it is always the Personal Assistant who is accountable.

How The Personal Assistant Came To Be

Many occupations have taken on titles that not only explain their function, but also help to define it. Secretaries slowly transformed into Administrative Assistants. Stenographers found themselves becoming Court Reporters. And Runners became Production Assistants. Each of these new career titles gives the job a more clear identity, and helps to define its purpose. But what about the Personal Assistant?

It's one of the most ambiguous and misunderstood occupations. Personal Assistant has become a catch-all term for everything from the multi-tasking Receptionist, Gofer, Administrative Assistant or Executive Assistant. Look at the help wanted ads from people searching for a Personal Assistant. Most of them use descriptions that tell you the tasks are simple and imply that the person doing the hiring doesn't have time to take care of himself. They think they know what is expected of a Personal Assistant, but, in reality, have no idea what the position actually entails. The bottom line is that they are requiring *honed skills* and

experience but offering *low pay* as compensation. They have no clue as to the skill-set that is required.

To most, the title of Personal Assistant fits any job description. Employers somehow latched onto the idea that if you do office work, and they throw in a personal errand every now and then (fetch coffee, pick-up dry cleaning, take the dog for a walk), that they can label you a “Personal Assistant.” And this is where a lot of the confusion begins. Since a low paid Runner or Production Assistant or Mailroom person can do these things, then why should they be obligated to pay more for a skilled Personal Assistant?

Let’s explore the difference between a Production Assistant and a Personal Assistant. By its very nature, the Production Assistant is usually a kid who is fresh out of college or is the son or daughter of a friend and is enticed by the “Hollywood” carrot being dangled in front of them by some executive who tells them that if they work hard and pay their dues they’ll be rewarded with a great job in the future.

Very often, a beginning Production Assistant will have little or no experience, but they take this opportunity to get their foot in the door. It is how the entertainment business continues to draw people in for little or no pay. That doesn’t mean that the Production Assistant isn’t smart, in fact, a number of them have masters and college degrees, and again, this is their opportunity to break into an exciting field. However, Production Assistant is usually not their career job of choice and the low pay can often equate to minimal effort.

A Personal Assistant, however, is someone who usually comes to the table with some skills in one or two areas and is able to pick up other chores while never dropping the bigger responsibilities.

The Personal Assistant is not merely someone who fetches, they're able to multitask. They need to understand what they are fetching, and how best to fetch. But this is just one of many duties that will be required of them. Again, their job is to take care of the minutia so that their boss has the freedom to concentrate on work, home, or anything else important enough for them to need and hire the Personal Assistant. You are a master juggler, a supreme multi-tasker. Yes, most anyone can walk a dog, but can they do it while making sure the calls are handled, correspondence is typed, appointments are met, bills are paid, houses are managed, travel is arranged, and their favorite Grande double-latte is served up piping hot.

One of the earliest mentions of the Personal Assistant was in the film called "*All About Eve*" (1950). In the film, a young girl, Eve, is so infatuated with Broadway star Margo Channing, that she works her way into Margo's world and shortly thereafter becomes her Personal Assistant. Researching the history of the Personal Assistant uncovered that some of the first Personal Assistants were attached to film projects as Production Assistants, or they were actually Stagehands, Runners or often Assistant Secretaries – maybe even someone from the typing pool, who was assigned to attend to the needs of an actor or actress. Their job was to make sure that the actor or actress was "happy" while filming. This entailed everything from making sure they had their favorite drink, hobnobbed with other elite members of society, lived in the lap of luxury, or was protected from their own destructive habits. There were also Secretaries who were asked by their boss to pick up the dry cleaning or get lunch, or sometimes to escort a star or client to a social engagement.

What The Personal Assistant Is Today

Unlike the glorified Secretaries of yesterday, today's Personal Assistant is so much more than a human dictation machine, coffee maker, or an errand person. The Personal Assistant of today is someone who is smart, quick on his feet, resourceful, diplomatic, lifelong learner, is open to new experiences, and thrives on new challenges.

There's a movie that stars Anthony Hopkins entitled, "Remains of the Day" In it he plays a Butler who is a seasoned professional at his position. His every move, every thought, and every fiber of his being is dedicated to the service of his employer. While you won't be expected to be this myopic, it's important that you understand that in order to be successful as a Personal Assistant, you need to be thinking about your every move. Much like playing chess, what you do today can have repercussions seven moves from now.

This is a fun and exciting field complete with adventure and surprising rewards. And while it can be hard, sometimes overwhelming, and a constant challenge, it's never dull; it's a job that gives back as much as you put into it. You will come away with great knowledge, experience, solid contacts, and a proud feeling of accomplishment that you did your best at an amazingly difficult job.

The only thing that makes me sad about this field is that the Personal Assistants who work primarily for celebrities are usually the ones who are honored and recognized. There are so many more Personal Assistants in less glamorous fields who are often overlooked, when more often than not they are nothing short of amazing in their role as Personal Assistants. This book is dedicated to them.

How This Book Can Help You Reach Your Goal

By the end of this book you will have been given all the tools needed to perform your job with confidence. You will be able to jump in and handle almost every situation you encounter. You'll know when and where to get the help you need to complete any task. You will become a valuable asset to your boss.

This book will teach you how to develop or enhance your skills to become a better Personal Assistant than you'd ever thought possible. And, you'll be surprised at how simple these steps are. In fact, you'll probably kick yourself when you discover how many of these skills and secrets you already possess.

You'll be shown every aspect of what a Personal Assistant needs to help him or her stay at the top of their game. Here is where you will find useful examples and tools that will make you invaluable to your boss. Using this guide will help you reach your peak.

Whether you've got the entertainment bug, you like working in the private or corporate sector, whether you're already a Personal Assistant, or even if you're just starting out, this book is written as a guide that you can use to help hone, perfect, develop, and understand the craft of the Personal Assistant.

Special Note to Employers

Employers will find this book useful too. If you're thinking about hiring a Personal Assistant to help you out, or you've had bad luck in the past hiring Personal Assistants, this book will help you understand why that happens, and what to look for to ensure you have a great Personal Assistant. You'll learn how to successfully find, interview, and hire a Personal Assistant that best suits your needs and personality. Using this book, you can be sure that

the Personal Assistant will be ready to jump in and help you get things done.

The Personal Assistant is always changing and growing. The different styles and various types of bosses that emerge dictate what new and unusual skills he/she may need to acquire. And while there are always basic duties and recurring themes in our role as Personal Assistants, there's always some new task that has never been encountered before and will have to be learned and adapted to. Let's get started!

Chapter 2: What's Going To Be Expected Of You

How Your Position Defines You

There is an unspoken rule that the Personal Assistant must recognize and always be aware of: "You are not hired to be, and may never become your boss's friend." This is the black hole of the Personal Assistant's universe. Yet like a moth drawn to a flame, this is where many Personal Assistants gravitate since it seems like such an inviting, open, welcoming area, because you will spend many hours in close proximity to your boss; joking, talking, sharing a story. It can seem like you are becoming fast friends. It's not that this can't happen, but almost always is the reason a job can end abruptly. While it's true that great friendships *have* been forged out of these working relationships, the exceptions are extremely rare.

It's important to remember not to get caught up in the social aspects of the job, and that the true role of the Personal Assistant is to cater to the needs of the employer – whatever that might be.

So what exactly is the role of the Personal Assistant? What function does she or he serve and where does she draw the line of unacceptable tasks?

The Personal Assistant can be many things to many people. Since you may be involved with both the home and the office, depending on the needs of the employer and the requirements of the job, duties can often overlap. The Personal Assistant becomes a trusted member of the household staff, handling all of the confidential responsibilities for the employer. Duties may include; hiring,

training and supervising staff, making and scheduling appointments for the employer, taking charge of all correspondence to and from the employer, handling all travel arrangements and creating the itineraries, doing or assigning maintenance work to be done on the home(s), acting as a liaison, and any other personal requests the employer may make.

A Personal Assistant may also perform only secretarial responsibilities, i.e.: typing, emails, letters, memos, and thank you notes, taking dictation, proofing and transcribing important correspondence or business documents, answering the phone and taking messages, opening, sorting and/or answering mail, setting up and managing files for letters and other important documents, or any other kind of clerical work.

Though a number of employers do have Business Managers, the Personal Assistant may also be asked to act as Bookkeeper and manage the family finances, track expenses, manage records for tax purposes, research and keep track of investments, or obtain quotes on major renovations of the home.

In today's world of fast-paced technology, the Personal Assistant needs to have excellent computer capabilities and will usually maintain extensive warranty and inventory files (e.g. **The Bible**, which we'll discuss in Chapter 17 – is also known as a *Household Management Reference Book* and, is an invaluable tool which anyone in the household can quickly reference to find answers fast.).

The Personal Assistant may be asked to travel with their employer and keep them company on a long arduous tour, journey, or business trip.

Whatever your job, you will begin to see a pattern emerge that will dictate what kind of Personal Assistant you are becoming. Who you report to, which staff members you interact with, whether you begin your day at their home or the office, you'll begin to understand if you're becoming a behind-the-scenes Personal Assistant or if you are becoming someone who needs to be at the wheel, taking charge of every task as it arises.

Don't Expect A Typical Day

You can plan, prepare, and anticipate what will happen tomorrow, and when you arrive you're told by your boss to cancel everything because he's going off to play golf for the day. In other words, there will be times when, no matter how meticulously you plan things can change on a dime. Breathe, exhale, and start rearranging the schedules. Often, you will find that this is a roll-with-the-punches kind of job.

One of the most common tasks of a Personal Assistant is doing the personal shopping for the lady or gentleman of the house. Therefore you need to be aware that the shopping habits of the wealthy are very different from the average person's shopping habits. Whether it's for groceries, clothing, or gifts, a wealthy person has no problem spending large sums of money for their personal needs. They may tire of last year's car or want to add to their collection, or they may want to spend a million dollars on a wedding. You may therefore be asked to help design part of an estate, or locate a new home. You may not only plan the family vacation to the Four Seasons in Punta Mita, Mexico, but also go along. You might handle dinner reservations at the premium restaurant in town, or listen to how their day went, or perhaps go grocery shopping for them. They may have you contact Vera Wang because they need a new dress for an awards show.

Now imagine the power of having access to someone's credit card, checking account, or petty cash, and finding yourself being sent to some of the most exclusive stores in town like, Barney's of New York, Dolce Gabbana, Prada, Neiman's or Saks; it can be very enticing to sneak an extra little item you think you deserve onto the shopping list. This is why it is so important for the employer to make sure that the person being hired is well screened, has signed a confidentiality agreement, and has undergone a thorough background check. These should be performed by a licensed private investigator, background service agency, or attorney. As a Personal Assistant, you'll be given a lot of financial freedom with someone else's money and it's imperative that not only do you have their trust; but that you do not take advantage of it once it's given.

So who typically hires a Personal Assistant? Here are the people most likely to use the services of a Personal Assistant:

Celebrities – To the general public this appears to be the most prevalent group of people who use Personal Assistants, but it only looks that way because celebs are always in the limelight.

Entrepreneurs – People who invest or invent or create and are always on the go and need someone to assist with their schedule to keep things in order.

Business Executives – Usually their Assistant is in the office but can also take on duties in the personal life of the employer.

Directors – Because they travel or are always on the set or in production, they have little time to manage their personal lives.

Athletes – Like entertainers, they travel a great deal and sometimes need assistance on the road or assistance with the family while they are away.

Producers – Like the Director, they can be on location or in a busy office.

Authors/Writers – Keep up with their work as well as some personal chores.

Politicians – Mainly they have an Executive Assistant, but they also have a need for personal services.

Doctors – They have Secretaries who help them, but some need help in their private lives as well since the demands of their job leaves them little time to attend to personal tasks.

Lawyers – Their hours are often long, so they can often be in need of additional help to keep their lives on track.

Real Estate Agents – They usually work on multiple listings and need someone to attend to their schedule, field the calls, sit at an open house, handle correspondence, and also take care of the personal chores; dry-cleaning, auto, groceries, etc.

Music professionals (Artists, Producers, Label Execs, etc.) – This is another group whose schedules are random and chaotic and they simply don't have the time to even think about something as simple as dinner or travel arrangements.

In essence, anyone who has the money, but not the time, inclination, or the ability to do the task for themselves can be in need of a Personal Assistant.

Demands Of The Job

The President of the United States has a Personal Assistant known as a *Body Man*. His job starts an hour or two before the President's and entails everything from carrying an overcoat for outdoor speeches, to the small. Example: He knows that President Obama likes MET-Rx chocolate roasted-peanut protein bars and bottles of a hard-to-find organic brew - Black Forest Berry Honest Tea. He keeps a supply of both on hand. He has a list of immediate contacts at his disposal, VP, doctors, White House attorney, etc. He knows when to stay in the shadows and when the President needs a well deserved break. And, he knows how to keep the pressure on President Obama when he's controlling a basketball on the court.

Like the coveted *Body Man*, a good Personal Assistant is prepared. He knows how to organize for the coming day. He reviews everything on his agenda, then prepares his employer's day and schedule accordingly. He is aware of his entire world. Say for example, your employer is an Entrepreneur. You read the news daily and notice that there is a new merger happening with a company that he has been keeping an eye on. This information, along with who the players are, can be invaluable information to your boss. Or let's say that because you keep your boss' calendar, you may know the upcoming birthday of a friend or relative and you need to alert him about a party, or discuss purchasing an appropriate card or gift.

Thinking ahead is one of the many talents a good Personal Assistant possesses, and it's not hard to master. One of the ways to keep on top of things is through a laptop

or PDA device, which allows you to program reminders for days, weeks, even years in advance, and then set alarms twelve days prior with a reminder notice that an event is coming up soon. This allows enough time to stay on top of every event without having to cram it all into your head. And this way you give my boss a good heads-up well in advance. This can include birthdays, annual charity events, award shows, upcoming travel, holidays, rent, bills (theirs and yours), anniversaries, etc.

Another useful tool is preparing a yearly calendar. Events may change or new ones may develop, but at least you'll have an overall view on everything that can occur with few or no last minute surprises.

A good Personal Assistant is also not afraid to get his hands dirty. You may be asked by an employer to call someone in to replace a screw, a light bulb, move furniture, buy flowers, change the oil in a car, fix the timer on the oven or VCR. It amazes them when a good Personal Assistant is able and willing to do these things his self. (It's rumored that Liza Minnelli was surprised that her assistant knew how to use an iron, wondering where she had learned it.) However, you only should do these things if you know how, and if it doesn't take away from something more pressing. Sometimes it's more important to outsource these tasks. We'll discuss when it's best to do so.

A good Personal Assistant can tackle a situation without any handholding. If your employer gets invited to an event at the last minute and doesn't have a clean suit, needs an appropriate gift, or needs an immediate appointment for hair or manicure, you need to be on it. Or maybe the charger on his cell phone breaks down (always keep one or two extra on hand). You'll look like a miracle worker when you have a replacement on hand for something that fails to work properly.

Sometimes a good Personal Assistant is merely a good listener. This important people skill is one few have mastered and takes some practice, and it can benefit both you and your boss if you can be supportive when she needs it.

New And Already In Demand

From the moment you are hired you may find yourself thrust into several important tasks. Don't be surprised at how much trust you're given so early on in your new position. A lot of people think that you need endless hours of training to be a great Personal Assistant. While it always helps to improve your skill level and can only make you better at your job, you might not realize how much training and skill you already possess. For example, have you ever visited another city or country? Taken a CPR class? Are you organized? Have you ever put a bookcase together? Obviously you've shopped before. Are you computer, Internet or email savvy? Can you cook? How are you with children or pets? How are your phone and people skills? Do you enjoy driving? Do you know your way around the city you live in? If so, you may already have many of the skills required to be a good Personal Assistant.

So what about training? You might be someone who already travels a lot but has never flown on a private jet. There are ways you acquire the know-how on a particular subject. For instance, you can learn if there are luggage restrictions on private planes. Can a jet take off or land in different kinds of weather? Are there limitations to the time of day a jet can fly? Where nearby alternate airfields are located. If dogs can fly on private jets and what are the regulations.

All this and more can be learned. Sometimes, you'll be thrown into a job and have to learn as you go, but the better prepared you are before hand, the easier you will make it for your employer. And this might be the difference between hiring you or someone else.

Understanding what's going to be expected of you can make the difference between doing a good job or a great one. It can also determine how much you enjoy your work and how long you survive in this business. Don't be afraid to ask questions. It shows a desire to learn, an ability to communicate, and it tells your boss that you're thinking about the job. The more you understand what's expected of you, the better prepared you'll be.

Chapter 3:

Can Anyone Become A Personal Assistant?

Yes. But it also depends on your motivation. Are you in it for the money? Does the possibility of world travel excite you? Are you enamored with the film industry? Or are you simply trying to get a leg up or use this to acquire new skills or contacts?

What Is Your Background?

Do you have a desire to serve? Are you the kind of person who likes to do volunteer work? The real answer can be found in looking at your attitude. Do you, and can you put other people first? Are you willing to miss out on things that matter to you?

Here are some examples of professions that feed nicely into Personal Assisting

- **Secretary** – Office skills, diplomacy, organization, tact, resourceful
- **Executive Assistant** – Gatekeeper, guide, liaison, partner, right-hand
- **Runner** – Gofer, errand person, coordinator, assistant
- **Newbie** – Adaptable, enthusiastic, fresh, willing, energetic
- **Student** – Capable, learned, smart, savvy, eager
- **Nurse** – Caring, patient, tireless, nurturing, take charge
- **Waiter** – Prepared, alert, quick learner, endurance, friendly
- **Actor** – Quick study, personable, adaptable, jack-of-all

- **Mother** – Mature, sensible, experienced, wise, supportive

Another *important* thing to think about is how thick your skin is. When you become a Personal Assistant you are sometimes the closest thing to your boss, closer sometimes than a spouse or family member. And often, when things don't go her way, the frustration can rain down on you. So the question is; "Can you handle things without taking them personally?"

You have to remember that number one, this is a job. It's not personal. Two, that your boss may not be mad specifically at you but at something else entirely. Thirdly, you have to be willing to do whatever it takes to help fix the problem. (Sometimes this isn't possible. It's true that there are some jerks out there who are always on a power trip, but that goes for any business, not just entertainment.). See the movie *Swimming With Sharks*, starring Kevin Spacey.

The funny thing is that most Personal Assistants are women who in general are more empathic than men. This can be both a good and bad thing. Women can (sometimes intuitively) sense what is going on. The problem is that they can also take too much to heart, so when their boss yells or is frustrated, the (female) Personal Assistant can take it too personally and begin to think it is her fault. Many Personal Assistants have shared their stories while crying that their employer hates them or constantly yells at them. This is especially prevalent in the entertainment business.

Do You Have What It Takes?

There are going to be many days and many employers who will beat down on you verbally and make everything your fault. There is actually an amusing book called; "It's All Your Fault!" about this phenomenon. There

are going to be days when you'll find that no matter how carefully you've planned, how meticulous you are, or how good your intentions, something will go wrong and fingers will point at you. It is inevitable that at some time in your career as a Personal Assistant, someone is going to say something or does something that will make you feel like the lowest common denominator. (One high-level T.V. executive does it just to keep her Assistant from developing any ego, and constantly berates the Assistant whether it's warranted or not.)

Still, women Personal Assistants aren't alone in this arena. There will be times where you cannot fix the problem. That doesn't mean you don't try everything in your power to resolve the situation.

Does This Job Suit Your Lifestyle?

Do you know what type of person you are? Are you someone who is close to your family? Do you spend every holiday, birthday, anniversary, and special occasion with loved ones? It's important to know as much about yourself upfront so there are no surprises in the near future. Since we understand that there is no typical day in the life of the Personal Assistant, you can also be assured that there is no typical lifestyle as well. There are Personal Assistants who travel *everywhere* with their boss. There are those who don't travel (perhaps a second Assistant), who work long hours, sometimes twelve to fourteen hours a day. And there are Personal Assistants who come home at the end of the day. They might be married, have a pet, or simply have done the 24/7 thing and want a more structured work environment. Dennis Hopper's Personal Assistant is someone who, before going to work for him, traveled everywhere at the drop of a hat. Her schedule was chaotic and she was always on the go, often missing important family or social get-togethers. After many years of living this kind of lifestyle, she decided to

reexamine what her life was like and what was important to her. So, she began to seek out a Personal Assistant position that would allow her time to socialize and have more *personal* time.

What Kind Of Personal Assistant Do You Want To Be?

Are you someone who's adventurous? Are you a person who is meticulous and always crosses their "T"s and dots their "I"s? Do people say that you are a nurturing person? How about hands-on? Are you the type that gets in there and gets a job done?

When beginning to understand which direction you want to go in, it helps to understand where you are best suited. It's not enough to just say I love being on a movie set or attending a premier, because in reality, while you may be present at those events, it's very likely that you will be running around taking care of all the last minute details that somehow fell through the cracks. Watch or read *The Devil Wears Prada* if you think differently.

If you have decided that you want to work for an athlete, then your project is to figure out everything that working for one might entail. Most athletes travel frequently, they may have several houses in different cities, the better ones have multiple cars. Some have families and you might stay home while they travel to help take care of children or pets, or to meet with contractors while they are away. Or you may go with them and help coordinate their press and publicity schedules with the publicity agent. They may want you to set up their hotel room a particular way, or shop for special foods. Help them purchase clothing. They may have you handle all correspondence for them because they're busy at practice or preparing for a game. If you travel with them, you may very possibly be responsible for

packing and unpacking, possibly ironing, dry cleaning, and occasionally sewing. You may have to act as gatekeeper for those who want to get close to your boss.

Once you decide what kind of Personal Assistant you want to be, your next step should be to research as much as possible to see if this is something you really want to pursue.

This is a very fun and exciting business but it's also all consuming. Once you commit, it's a roller coaster ride that can have some crazy twists and turns that you may not be prepared to handle. It's best to investigate and explore as much as you can about the kind of Personal Assistant you want to be. A good step towards understanding what direction you are suited for is to have a comprehensive analysis about the type of person you are. Two great sources are www.analyzemycareer.com or Myers & Briggs. Here you'll find a number of aptitude, personality, and occupational tests whose results will tell you where your strengths lie and your weak spots are. It will help you to see clearly what types of occupations and employers you are best suited for.

Part 2:
Secrets for
Getting
Hired

Chapter 4: Finding Where The Jobs Are

The best way for getting hired is to have a referral or recommendation from a close friend or associate of the person seeking to hire the Personal Assistant. If you don't have these kinds of connections in your arsenal, then you will need to be resourceful in finding where the jobs are. You can be assured that by the time you find a position you're interested in others may have also found it, but the second part of getting hired is to make sure you stand out.

In the next few pages, we'll discuss the *secrets* you can use to rise above the competition and how to make yourself look like the perfect selection for becoming their Personal Assistant.

Agencies, headhunters, networking, word of mouth, special listings, the Internet, job sites, friends, family, and using your brain are all good sources for finding a Personal Assistant position. There is even a technique using *WhoRepresents.com* that we will also go over.

Once you've figured out which area you want to work in (music, entertainment, politics, sports, etc.), you can begin outlining your search criteria.

One of the better places to begin are placement agencies (see section on "**Placement Agencies and Headhunters**" for a complete list). The good ones should not charge a dime to register with them.

Inside is a list of the better agencies, but you should be leery of the ones who want to test you like they would a secretary. It is not often that you would have to take a

typing, spelling, and math test that some placement agencies have their candidates do.

If the agency you go to is seasoned at placing Personal Assistants, then they should sit down with you and thoroughly go over and review your entire background. Remember, some of the Personal Assistant positions out there never do a single day of typing or filing. Of course there are many that do, in fact a majority of them look for these skills, but this is not the only criteria for getting the position. As you will read again and again throughout this guide, the things you will be hired for first and foremost are, if your personality is a good match and similar to your boss's, and that your skill set compliments the duties of position. Your age, experience, and job longevity are also important but secondary to these.

Another great source for successful job seeking are your connections. Word of mouth can sometimes lead to an opportunity you might never have heard about through conventional methods. You never know who knows whom. Your father may have a friend at work who just got an account with Shaq, and he just happens to be looking for a new Personal Assistant. You just never know. So put the word out; a lot.

Let's talk about back doors. Sometimes, especially when you are newer to this field, the doors all seem locked up tight. So how do you get in? One of the many things you'll learn in this guide is that when you are on the job, you must find creative and resourceful ways to get a task done. So why shouldn't job hunting be just as creative?

You've heard this term many times before. Internet Hackers often use *back doors* to get into sites that are protected. So why shouldn't you use creative *back doors* to get closer to celebrities, or high-powered people who are also protected. You just have to know how to get in.

Let's say for example you are one of the many people who want to work within the entertainment business. It's a hard business to crack and very often you find that you have no allies. So how does one get close to the stars or the producers or directors?

One method is to do extra or background work. You will need to register with one of the agencies, pay a fee and take almost an entire day to get registered, but once you do, they will start calling you for various TV shows and movies. If you are lucky, you might work on a show for several days. The bad thing is that the pay is not great and the hours are long. The good thing is how fast you can meet people and create connections which potentially could get you the kind of work you're really looking for.

As you spend your time on a set, get to know the higher-ups. The production people, the crew, even the producer's assistants. As you begin to build a rapport with them you can slowly let them know what your real goals are. Sometimes they'll invite you to leave a resume with them, periodically, as they hear of a position opening here or there.

This same technique can be used in volunteer work. Again, depending on the type of Personal Assistant you want to be, a number of celebrities, athletes, and politicians volunteer their time to various projects and this is a great opportunity not only to give to your community, but to work alongside these people. I even know one woman who is now the Personal Assistant to a politician whom she met while working with Habitat for Humanity.

Seminars have also been an excellent way to volunteer and meet top people firsthand. Are there any

entertainment industry seminars or events you might be able to volunteer for?

Do you work for a florist who delivers to high-end people? Are you currently working in the mail room of an agency or PR firm who represent A-list clients? If you let them know your ambitions after you've proven what a loyal, hardworking, dedicated employee you are, chances are you could be recommended to one of the clients who needs a new Personal Assistant.

Again, use any avenue that you can to put yourself into a position where the opportunity is there to meet the right connections, and then take full advantage of that back door.

This guide will also explain how to go directly to the hiring source – the person you want to work for without putting him or her off. You'll have simple techniques for approaching someone as a stranger and having them invite you to send your resume to them, willingly.

You will use the Internet as a source for your searches (more on this in a moment). You'll also use periodicals, placement agencies, friends and relatives, cold-calls, contractors, and networking. As well as any resources you can gather.

The Essential Handbook for Personal Assistants is not condoning running up to a potential employer and getting in their face. This can backfire in so many ways, you can come off like a stalker, or weird, or pushy. But, if you do it in a subtle way, perhaps by making acquaintances with the charity staff and letting them know what you do, then perhaps they may hear of something and since they appreciate the volunteer efforts on your part, it is a good chance that they may pass along your resume or

information. But first, you must ALWAYS show that you can be a hardworking, dependable volunteer.

Searching on the Internet can be a good tool to start with. You never know who's going to be doing the job posting; it could be the manager, the agent, a friend, the old assistant, a relative, or even a search firm. So yes, while hundreds of others may be seeing this same ad, you must take the opportunity to investigate because they may not want all the others, there might be something that stands out on your resume that tells them this person may be the one.

You can't always know when someone will post a new ad, so you should do your searches twice a day. Once around 7am and again around 4pm. Okay, so by this time you're probably saying big deal I put in Personal Assistant and I get the same worthless junk everyone else is already seeing.

This may be true in some cases, but what we will learn here is how to maximize the Internet to tell you more about a job than the information the ad provides. Let's say that again; the ad you find about a particular position may not have enough information about the job, the people, or the company.

This guide will give you some tips and show you some tricks that can often reveal a lot more information than they wanted you to know.

Why is this helpful? Because sometimes an ad may promise more than the job actually is, and by finding out deeper information, you can assess whether you really want to pursue that job or not. Or, the opposite can sometimes be true. An ad may give little information and turn out to be for a big, important person and they were reluctant to divulge too much information.

Just because you and another person find the same job lead, it's still about what they notice and how the rest of your package that makes the difference in who gets hired. Your resume, your experience, how you interview, what you say during your introduction, your clothes, and your personality, all goes into the mix when someone is deciding whether or not to hire you.

Let's get started. For our example we'll use Google since many of the search engines use Google's database for some of their own searching. Type the words *Personal Assistant* and see what you get. At the top of the list you'll notice the first couple of results are those that pay to be listed there. After that, you are most likely to find sites that are trying to sell you something or get you to try some product. Not much help.

Creating A Resume That Gets You Noticed

First rule: For every job you can expect hundreds of resumes to hit the desk of the perspective employer. So within these piles and piles of candidate's resumes, how do you get your resume to stand out?

Let's begin by looking at what will automatically disqualify you and put your resume right into the trash. The likely candidates for waste receptacle consideration are; colored resumes, scented paper, photos, resumes that are more than two pages long. If you can't say it in one to two pages, then you've lost their interest. While you may have seen some online postings that request a picture along with the resume, you can guarantee that the job has little or nothing to do with Personal Assisting, and if it does then it becomes a discrimination issue, and your boss will likely be someone who will hit on you. Plus, you'll never know if you got the job from experience or looks. Why is that bad you ask? If you get a job based on your looks you can almost guarantee that your boss has ulterior motives and you need to be very careful and clear about what his or her intentions are. Do not fall for the "We work with such beautiful models and actors that we need someone who makes our office look beautiful." So just how many pretty faces does it take to get a cup of coffee? Or file a document? Come on, get real.

When reviewing a resume, employers look for experience, longevity (at the job), similar experience, meaning that you've worked in a similar field. So what if you are new and don't have much experience? This can be an interesting area. I can tell you that one of the reasons Noah Wylie from ER fame hired his Personal Assistant was based on the fact that on her resume she had a military background. For whatever reason, he liked that quality.

You never know what someone will hone in on and it's important to be honest and also list your abilities, especially if you don't have much experience. This doesn't work for every employer, though. But the good ones will read your resume and see if there are skills that are translatable to their job opening. Keep in mind that the less experience you have working as a Personal Assistant, the lower your beginning salary will be. See *Salary Guidelines* below.

Something that got me noticed by headhunters was that my resume had been created in a brochure format on cardstock. They called to ask who designed it and when I told them I had, they liked the fact that they could sell my computer design skills as one of my assets. The fact that I knew how to create a brochure like this impressed them. They'd call me to say that it was unique and it made me even more marketable. And while it did fly in the face of the no colors rules (some of the words were in color), you have to know when to take chances and when not to. With headhunters and placement agencies, this can *sometimes* be okay, but never with the employer itself.

Your resume should at least contain the following:

- Your name
- Your address
- One or two *working* contact phone numbers
- Work experience
- Dates of employment – to illustrate length of time
- Description of your duties
- Any education, special courses, or skills
- Job title for every position held
- If there is a page two, ALWAYS put your name & contact info at the top and also:
[Page 2]

- Put your OBJECTIVE at the top, but list your education and other skill sets at the bottom

If you are someone who can't write objectively about yourself, a good source for writing a resume that really will stand out and give you that extra advantage is:

www.resumewriters.com.

IMPORTANT: The more you can tell more about the benefits to them and less about your features the better your chances will be. A **benefit** to them would be that; "You're punctual", "Self Sufficient", "Able to multitask" "Can handle any electronic device". Examples of **features** are; "Four years of experience", "Not a clock watcher", "Likes pets", "Good with children".

Your resume should be concise and to the point. It's not just a list of past jobs, it's about you. It should reflect your strengths and objectives.

Part 3:
Becoming a
Kickass
Personal
Assistant

Chapter 5: Killer Techniques For Making Yourself Invaluable!

Congratulations! Or if you're already working, glad to see you're still working! Okay, this chapter will take you through what you will need to understand to begin your job. The key here is to keep in mind that you are part of a team. Whether it's just you and your boss, or a whole staff behind you, all the other contractors, vendors, consultants, business associates, family and friends are already part of your boss's team and you are kind of like the assistant coach. Your boss will give you the general scrimmage, but it's up to you to see that all the team members – so to speak, carry out the play and make your boss proud of the results. Remember, your team may not always win, you may fumble the ball sometimes, and there will be times when you feel like you are being benched. But there are also the wins, the team victories, and the better prepared you are, the more practice and experience you get under your belt, the more successes you are going to have. So, enough with the sports analogies and on with the journey.

Understanding Your Role

You are the point person. Very often you are and will be the most direct contact to your boss. You will be expected to check in daily, prepared with the day's agenda, and make sure your boss is apprised of any and all meetings, calls, projects, and scheduling. You may be asked to be quiet as a mouse and remain in the background until called. Still, that doesn't mean you shouldn't be prepared when called upon. And while you are being quiet, you can and should have a lot to do. You should know what the day's schedule is like, what the week holds in store, both in business and

personal dealings. You need to know where things are and who's who. You'll want to familiarize yourself with habits, routines, and anything else that your boss now expects you to know.

Your First Day

The first day can be different for so many people. There is a chance that someone who preceded you will be there to acclimate and train you. Then again, there may not. You may show up and the first thing in the morning, you'll be asked to get (important) so and so on the phone. Or you may be sent to get their favorite coffee. You may be nervous your first day and rightly so, but one of the key things to remember is don't be afraid to ask questions. Until you get used to things, you can't be expected to know how your employer thinks. So if she asks you for a tall cappuccino, ask questions. Decaf or regular? Do you take sweetener? Any special way? Extra hot, extra foam? Do you want a scone or muffin?

Don't stand there and have a five minute conversation either, just ask, write it down, and go. Your job is to get the information succinctly, and get the task done.

You Are the Gatekeeper

Part of your job will also be to protect and be a buffer for your boss. This role may make you the bad guy or the heavy to outsiders, but the key here is to screen and not let anything through that could possibly annoy, disrupt, or disturb your boss. Remember, you are there to help her do whatever she does best. And because she is successful at it, she can afford to have you assist her. So, one of your jobs is to screen calls. To do this you need to learn who you should screen, when to screen them, and whom to let through. You

can keep a list that has A people, B people, and C people. See the section on *Keeping Good Records* in Chapter 6.

Another role of the gatekeeper is to know the schedule. You are responsible for knowing where your boss is at all times in case an A or B person needs to get hold of her. As the gatekeeper you may have to roll calls, conference calls, take dictation, set up meetings, and return calls. As gatekeeper your job is to also limit unnecessary, potentially wasteful interruptions and unexpected interference that may negatively impact your boss's workflow or productivity. Any unsolicited, meaning *uninvited* inquiry requires screening.

Basically, your boss is the Queen of England and you're her guard. Nothing gets past you without specific approval from the Queen.

Having The Right Tools

Just what are the right tools for doing your job? It's different for each employer. Remember President Obama's *Body Man*? If you're traveling, your tool of the trade could be a messenger bag with many travel items, gum, water, pens, pencils, tickets, phones, batteries, ear plugs, band aids, aspirin. If you are an office employee perhaps it is a pad and pencil, a calendar of events and scheduling. If you're on set, a copy of the script, water, your boss's cell phone, a favorite food item. The right tool could be a computer, fax machine, Palm or PDA. The right tool for the right job.

Know your arena. By knowing who you are working for, and what's required of you, you'll quickly get a sense of the needs of the job and what you must have to provide good assistance. Again, in the beginning, don't be afraid to ask questions. This is one of your first important tools to acquire. Ask, be brief, listen, and always observe.

Knowing All The Players

A big part of your job will be keeping up and keeping track of who the players are. Your boss may have a big entourage or a small household staff. You will be interacting with most of these people on your boss's behalf and it's good to know who they are and what they do.

The *Business Manager* - is responsible for most everything financial for your boss. He can keep track of payroll, big purchases, expenses, petty cash, financial contracts, household properties, taxes and more.

The *Attorney* - Is involved with all contracts, legal negotiations, sometimes investments and purchases, and again there could be financial endeavors which he handles as well.

The *Agent* - Handles meetings, appointments, contract negotiations, and anything involving career and career moves.

The *Press Agent or Publicist* - Deals with everything media. They are responsible for any and all public events; which means that if your boss is attending a public event for publicity, there is a very good chance one of their reps will attend alongside your boss. You may be there too, but they will be responsible for knowing when to move him along and watch his back for potential media opportunities or paparazzi trouble.

The *Manager* - Is the one who puts all the people together. They help to open the doors of your boss's career, they check in with the agent to make sure your boss is being handled and shopped properly, that she is making good career choices.

The Players can also be people in your employers field that he has never met or worked with yet knows of. It's good to learn some about these people.

Watching The Clock?

One of the quickest ways to know this isn't the business for you is to take notice of how often you check your watch or the clock on the wall. This is a job that goes beyond time. This is the quantum arena of positions. Time is different here and like most people in the entertainment business can tell you, the day is done when the day is done. Some of you will be lucky and have a structured nine to five lifestyle, but most will not. It all comes down to getting the job done.

What Will Be Expected Of You

Remember way back when, someone at some time asked you what you wanted to be when you grow up? Was your answer "everything"? This is the kind of job where your boss may not know all about your background and experience, but will surely want you to know how to get something done when he asks. See the section heading: *You're Expected To Know Everything* in Chapter 6 for more details.

Know the Team

No matter how big or small the staff is you must be able to work with them. Even if your boss doesn't have anyone but you, there is still a team. This can include the travel agent, the phone company, auto service, dry cleaner, the gardener, pool man, delivery, etc. You are representing your employer when you interact with any of these people and you must know how to work well with them to get the

best results. Ultimately, if something goes wrong or someone is upset, it reflects badly on your boss.

If there is already a staff in place it's often good to defer to the staff members since they know your boss's habits best and can provide you with some good insights until you learn the ropes. You are still ultimately responsible for how things turn out so while you can't give all the power away, you can use their work history with your employer to see how things have gone in the past.

If you will be working with a team you must keep in mind that they are there for a reason and have a specific task. You must never demean them especially when you are asking for something from them on behalf of your boss. They can make or break you. This means they can make the outcome difficult or easy. Of course they too work for your employer, but how you treat them and handle them can determine how well they will work with you. And remember, you are the new kid on the block. They already know the ropes.

On a different note, an unspoken part of your responsibility is to get the best out of the team. If you are demeaning, rude, condescending, or annoying, they are not very likely to help out, and they may even drag a task out to frustration. You need to become a diplomat and show that you are a team player and that you respect and appreciate their job, and duties. Again, the players are also staff members. Everyone has a job to perform. Learn to be a team player and get to know your teammates.

Be Punctual

Another important criterion of a good Personal Assistant is to be on time. This is simple; you are being paid to be there. Whatever the excuse, it is just that, an excuse.

Figure it out and find a way to not let it affect your job. You have been given a rare opportunity to really have an exciting job and career opportunity. If you are a compulsive oversleeper, get over it. If your car breaks down, get a cab and call on your way there. Deal with the ramifications later. But never be late. Yes, for those of you who have to whine right now and find the one exception to this rule (family medical problem, or whatever), I can safely say that you will always look for these excuses and this disqualifies you from ever being a good Personal Assistant. Just as important, don't be too early either; especially if you're working in someone's home. They may need and covet their private time so be respectful.

Chapter 6: Preparing and Looking Like a Pro

At some point in your career almost everything will be thrown at you. You will have some challenges you can handle with ease, perhaps because it is something you've encountered before, and there will be some challenges that will give you a run for your money.

The trick is to prepare for anything that arises. I'm sure you're saying; "Easy enough said..." The best way to prepare is to visualize the position. Actually visualize it. Picture the place you'll be working, the surroundings. Once you've figured out what type of Personal Assistant you will be, then you can prepare. Example, let's say a part of your job is the grocery shopping. The easiest way to look like a pro here is to go through the entire fridge and pantry and make a list of absolutely everything. Once you have this list you can type it up and print it out. Put a check box next to each item and then you can do one of several things. You can post the list somewhere and let the family members check off an item when it is getting low or is out. You can go through the kitchen periodically check things off yourself. You can make a project for the kids to help you out. If there is a chef, check with him or her about their needs as well and add that to the list.

You can incorporate this same technique with many aspects of the household; office supplies, household items, Kleenex, parking change, sunglasses, toilet Paper, toothpaste, cleaning supplies, and more.

By visualizing your job you can add value by anticipating needs and tasks which may arise. Another technique is to get to know the other employees and ask

them what your employer likes and what his preferences are. This can also give you greater insight into his habits and behaviors.

Are You Ready?

Being set for a position is being prepared. This can mean, researching your new boss, interviewing the person you are replacing and perhaps talking with some of the team to know what's expected.

You will need to know how to dress, where to park, and what time to arrive. If you can have his favorite morning beverage or breakfast ready, so much the better.

Carry a notepad and pen at all times. Simple things like wearing a watch, knowing the weather for that week, carrying a pen knife, tiny flashlight, a small sewing kit. Whatever it is, be prepared.

Can You Juggle?

On your very first day you may have several things thrown at you at once. You arrive thinking that you'll be going over the daily schedule and you come in the house only to find out that your boss needs a ride to an appointment in ten minutes, then you have to pick up a last minute wedding gift, have a rip in his suit jacket repaired and pick him up from his meeting.

Can you do this while scheduling his travel, making luncheon reservations, and getting a stock quote? You will need to be able to handle everything that is thrown at you. If not, you need to rethink this field as a career for you.

Don't think you'll ever be in this situation? So your task is simply picking up the kids from school. What if just

before you leave the house to pick them up, the pipes break and water is pouring into the master bedroom (See Chapter 17 on *The Bible* for tips on how to quickly handle this). Try having to pick up the kids from school and dealing with this at the same time.

Can it be done? Yes. Will it be easy? Of course not. Will your boss flip out? Maybe, but this will all be part of how well you can juggle.

Staying On Top Of It All

One of the most important things to keep in mind is that you can never let things overwhelm you. By planning and preparing, you can keep on top of your duties. There will always be something that can throw a wrench in the works as we just discussed, but if you review and keep up with your list of tasks, you can handle most surprises that come your way.

Try not to keep everything in your head. If someone calls you and requests something of you or changes an appointment, write it down then and there. This helps you two ways. Writing it keeps it better affixed into your memory and, you've written it down, which will allow you to add it to your task list.

Chapter 8:

Becoming Indispensable

Little Things That Make You Shine

It can be as simple as washing a dirty glass in the sink and putting it away, or, filling the car with gas. Little can also mean putting the latest updated schedule on your boss's desk so it's the first thing he sees when he arrives. Maybe it's having his favorite beverage stocked in the fridge. These small details can seem trite, and sometimes you may not hear anything about it, but your boss will appreciate your attention to detail. Keep in mind that a big part of your job is keeping your boss as stress free as possible. One of the best ways to do this is to anticipate something before he comes to you and asks you to go out and get it.

Are You Clairvoyant?

After a while, you'll begin to read what kind of mood your boss is in and often you will know why. So mind reading is simply the technique of anticipating this before it comes up. For example, if the weather is becoming colder, start preparing their sweaters and jackets, and begin preparing to put away summer items. If you know that after a stressful day your boss likes to unwind by plopping down into their favorite chaise lounge with a bowl of Hagan Daaz and a good video, have the ice cream and video ready to go. If he regularly eats out on Friday nights, have a couple reservations at his favorite places secured. You can always cancel.

Be Prepared!

Always have a spare pen or pencil with you. Always have a little cash for parking or change for the meter. If you drive your boss, keep extra water, gum, Chap Stick, aspirin, and sometimes an additional cell phone or battery handy for her.

Try to envision what your day will be like. Actually picture yourself going through the motions. This can help you plan better for what's to come. For example, if you know that tomorrow you are going to be driving your boss from Malibu to Downtown Los Angeles, does the car have a working spare tire? Is there washer fluid for the windows? Gas in the car? Do you have a map with you? Have you checked the day's traffic conditions? Maybe at the last minute your boss wants you to come with him. Do you have a sport coat ready to go in case you meet with clients?

Envisioning the day can help you plan and prepare for many of these events.

Chapter 16: Resources To Hone Your Craft

Courses You Can Take

There are not many classes out there on learning to become a Personal Assistant, in fact, less than a handful, but this is not the only area where you will need an education. *Kerri Campos Agency* used to be one of the very best at training and placing Personal Assistants but the agency no longer exists. However, *Bonnie Low-Kramen* who worked many years as a top Personal Assistant for Olympia Dukakis and has been a strong presence in the business for over twenty-five years has taken over the mantle as one of the better companies for training Personal Assistants. Her book; "*Be the Ultimate Assistant*" will give you a great set of tools and insights into this profession.

Here is a list of companies that can give you the training you need:

Chapter 19:

A Final Thought For The Seasoned And Not-So-Seasoned

Take pride in your work. Use the tools provided in this guide. Excel and work hard. But most of all enjoy your life. Don't forget that you don't live to work, you work to live. Take a moment to appreciate the things around you. You may not know it but a big part of why you were hired in the first place is due to the life experiences you've gathered. Your outlook on life and the world, your manners and behaviors towards others, how you feel, think, and breathe all contribute to the type of person you are.

Spend time with the people you care most about. Go to a concert. Travel. Seek out a restaurant you are passionate about and enjoy every bite of food, and every sip of wine. Walk through your favorite museum. Take a drive along the coast, or through the mountains. Sleep in. Take a picnic to the park, lay on the grass and look at the clouds. Take your shoes off and walk in the hot sand along the beach. Buy yourself a piece of chocolate and savor the moment. Share a glass of wine. Go to a bar and watch your favorite team. Head to Las Vegas. Read books and magazines. Go to the movies and don't forget the popcorn. Volunteer at some charity organization. Buy yourself a gift.

Once you have done any or all of the above, you are ready to work as a successful Personal Assistant because your present or future boss will see a light inside of you and know you are a force to be reckoned with. You are someone who is in control, who understands what it takes to have a successful, fulfilling life. You are someone they can't do without. You are the next, successful Personal Assistant. Congratulations.

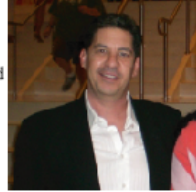
About The Author

THE *Best* OF THE *Best* HOUSEHOLD PROFESSIONALS

PERSONAL ASSISTANT

CRAIG COPELAND

Copeland has been a personal assistant for the last 15 years and has worked for celebrities and other high-profile employers. What he loves about his work is the diversity and challenge it presents - there is never a dull moment because he is always anticipating his employer's needs to make sure that every eventuality is covered. (For example, he always makes sure he has cell phone batteries or a second cell phone on a trip.) He has worked for celebrities such as Katey Sagal and Lenedra Carroll, who was managing her daughter, "Jewel" Kilcher, and has always found it rewarding to take care of the many details and areas of his employer's lives while they are busy doing the things that they have to do. For Craig there is no such thing as a typical day - he has to be ready for anything. Or, as he says, "Preparing for change is your best gift." He is currently working off a top celebrity and earns a six figure salary. His favorite work tool is his cell phone, which he also uses for essential tasks like tracking flights and viewing emails.



Celeb Staff Magazine

Craig has worked for A-list actors, Grammy winning performers, heads of major corporations, top producers, directors, and entrepreneurs. He landed one coveted Personal Assistant position by being the first of fifty people to find a rare exotic car (one of only three hundred made). He scored a private box for a Madonna concert one day before the concert, and when my employer wasn't happy with the location, He was able to get a second, more coveted, private box on the day of the concert. He's lived on a secluded island with moguls like Paul Allen, and flown in everything from puddle jumpers to private jets, Citation Tens, Gulfstream IV & Vs, to the now retired Concord, the fastest commercial plane. He's also washed dishes for eighty, cooked for twelve, thrown parties together for 200-1000 people, arranged transportation for an Ocelot (an American wildcat), shopped at the top fashion stores in Los Angeles and New York, held off a screaming mob of fans, held someone's hand while they were getting a tattoo, changed diapers, light bulbs on the front porch, and the oil in a car. The point is, he's done a number of jobs both large and small and learned to take pride in every task given to me. It's what is and will be expected of you too as a Personal Assistant.

Resources - Tools of the Trade

Airport Escorts:

Airport Assistance Worldwide –
www.airportassistance.com

RML - www.airportconciergeservices.com

Career Info:

Book: Do What You Are:
Discover the Perfect Career for You

Cleaning:

How to Clean Anything –
www.howtocleananything.com
Online Authority for Free Cleaning Information

Concierge Tips:

Book: The Concierge Manual

Book: The Concierge: Key to Hospitality

Databases:

IMDB – us.imdb.com
Internet Movie Database

Who Represents – www.whorepresents.com
Contact info for Celebrities and their Representatives

Entertainment:

Seeing Stars.com – www.seeing-stars.com
Celebrity Events and

Etiquette:

Book: Complete Guide to Executive Manners

Book: The Modern Gentleman:
A Guide to Essential Manners, Savvy & Vice

Book: How to Be a Gentleman:
A Contemporary Guide to Common Courtesy

Book: A Gentleman's Guide to Etiquette

Everything Legal:

Forms Guru – www.findlegalforms.com
Legal Forms

LegalZoom - www.legalzoom.com

Happenings:

Visualnet - www.visualnet.com
The Film, TV & Video Production Link

Hiring Service Professionals:

Angie's List - www.angieslist.com

How Things:

eHow – www.ehow.com

How Things Get Done

(Tying a tie, negotiate a raise, win at Monopoly)

How Stuff Works – www.howstuffworks.com

How almost everything works

Consumer Search – www.consumersearch.com

Info about Products and how they perform

Managing A Household:

Book: Butlers & Household Managers:

21st Century Professionals

Book: The Insider's Guide to Household Staffing

Organizing:

Book: The Organizer : Secrets & Systems

from the World's Top Executive Assistants

Parties & Events:

Party Planning – www.party411.com

Everything for putting on a Party

References:

RefDesk – www.refdesk.com

Fact Checker for the Internet

Restaurant Reservations:

Open Table – www.opentable.com
Restaurant Reservation Booking

Self Improvement:

Book: Change Your Life in Seven Days

Book: Instant Confidence

Book: The Power of Charm

Book: Behavior in Public Places

Book: Strengths-Based Leadership

Book: The Art of Speed Reading People

Shopping:

Book: The Lucky Shopping Manual

Book: Fabulous Gifts: Giving Perfect Present

The Office:

Book: The Valuable Office Professional

Book: Administrative Assistant's
and Secretary's Handbook

Book: The New Office Professional's Handbook

Travel:

Trip.com – www.trip.com
Deals on Travel Rates and Prices

Travel & Leisure – www.travelandleisure.com
Hotels, Restaurants, Destinations

Air BnB – www.airbnb.com

Training Services:

Additional Tools to Download:

With the purchase of this guide you will have access to many downloadable templates to help make your job more efficient and run smoothly.

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