

THE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT'S EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING FOR TODAY'S BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

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Administrative Assistants and Executive Assistants need to embark on a continuous educational journey, both professionally and personally, to fulfill the basic need of job satisfaction and overall well-being.

As both corporate presidents and first-time managers know, today's business environment means doing more with less. Business practices and technology have changed drastically in the last few years. One area has not kept up the pace to its full potential. *How can a business succeed without properly trained professional administrative personnel?* Corporate restructuring has created jobs that are more rewarding and require more skills than ever before.

The role of an Administrative/Executive Assistant has changed dramatically. Today, these assistants work more independently and multi-task more than ever before, often managing other staff including responsibility for hiring and dismissal; responsibility for establishing and monitoring departmental budgets; often being involved in project management and participating on project teams and in corporate meetings; as well as investigating and evaluating the latest technology trends making recommendations on how today's technology can assist the corporation.

Knowledge in business law and government policies is a must. Interpretation of regulations, contracts, agreements, as well as participation in policy development and development of standard corporate processes are common responsibilities. Administrative/Executive Assistants oversee the implementation of electronic document management systems which can include writing a business plan, meeting with stakeholders, and presentations to committees. A recent survey of all members of the Association of Administrative Assistants revealed many are involved in financial management and hiring practices, along with being the major contact resource for their companies. The vast majority of our members maintain confidential files and their employer's schedules.

Employers need to encourage and recognize the commitment and on-going educational requirements of an Administrative Assistant. A fully-trained Administrative/Executive Assistant will greatly benefit the employer, management team and the organization.

BENEFITS OF A FULLY-TRAINED ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

- ability to manage people, situations and equipment
- adaptability and flexibility in embracing new challenges in business and new technology
- compatibility to work as a productive member of a team
- provide a resource to provide instant access to valuable information resources and networks
- add value to your business as an educated employee committed to continued self-improvement

GAIN A PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATION

Many professional associations offer a professional designation after completion of required courses. The Association of Administrative Assistants offers the Qualified Administrative Assistant (Q.A.A.) designation after completing seven courses through correspondence, on-line or lectures at seventeen university and post-secondary institutions across Canada. The Q.A.A. certificate program is offered to secretaries, administrative assistants, executive assistants and office managers interested in meeting the challenge of today's demanding work force. The program provides a solid background in general business education and will assist office personnel in understanding corporate initiative. Subjects being offered include Business Administration, Business English, Organizational Behavior, Financial Accounting, Communications, Supervision, Human Resources Management, Commercial Law, Economics, Psychology, Marketing and Computer Technology.

BENEFITS OF JOINING A PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

- gain prestige of becoming a member of an organization which sets the standard for excellence in business administration and practices
- gain interaction with others who share similar career aspirations
- gain professional growth by participating in educational programs
- gain networking with contacts in many different business sectors
- gain skills development by active participation as a member of a committee by practicing skills such as organization, delegation and communication
- gain information on subjects of current business interest through workshops, guest speakers and newsletters

On-going education and broadening skills are a necessity in today's constantly changing work environment. Education opens the door to new horizons including financial management; human resource planning and benefits administration while dealing with both internal and external customers thus expanding horizons and marketing of skills.

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The *Association of Administrative Assistants* is a Canadian association founded in 1951 and encourages members to continuously upgrade their education to enhance career opportunities. For further information visit our website at www.aaa.ca.