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## SO, I'M A CONTROL FREAK

Yep, that's right, I admit it – I'm a control freak. I wonder if there's a 12-step program for that. I wanted to bring this issue up as a benefit to all of those poor people out there (virtual assistants especially) who work for people like me. And for the benefit of all of my partners in making the misery – my fellow control freaks.

Being a control freak isn't as bad as it sounds. You just have to realize where your limits are and of course, it's best if you can admit it so that you can begin to deal with it. And if you're working with or for a control freak, you just need to know how to deal with us. Really, it is possible to overcome some of your control-freakishness and it is possible to work with us.

I'm going to wager that most control freaks are A-type personalities (or if you prefer to talk in terms of D.I.S.C. profiles - high Ds). That's not all bad. It means we're the ones who put ourselves out there on a daily basis, are driven, and make the world go 'round. We're also very task oriented (e.g. get it done!). We're usually very successful and we don't give up until we've got what we want and then some.

So how did I get over my freakish side? Well, I didn't and I don't know if you ever really can – it's part of who you are. What I have done though is learn how to tame it so others can live with/around me. So how do I handle my freakish side? For one, I like lists. I make lists like you wouldn't believe. Here a list, there a list, everywhere a list list. In fact, I'd be happy make a list for you now.

Tips to overcoming a little of the control freak in you:

- 1) It always makes me feel better, when giving instructions to someone, to write it all down. Every last detail of how I want whatever it is done. Then I feel that nothing is or will be missed.
- 2) Make your instructions clear and to the point. This should give you piece of mind that whomever you are delegating tasks to understands what you want done and how you want it done.
- 3) Take it one step further and have your virtual assistant repeat back those instructions. This is your assurance that s/he understands what you're after and will help you trust him/her more.
- 4) Learn to trust. Okay, maybe not the first time you delegate a task to someone new. But certainly, after that person has successfully completed the tasks you delegated, and completed them to your wishes, you really CAN begin to let go and trust that they'll do it "correctly" each and every time.
- 5) Write it down. Write it ALL down! I've found that writing everything down helps me feel more like I'm in control so that freakish side doesn't need to bare itself to the world quite so much. Take notes on your phone conversations, list out what you need to accomplish, write your instructions out, and so on.
- 6) Learn to let go. Really. Other people CAN do things as well as you can and sometimes even better – even if they're not an A-type, High-D, control freak!
- 7) Find a complimentary assistant. Find someone who is good at and enjoys the things you hate.

Working with a control freak:

- 1) Realize that we can't help it.
- 2) Realize that we do our best to overcome.
- 3) Ask us for a list of what we need to have done.
- 4) Ask us HOW we'd like things done.
- 5) Write it down for us. If we give you a whole bunch of random stuff that needs to be done, write it down and email that list back to us. This way we can look it over, change our minds, add, and subtract and send it back to you.
- 6) Ask us questions about what we want and how we want it before we flit off on another subject. Keep asking until you have enough information from us to understand what we want.
- 7) Do what you say you are going to do. Nothing makes us run away faster than not doing what you say you are going to do.
- 8) We have to be able to trust you. You need to be honest EVERY time – even if it means telling us what you think we don't want to hear.

These tips should help you, the control freak, overcome that freakish side and for those of you working with us, maybe this will make it easier. We control freaks really aren't as scary as it may seem.