



Editor's Note

Caroline Jarzabek

[CMJ Virtual Office Manager](#)

Finally it is here the summer issue of the newsletter. It has been quite the summer and I hope that you have all enjoyed some rest and relaxation.

It is my hope that this issue will inspire you to grow your business and motivate you to gear up the fall. We have included some articles that I hope will help you to reach your goals.

Thank you again to Karen Bowman of [West Coastway Consulting](#) for her invaluable help in putting this newsletter together.

Caroline.

Founders Note

Elayne Whitfield, CCVA, MVA, PREVA
[Executive Assistance](#)

Janice Byer, CCVA, MVA
[Docu-Type Administrative and Web Design Services](#)

Well... summer is coming to an end (a sure sign of that here in Ontario is the CNE that started last Friday :-) and we hope everyone had a chance to take a little time for themselves and enjoy the wonderful weather. Some areas of the country have had some extreme weather but most of the season has been pretty good.

This issue of the newsletter includes some great articles to help you build your business. We have always been huge believers in the power of networking when it comes to building your business so be sure to take a look at the great list of places to network online in Networking 101 by Caroline Jarzabek on page 6.

Just a reminder to all of our full members, you are listed in our member directory which is searchable by our site visitors so be sure to keep your profile up to date. While you are in your profile, be sure to list your alternate email address which you use for the email discussion list. This helps us to ensure that you keep receiving the emails as well as the RFPs that full members are entitled to. Visit your profile today to be sure everything is up to date at <http://www.cvac.ca/members/menu.php>. You will be asked for your username and password. If you have forgotten it, there is a Password Retrieval feature on that page to help you.

We hope everyone enjoys the rest of the summer and is ready to get back into the swing of working regular hours once the kids go back to school (and you don't have to chauffeur them around to camps and such :-).

Janice D. Byer, CCVA, MVA
Elayne Whitfield-Parr, CCVA, MVA
Founders of CVAC - www.cvac.ca
Connecting Canadian VAs with the world... virtually! ❖

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Article: Why Creativity Is A Myth
<http://www.psychotactics.com/artcreativity.htm>

Can pretty much anyone make 2 minute noodles?

Or do you have to be genetically enhanced? Do you have to come from a family of genius chefs?

So why is it so hard to succeed at 2 minute noodles, and so hard to succeed at say a skill like copywriting, or singing, or speaking to an audience?

The answer is in the code

Not the genetic code (which is also a code, by the way), but in the code you get while learning to do the task. So if I asked you to draw a cartoon and then write a funny caption, your response would be:

- a) Can't draw cartoons
- b) Can't write funny stuff

But that's because you have the wrong code

So what if I changed the code. What if I asked you if you could draw circles and squares? And what if I said: Can you think of two disconnected terms like: 'outer space' and 'barbeque'? What would you say then?

Why of course, you can do both of the above. So logically, if you can do both of the above, you can draw cartoons; and write funny captions. And how do I know? Because I've trained people to do the above, by simply showing them a different code.

So heck, it's been proven. Tested to death too

Which means that if I show you a code to design a website, or create a pop up, or for that matter do copywriting or write an article, then all I need is a simple code. The reason why people learn to drive automatic cars faster than manual is because....yeah I know you know why.

Let's all bow to the Goddess of Genetics. And then disregard that goddess completely.

But doesn't it depend on the brain?

And the processing system of the brain?
Sure it does. And not for one second am I suggesting that you don't consider individual brains.

We all have tremendously varying brains (operating systems). Some are faster, some are slower. And what we know about brain-research, and how the brain thinks is reasonably pathetic.

What we do know, is that almost all of us learn a certain level of language and communication skills. And language is not based on genetics. It's not hard-wired in our brains.

It has to be learned. Via code.
Yet despite enormous complexities of the language code, we still pick it up--and use it.

A Warm Welcome to our new CVAC Full Members:

- Mary Brizan
- Julie Oliveira
- Patty Burnell
- Linda Pedley
- Suzanne Collyer
- Lauren Pibworth
- Debbie Eberhardt
- Peggy Piekema
- Virginia Frost
- Larry Ruznisky
- Gladys Green
- Kelly Sims
- Morgan Hawkins
- Monica Stekl
- Lynda Hodgson
- Anita Thistle
- Teresa Kemerer
- Tracy Turavani
- Latoya Kenyon
- J.P. Wooster
- Robert Neilly
- Yvonne Wu

Welcome to all of the new partial members, we hope to see you become a full member soon so that you can take advantage of the ever-growing RFPs that are coming in ❖

Now imagine if that code were simple

The difference would be like coding HTML by hand vs. cutting and pasting in a simple web-program like Dreamweaver. Could you do the Dreamweaver thing? Sure you could. In how many minutes exactly could you learn to cut, paste, make bold, make italic and upload files.

Try 15 minutes. In how many minutes would a similar page of hand-written code take you? You might give up before you even got far enough. And all because the code is just too darn hard. You can achieve or do anything you really want to. If you:

- 1) Find the code.
- 2) Find a simple code.
- 3) Want to implement the code.
- 4) Find success implementing the code.

And implementation counts.

Because even 2 minute noodle-making is hard for someone who just refuses to make noodles.

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Wouldn't you love to stumble upon a secret library of small business ideas? Find simple, yet electrifying ideas, on copywriting, public speaking, marketing strategies, sales conversion, psychological tactics and branding.
Head down to <http://www.psychotactics.com> today and judge for yourself ❖*

Volunteer Benefits

Do you have the time, talent and ability?

BE A VOLUNTEER!

Volunteering is a rewarding experience. Being able to help others, a sense of belonging and helping to create a successful association are only some of the reasons people volunteer.

10 GREAT REASONS TO GIVE YOUR TIME AND TALENT

1. Show clients and competitors that **YOU** are an "expert" in your field and lend credibility to your business!
2. Give back to the community that is giving you a "head start"
3. Sense of accomplishment and pride in what VA's are all about!
4. Volunteering looks good in a portfolio or on a resume
5. It gets your name **VISIBLE**
6. Volunteering = **SHARING YOUR VA SPIRIT**
7. Make new friends and business connections
8. Learn new skills or keep your skills updated
9. Promote the **CVAC** and help grow the Association
10. It opens doors to a world of possibilities

To learn more or to lend us your time, contact:
Tanya Beaudoin tanya@officeondemand.ca

COMMITTEE POSITIONS AVAILABLE!

Blog Committee
Web Committee
Mentoring Committee
Teleclass Chair & Committee
Public Relations Committee
Event and Planning Committee
Advertising/Sponsorship Committee ❖

FEATURED CVAC MEMBER AND

VOLUNTEER ~ Karen Bowman



Karen Bowman is Owner and Operator of West Coast Way Consulting (WCWC). Since 2001, WCWC has provided communications, project management, copy writing, technical and public relations consulting services to realtors, entrepreneurs and small businesses.

WCWC's project management includes hands-on involvement with the extensive requirements of complicated and constantly evolving project goals and deadlines. Karen's approach allows clients to focus on the aspects of their project that requires their specialized attention while confident that all other tasks are meticulously managed and completed.

What does Karen have to say about volunteering?

"I joined the CVAC Newsletter committee just prior to the release of the Winter 2006 newsletter. Being passionate about writing, both creatively and for business, made the newsletter committee a logical choice for volunteering.

If joining CVAC was the catalyst to the beginning of substantial growth in my business, joining the newsletter committee took that growth to a whole new level. Writing my article on real estate virtual assistance provided the opportunity to interview some local realtors, one of whom decided to contract my services before the article was even printed. I was also able to point to these two CVAC articles when responding to an RFP submitted through CVAC and successfully landed the contract. Talk about your instant reward for volunteering!

Not only have I seen growth in my business through volunteering, but also I've made a wonderful new friend in Caroline as we work towards the release of each newsletter and I get an enormous amount of pleasure from giving back to CVAC since being a member has given me so much. If you can choose an area to volunteer that reflects your passions; it's a win-win situation for everyone."

Karen Bowman
www.westcoastway.com ❖



JOIN CVAC

BECOME A MEMBER

CVAC is by Canadian VAs, for Canadian VAs. Members of CVAC are in a variety of stages of running their Virtual Assistance businesses in Canada. Some have just started, while others have been at it for some time. By being in these different stages, we can share the do's and don'ts of running your business. Veteran VAs have "been there and done that" so they can enlighten others as to what works and what doesn't. New VAs have a fresh perspective and bring new ideas to the group.

Whether you are already established in the VA industry, just opened your virtual business, or are in the research process of setting up your own VA practice and are seeking guidance, CVAC is for you!

Read more about the benefits of joining CVAC at <http://www.cvac.ca/member.php> ❖

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Newmarket Lunch

1st Wednesday of every month

The Buttery – North East Corner of Davis Drive
and Yonge Street.

17565 Yonge Street, Newmarket – 905-836-0300
12:00 p.m. Noon.

GTA VA Breakfast

3rd Saturday of every month

Perkins Family Restaurant (Holiday Inn)
Dixon and Martingrove

600 Dixon Road – 416-240-9741

Durham CVAC Luncheon

4th Thursday of every month

Kelsey's – Brock Road and 401
In Pickering.

**Please let us know of any events in your
area** ❖

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Remember that your membership with CVAC has a yearly renewal. If you are unsure of your renewal date, please contact founders@cvac.ca. You can renew your membership at <http://www.cvac.ca/renewal.php>. We will send out several reminders and if we fail to get a response, our system will eliminate your email address from the full member's announcement list (where the RFPs are sent), disable your password for the member's only area of the website, and delete your contact information from the member directory.

**DON'T FORGET TO RENEW
YOUR MEMBERSHIP!** ❖

Motivational Quotes

Catch a passion for helping others and a richer life will come back to you.

*William H. Danforth
Founder of Ralston Purina*

We are told that talent creates its own opportunities. But it sometimes seems that intense desire creates not only its own opportunities, but its own talents.

*Eric Hoffer
Author: The True Believer*

It is not the straining for great things that is most effective; it is the doing of little things, the common duties a little better and better.

*Elizabeth Stuart Phelps
Writer.*

A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.

*Christopher Reeves
Actor and Speaker*

Circumstances may cause interruptions and delays, but never lose sight of your goals. Prepare yourself in every way you can by increasing your knowledge and adding to your experience, so that you can make the most of every opportunity when it occurs.

*Mario Andretti
Auto Racer*

One of the secrets of success is to refuse to let temporary setbacks defeat us.

*Mary Kay
Founder: Mary Kay Cosmetics.* ❖

CVAC SHOP – Support CVAC and the VA industry with these cool, high-quality products sporting the CVAC logo. You will be amazed how many people will ask you, “What is the Canadian Virtual Assistant Connection?”, or “What is a Virtual Assistant?” and then you can tell them the benefits of working with a VA, such as yourself.

Visit <http://www.cafepress.com/cvacshop> to get your t-shirt, hat, mousepad and more! ❖

CVAC is proud to have acquired special rates for benefit plans for our members. As a full member of CVAC, you can now get health insurance and more at wonderful rates for full members at <http://www.cvac.ca> and go to the full members' page. ❖

Don't want the expense of a fax machine? CVAC and MyFax have teamed up to offer an Email-based fax service for our members. Click here for more information <http://www.myfax.com/affiliates/index.asp?aff=4860&bid=3> ❖

CVAC now has an exclusive arrangement with I'm InTouch to offer their remote access solution to our members at a discounted price and extended length of usage. Read more and download your 30-day trial version at <http://www.cvac.ca/imintouch.php> ❖

CVAC Mentoring Program - The CVAC Mentoring Program is a full-member benefit and it is meant to assist both newcomers and existing VA's in their search for sustainable self-employment, by matching them with mentors who have greater professional experience. If you would like to be matched up with a mentor or can offer your help as a mentor, please visit <http://www.cvac.ca/mentoring.php> ❖

For more exciting benefits, offers and E-books go to the full members' page at <http://www.cvac.ca>.

Not a full member yet? Why not join now and take advantage of all these exciting benefits! ❖

Software Techie Tip

I found a great little program that is completely free and clean of any spyware, adware etc.

I needed something like this because I find myself forgetting to take care of little tasks that I need to each day. I have a book at my desk that I jot down things but find this easier because I can actually READ what is jotted down. (Doesn't say much for my handwriting does it?) And anyway, I am saving a tree and cleaning up some clutter.

We all know and probably all use sticky notes.... well this software is sticky notes for your computer. It is a very small program so it doesn't use up a lot of your computer processing power to use. You have many options of how your computer should handle the sticky notes.

It is great for TO DO list because you can cross off each item in your list as you complete them. You can file the notes for later reference if you happen to jot down something that you would need at a later date.

You can give a sticky note an alarm and it will pop up on your screen at the time you specify.

It is quick, and efficient. and FREE... here is the link to check it out

<http://www.zhornsoftware.co.uk/stickies/download.html>

Courtesy: Katie Whissel, Accord Media

www.accordmedia.com ❖

WEBINARS

We are still seeking a dedicated person who can lend some time to be the Chairperson for the Webinar Committee.

Please apply to:

Tanya Beaudoin
tanya@officeondemand.ca

CVAC Is Looking For Your Feedback

- **What is the CVAC Website missing?**
- **What types of resources would you like to see on the website to help you build your business?**
- **Any other comments or feedback?**

Please e-mail founders@CVAC.ca with your ideas and comments. ❖

Networking 101

by Caroline Jarzabek,
[CMJ Virtual Office Manager](#)

Lately there seems to be a lot of talk about how to get your business known and how to find clients. Since September is rolling around before we know it, this might be an opportune time to address networking.

Networking is such a vital part of growing a business, especially a VA business. So what is networking, how and where do you start?

First and foremost, networking is about building relationships. Think about it for a minute. If you were looking for someone to fix your computer or do some work in your home, where would you look? Would you go through the Yellow Pages and then hope that you found someone reliable, who knew their stuff and was the best person to handle your needs? Would you really trust someone that you didn't really know?

This is what networking is all about. You need to get out there and get yourself known. Once people get to know you and your business then it is easy for them to refer you to others. Why? Because, they have built trust and a relationship with you. They know what type of person you are and what your work ethics are by how you present yourself. This works online and in person.

Now where do you go to network, what groups can I possibly look at and where do you find them?

Here is a few to get you started both online and off:

The York Business Exchange (YBE)
www.ybe.ca

Business Owners Idea Café
www.businessownersideacafe.com

The Leapfrog Network
www.leapfrognetwork.com

BNI Canada
www.bnicanada.ca

eWomen Network
www.ewomennetwork.com

Canadian Women's Business Network
www.cdnbizwomen.com

entreWomen
www.entrewomen.ca

Canadian Association of Women Executives and Entrepreneurs
www.cawee.net

Business Women's Networking Association
<http://www.bwna.biz>

Women Entrepreneurs of Canada
www.wec.ca

Small Business Forum
www.small-business-forum.com

Company of Women
www.companyofwomen.ca

Wings Canada
www.wingscanada.com

Ryze Business Networking
www.ryze.com

Linked In
www.linkedin.com

International Association of Administrative Professionals
www.iaap-hq.org

Canadian Virtual Assistant Connection
www.cvac.ca

Canadian Virtual Assistant's Network
www.canadianva.net

Virtual Assistant's Networking Forum
www.vanetworking.com

Women In A Home Office
www.womeninahomeoffice.com

Canadian Federation of Independent Business
www.cfib.ca

SOHO Business Group
www.soho.ca

Business Innovation Group (BIG)
www.bignetworking.ca

Business Partnerships
<http://businesspartnerships.ca>

Business Networks
<http://businesspartnerships.ca>

Meetup
<http://smallbiz.meetup.com>

ReferralQuest
www.referralquest.net

For other groups, events, meetings and times check out this fabulous website by Jennifer Beale – the Queen of Network. You can even sign up to have meeting and events come right into your mailbox:

<http://www.biznetworknews.com>

Remember that networking is an ongoing investment in your business. Think of it as courting your potential clients, it doesn't happen overnight, it does take time but what lasting relationship doesn't!

Happy networking! ❖

NEW NATIONAL INSTITUTE MAKES BOOKKEEPERS ACCOUNTABLE

Surrey, B.C – Last month a BC woman was jailed four years for GST fraud.

(<http://www.cra-rc.gc.ca/newsroom/convictions/bc/bc070622-e.html>) With ever-increasing compliance burdens from the tax department, a shrinking labor force, and the transition of businesses from one generation to the next, how can business owners today ensure top notch, competent help from bookkeepers? How can you ensure that your bottom-line, personal, and corporate income taxes, GST and payroll remittances are accurate and timely?

More than 60,000 Canadians hang out their shingle as a "bookkeeper," yet competency in that marketplace ranges from stellar to mediocre and worse, completely inept. Who is the best professional to do the important compliance work required by law of business owners?

To address this need, a new, national non-profit association of practicing bookkeepers, **The Institute of Professional Bookkeepers of Canada**, has been formed with a mandate to institute professional standards for its members, through a multi-layer approach to professional development designed specifically for the Canadian bookkeeping profession.

"It took three industry professionals to help bring this concept to reality," says Gordon Skillen, Executive Director of IPBC, former board member with the BC Restaurant Association, and a Maximizer business partner of many years. "My colleague, Dianne Mueller, a bookkeeper and trainer of Simply Accounting, was increasingly frustrated at her inability to find highly trained bookkeepers, as was Randall Orser, the new President of this organization. But this was only reflective of part of the real problem."

"The largest problem many small businesses have today is finding adequately trained bookkeepers," added Chris Hafstein, Secretary of the IPBC.

"We have corporations such as Simply Accounting, Quick Books, Dell, The Knowledge Bureau, and Telpay on board as partners to help us with our mandate," adds Skillen. "The many endorsements and congratulations we have received since our inception last month include MLAs and BC Premier Gordon Campbell, who extended his best wishes '... as you work to promote excellence in the Canadian bookkeeping industry.'

"We are proud to align ourselves with this new organization which promises to provide an opportunity for business owners to find a higher quality service from knowledgeable bookkeepers across Canada," says Evelyn Jacks, President of The Knowledge Bureau.

"TelPay supports IPBC's certification program for bookkeepers and is pleased to offer its industry leading electronic payments software for Canadian business to IPBC's membership and clients," says TelPay For Business, Product Manager, Jason Olson.

"We have a strong partnership with the Knowledge Bureau to support the needs of small business owners in identifying reliable bookkeeping talent for their organizations," said Laurie Schultz, Simply Accounting General Manager, Sage Software, Canada. "We support the efforts of the IPBC and their joint work with the Knowledge Bureau, to provide valuable resources to the accounting industry that will further benefit small business owners."

"As an added incentive, we are offering the first one thousand members an autographed copy of *Big Ideas for Growing Your Small Business*, written by the internationally-recognized small business expert and author, Frances McGuckin," says Skillen. "Membership only costs one dollar a day. It's phenomenal value for serious bookkeepers to become certified and stay in touch with the business world."

For more information, visit www.ipbc.ca or call 1-866-616-4722

Alternatively, Contact: Gordon Skillen
604-637-9607
E-mail: Gordon@ipbc.ca

Submitted by Karen Bowman,
[West Coast Way Consulting](#) ❖

The Lawyer and the Blonde

A lawyer and a blonde woman are sitting next to each other on a long flight. The lawyer asks if she would like to play a fun game. The blonde is tired and just wants to take a nap, so she politely declines and tries to catch a few winks.

The lawyer persists, that the game is a lot of fun. "I ask you a question, and if you don't know the answer, you pay me only \$5; you ask me one, and if I don't know the answer, I will pay you \$500."

This catches the blonde's attention; and, to keep him quiet, she agrees to play the game. The lawyer asks the first question. "What's the distance from the earth to the moon?" The blonde doesn't say a word, reaches in to her purse, pulls out a five-dollar bill, and hands it to the lawyer.

Now, it's the blonde's turn. She asks the lawyer, "What goes up a hill with three legs, and comes down with four?" The lawyer uses his laptop, searches all references. He uses the Airphone; he searches the Net and even the Library of Congress. He sends e-mails to all the smart friends he knows, all to no avail. After one hour of searching he finally gives up. He wakes up the blonde and hands her \$500. The blonde takes the \$500 and goes back to sleep.

The lawyer is going nuts not knowing the answer. He wakes her up and asks, "Well, so what goes up a hill with three legs and comes down with four?"

The blonde reaches into her purse, hands the lawyer \$5 and then goes back to sleep. ❖

VA QUESTION AND ANSWER TIME



Q. Charging Tax - I finally have to charge tax now that I'm over the limit income-wise. I just applied for a Business Number and a tax account. Can someone explain to me how I charge tax? Is it the full tax rate as per my province (14% HST) or does it depend on where the client is from (so I charge their provincial rate)? In addition, do I tax US clients?

A. You only charge GST as you are providing a service. You only charge PST for products. You do not charge US clients GST.

According to Revenue Canada, for Canadian customers you have to charge them the full 14% HST regardless of where they are located if it is for a product and not just a service. Tax is charged based on the province where the 'work' is actually done. Clients who do not live in a province under the HST rule, can apply to get an ITC credit on their GST remittance form for Provincial Sales Tax that is automatically included in the blended HST amount.

Q. Quickbook Pro – US Invoices - Has anyone figured out when creating an invoice, how to take out the word 'Can' in the total field. I need to create US invoices and the 'Can' always shows up in the subtotal and total fields.

A. You can either set up the multicurrency feature as previously mentioned, or you can manually set up a US A/R acct, and create a new Invoice template based on the existing one. To get the "CAN" off of the invoice template you will need to go into "customize" the template and revise it. You can remove any reference to it entirely, and just place in the customer notes either "Please pay in US Funds" or "Please pay in CDN funds" for whichever you are invoicing, or you can have 2 separate invoice templates to toggle between depending on the currency. You may need to go into the "Layout Designer" as well. I like to avoid using the multicurrency feature where possible, because it can cause some troubling glitches. You can track it better manually if you are only dealing with US vs CDN funds. Just be sure to identify any US funds in a separate A/R & Income and/or A/P & expense acct.

Q. RFP's - Do most 'old-timers' have a steady assignment from companies? How do I land that first assignment? When an RFP comes in, do Members bid for it? Does it mean that the lowest-bidder will most likely get most RFPs?

A. Although we get RFPs in and send them to our full members, you can't rely solely on them for assignments. You need to do a lot of other things to get your name out there and get work coming in.

First, put a signature line on all of your emails, no matter who they go to. You can set it up in your email program so that it is automatically added when you write or reply to an email.

Also, you need to get a website to showcase your talents. As you are a virtual business, you need to have a virtual storefront (so to speak) and that would be your website.

There are many other things that you can do to get your name out there including being listed on directories (such as CVAC); writing articles on your expertise and getting them on to article submission sites and other places; networking, networking, networking; and so on. You can find a number of articles on the CVAC site to help you as well as other VA websites that offer tips on getting exposure.

Members do provide the RFP submitter with proposals on how they can help and what they offer. It is not necessarily the lowest "bid" that wins the contract. It all depends on the person/company to whom you are submitting the proposal. Low bidding is not suggested, as you want to show that you are worth every penny that you propose. If you go too low, you may get the project or the person may think you aren't experienced enough so will go with someone else. You need to impress the person you are submitting the RFP to and your experience and response will be one of the factors in their decision.

Q. I am in the process of obtaining software for my business and would love to gain some input from all of you. I would appreciate your thoughts on what you feel the top 5-10 most necessary and useful software is in your own business experience. Both, for your own needs as well as the most required software for your clients.

- A.** 1) MS Outlook - for emails, calendar organization, contacts, tasks, etc.
2) MS Word - for word processing
3) MS Excel - for spreadsheet
4) MS PowerPoint - for presentations
5) Adobe Acrobat - for PDF conversion and manipulation

Question and Answer time is brought to you by Karen Bowman of [West Coast Way Consulting](#) ❖

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The Canadian Virtual Assistant Connection is proud to offer the CVAC Newsletter to our members and all entrepreneurs around the world. We offer articles, links and tips to help you run your small business. If you would like to subscribe or unsubscribe to the CVAC Newsletter, please fill in the form at: <http://www.cvac.ca/newsletter.php> ❖

If you are already a Full or Partial Member of CVAC, you will automatically be added to the newsletter subscriber list so there is no need to fill in the form. ❖