

When articulating the PA role, language matters!

We've got to get better about being more selective, and precise, when using language and words to describe the role of the PA or EA. I still get rattled when I see articles about the role of the PA, which, I have no doubt, were well-intentioned, but that actually take us *backwards*.

Often, PA and EA related articles are littered with stereotypical language that does nothing whatsoever to change perceptions of readers (who are often non-PAs) about the true nature and essence of the role of a high-level Assistant. Yes, the stereotypical words are often used as a comparison of what the role used to be, but can we not accept that by using those words in that way only reinforces precisely what we are trying to move away from?

I wrote the *EA Manifesto: What I Am*TM – and note this explanation very carefully – without defaulting to using any secretarial language whatsoever. That was intentional; to show the world, and those in the profession, that we must avoid 'secretarial' speak at every opportunity, as it takes us back to what we have worked so hard to move away from. I therefore make no apologies for my views but strive deliberately, as much as possible, to continue to push the perception of the Personal or Executive Assistant role in a new light. My students, for example, are taught never to describe themselves as 'secretaries', 'gate-keepers' or 'office-wives' (yes, we still get that one from time to time!) and I encourage all PAs to be careful not to use the wrong language, even in good faith.



In the corporate PA world, where professionalism, status and credibility are key, the old-fashioned words that were once used to describe a secretary have no place. If we continue to articulate the Assistant role with unhelpful language, then why do we expect our bosses or employers to think and speak about us, and the role, any differently?

You could start by looking at your job description; does it use only secretarial language, or does it contain the management qualities that employers are now seeking?

Remember: your word is your wand – meaning the way that you describe yourself becomes your self-perception, and that becomes the way others see you. So, getting the language right for PAs is paramount on so many levels.

*If you're keen to get the language right when articulating and describing your true PA or EA role, then Adam Fidler's two-day **Level 3 Get Ahead as an Executive PA** or **Level 4 The Strategic Executive Assistant** programmes cover job descriptions, EA Success Factors and a new definition of the PA/EA role – and avoid totally any old-fashioned secretarial language. The courses run regularly in Manchester and London.*

Adam Fidler Academy is offering a special 25% discount on course bookings to all East Midlands PA Network and East Midlands Chamber members' EAs and PAs
See Adam Fidler Academy for more details or email adam@adept.consulting

Business Network Magazine Chamber's Lesley awarded coveted FEPAA status

Lesley Young, the Chamber's Executive Support Manager, has been awarded FEPAA Practitioner status.

Having followed two years continuous CPD as part of the Executive and Personal Assistant Association's (EPAA) CPD Programme, Lesley is part of the first cohort of EPAA members to receive this recognition.

Lesley, a Fellow of EPAA which supports and champions business support professionals both within the UK and internationally, also represents the East Midlands on EPAA's Regional Committee.

Founded in 2016 to bring together a range of business support professionals to support them through a period of industry upheaval and transition, EPAA has now become the go-to organisation for EA/PA professionals in a diverse range of roles, all of whom provide invaluable support essential in the day-to-day running of any and every successful business.



Take a look at the Chamber's website to see how being a member could benefit your organisation.

Grow

Helping your business grow, whether through optimising processes, upskilling your people or reducing costs through membership benefits

Connect

Whether you want to network, exhibit, learn more about what's going on in your sector through industry forums

Skills

To stay competitive means you need good people, with the right skills who feel valued and appreciated

Influence

Reaching and influencing the right person, whether it's your industry sector peers, your local MP, a specific Government department or simply people who need what you do

International

Whether your business currently operates overseas or not

Become an Inspiring the Future Volunteer



The overall aim of this project is to inspire children and connect primary schools in Derby with the world of work. By becoming an Inspiring The Future volunteer, you can help inspire young people to think about what is possible in their futures. Your commitment can be as much, or as little, as you can offer: from giving up just one hour a year to share your career journey with young people in a school, to exploring the bigger commitment of becoming a school governor. So, **sign up** today and start inspiring children in your community by showing them a future they can aspire to.

Interesting reads and people to follow:

- **Harnessing the power of an EA** - Richard Amato, runner-up for Boss of the Year at the 2018 Executive PA Awards, gives a boss's perspective on what makes a truly brilliant EA
- **Vickie Sokol Evans**, RedCape Academy - global leader in engaging Microsoft, Apple and Google productivity training

JOIN



**BRITISH
CHAMBERS
OF COMMERCE**
BUSINESS AWARDS

Chamber of the Year

DON'T FORGET TO MENTION EMPAN WHEN BOOKING, THERE MAY BE A DISCOUNT!

Chamber Business Training Directory

The Chamber's wide range of training programmes are designed to help you train and retain the best talent. Take a look at the new [video](#) and [click here](#) for the current training course programme.

Digital Growth Programme

Benefit from fully-funded workshops, seminars and digital business advice to improve your digital footprint. [Click here](#) for more details.

Executive and Personal Assistants Association (EPAA)

EPAA supports and champions business support professionals, both within the UK and internationally. [Click here](#) for more details.

Adam Fidler Academy (AFA)

With an emphasis on teaching practical skills and strategies to continuously improve business performance and effectiveness, AFA is the first-choice training institution for those who aspire to be first-class professionals. [Click here](#) for more details.

Vacancies

Chamber and member vacancies throughout the East Midlands. [Click here](#) for more details.

COMMERCIAL TRAINING

Managing Difficult People and Situations - 3 Oct, Chesterfield; 26 Nov, Derby

Project Management - 22 Oct, Derby; 11 Dec, Nottingham

Foundation Excel - 17 Oct, Nottingham; 10 Dec, Derby

Intermediate Excel - 26 Sept, Derby; 28 Nov, Chesterfield

Advanced Excel - 27 Sept, Nottingham; 18 Dec, Derby

Introduction to Office 365 - 4 Dec, Chesterfield

Minute Taking - 10 Oct, Nottingham; 18 Dec, Chesterfield

EPAA EVENTS

Self Care Summit for EAs and PAs

Friday 11 October, London - **BOOK**

Self Care is any activity that we do deliberately in order to take care of our mental, emotional and physical health. It encompasses anything you can do to be good to yourself. Never has there been a more important time to look at this area for EAs and PAs. Keynote - in conversation with Frank Bruno MBE

EPAA National EA Conference - FULLY BOOKED

Thursday 14 November, London

Specifically for EPAA members only, this conference has a dedicated learning and development focus, with no sponsors or partners, no trade shows and even more importantly no selling!

OTHER EVENTS

Hays Wellbeing Event - Who's taking care of you?

Thursday 5 September, Leicester - **BOOK**

Guest speaker Aimee Browne, The Mindful Assistant.

Hays Event - Charity Quiz

Thursday 26 September, Leicester - **BOOK**

Charity quiz night in aid of End Youth Homelessness campaign

Birmingham PA Forum Learning & Development Conference

Wednesday 2 October, Aston University - **BOOK**

An action packed day of motivational speakers, panel discussions and educational seminars as well as networking opportunities

The Practically Perfect PA Virtual Summits

Friday 20 September and Friday 22 November - **BOOK**

Online conferences for EAs/PAs from all over the world. Join live or access the content for up to three months after.

CHARITY FOCUS

The East Midlands Chamber Charitable Fund is administered by Chamber member Leicestershire & Rutland Community Foundation and provides a platform for the Chamber to support charitable causes, whilst also managing all the money safely and within charitable law, claiming Gift Aid and so on.

The charities chosen to benefit from the Charitable Fund for 2019 have been announced as SkillForce, TwentyTwenty and CHICKS.

Funds raised during the year will be split between the three charities and presented at the Chamber's annual Christmas Lunch.

TwentyTwenty

TwentyTwenty is an employment and support charity that breaks cycles of worklessness, hopelessness and dependency in the most deprived areas of Leicestershire and Derbyshire and Rutland, through working with young people aged 11 to 24. They believe that every young person has incredible potential, and that the most disaffected young people are resources to be developed rather than problems to be solved.



The young people who go to TwentyTwenty live without hope, in the most deprived neighbourhoods, many from families who are now long term unemployed.

TwentyTwenty exists to help these young people become independent, healthy, aspirational citizens who have the skills and wherewithal to hold down secure and progressive jobs.

March Brain Teaser

Can you say 99 words without the letters a, b, c, d, j, k, m, p, q, x or z in 60 seconds?

Answer: All you have to do is count from 1 to 99. That's it!!! None of those numbers contain the letters a, b, c, d, j, k, m, p, q, x, or z.

AND FINALLY:

One moment of patience, ten years of peace

KEY SKILLS BLOGS

A series of blogs from Practically Perfect PA to help you keep on top of all your tasks

WORDS OF WISDOM

"Learn from others, even be inspired by others, but don't compare yourself to them, focus on you"

- John Hotowka

TECHNOLOGY

50 Chrome extensions for business

Hidden Lines - try typing three each of the following on a new line in Outlook or Word and press return to see what happens:

underscore; dash; =; *; #; ~

Supported by:

