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| **TEXAS CTE LESSON PLAN**[www.txcte.org](http://www.txcte.org) |
| **Lesson Identification and TEKS Addressed** |
| **Career Cluster** | Business Management and Administration |
| **Course Name** | Virtual Business |
| **Lesson/Unit Title** | Setting Up Shop |
| **TEKS Student Expectations** | **130.141. (c) Knowledge and Skills**(2) The student analyzes an overview of starting and growing a virtual business office. The student is expected to (B) list benefits afforded to virtual business clients.(3) The student demonstrates online and off-line marketing, including establishing a web presence. The student is expected to (A) create and design a website for a virtual business office. (B) describe details of setting up a virtual business office.(C) determine appropriate marketing of a virtual business office.(D) describe steps to successfully market a virtual business office. |
| **Basic Direct Teach Lesson**(Includes Special Education Modifications/Accommodations and one English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) Strategy) |
| **Instructional Objectives** | Upon completion of this lesson, the student will understand the details involved in setting up a virtual office.* Students will identify equipment necessary for the business.
* Students will identify software necessary for an online business.
* Students will understand the benefits of having a virtual assistant for an online business.
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| **Rationale** | In this lesson, students will learn about setting up a virtual business. Students will design floor plans for their businesses, create a newsletter about virtual assistants, and create a Gantt scheduling chart. |
| **Duration of Lesson** | When taught as written, this lesson should take four to five days to complete. |
| **Word Wall/Key Vocabulary***(ELPS c1a,c,f; c2b; c3a,b,d; c4c; c5b) PDAS II(5)* | * Cloud Computing – Where resources such as software, information, and other devices are shared over a network.
* Virtual Office – A combination of business services and electronic communication, usually from a location other than a physical office.
* Virtual Assistant – A type of administrative assistant who assists a virtual business owner or other professionals perform tasks electronically from home as opposed to a physical office location.
* Bandwidth – The speed of data transfer, essential for a virtual business.
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| **Materials/Specialized Equipment Needed** | * Poster board or flipchart paper
* Markers
* Computers for students to complete projects
* “Floor Plan Diagram” Assignment #1
* “Floor Plan Diagram” Assignment #1 Rubric
* Virtual Assistant Job Description Newsletter” Assignment #2
* “Virtual Assistant Job Description Newsletter” Assignment #2 Rubric
* “Gantt Scheduling Chart” Assignment #3
* “Gantt Scheduling Chart” Assignment #3 Rubric
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| **Anticipatory Set**(May include pre-assessment for prior knowledge) | Learner Preparation:Ask students if there are any similarities between operating a home-based business and operating an online business. What do they think the most important aspect of a home-based and an online business are?Introduction:Pass out slips of paper to students and have them write down one tool necessary for a virtual office. Ask a student to collect the slips and tally the items listed on the board. Pass out another slip and ask for another requirement of a virtual office, and continue for another round. Most likely many students will have agreed on what is necessary. |
| **Direct Instruction \*** | 1. Why Virtual
2. low overhead
3. flexible hours
4. can use personal strengths, talents, and skills
5. easier to reach a niche market
6. can reach a larger market than a traditional business

Many reasons exist for taking your business virtual including low overhead costs, flexible hours, and that you can use your personal strengths to start your business. Going virtual also makes it easier to reach a niche market, a specific market that you will be targeting. You also have a larger potential customer- base to which you can market.1. Your Virtual Office
2. Your work space
3. handling paperwork, filing options
4. handling visitors to your office
5. employee space, if not virtual assistants
6. Your assets
7. office furniture
8. equipment
9. laptop (most important resource)
10. printer, copier, scanner, or all-in-one device
11. removable storage
12. Physical room design
13. Functional
14. Measurements
15. Mail – a post office or alternative that will accept packages
16. Work schedule
17. Certain tasks outsourced
18. The “cloud” for shared applications

With a virtual business, your office can basically go where you go, in theory. In practice, however, you may need a designated office area with appropriate office furniture and equipment. Ask students what type of equipment, furniture, and technology you will need for your virtual office. Discuss with students the costs of not having up-to- date or compatible software.Another consideration with a virtual office is the temptation toward distractions. A work schedule is important for concentration. A dedicated work space may be needed for tax considerations. Ask if any of the students’ parents work from home and what issues they face.1. E-Tools
2. E-mail
3. Document viewing software
4. for .pdf files
5. for compressing files
6. for media clips
7. Word processing software
8. Graphics and presentation software
9. Financial software

E-tools refer to the types of software that your virtual office may need. E-mail is a necessity, as are word processing, graphics, presentation, and financial software. Document viewing software for viewing .pdf files and for compressing files (to increase your file transfer speed) are essential for effective communication.1. The Virtual Assistant
2. “virtual” meaning on a computer
3. “assistant” provides administrative andor technical support
4. Also known as a “cyber-assistant”
5. Entrepreneurs on their own

As in a traditional business office with an administrative assistant, so can a virtual business benefit from a “cyber-assistant”. Ask students what tasks an assistant can provide with this type of business.1. Virtual Assistant Responsibilities
2. Handling calls
3. Scheduling appointments
4. Customer service
5. Processing orders
6. Maintaining and updating the web site
7. Handling subscriptions
8. Press releases
9. Customers flyers

The responsibilities a virtual assistant provides are decided by the business owner.There are many from which to choose. Virtual assistants may also work from home, may work for different companies at the same time depending upon their job duties, and may actually never meet their clients in person.1. Virtual Assistant Clients
2. Entrepreneurs
3. Businesses in general
4. Sales professionals
5. Executives

Virtual assistants can provide an important service for many people. Aside from entrepreneurs, existing businesses, sales professionals, and executives can use the support services a virtual assistant can offer.1. Virtual Assistant Considerations
2. Laptop a necessity
3. Capability of large file transfers
4. Compatible software
5. Specific job responsibilities
6. must be organized and motivated
7. must have an aptitude for the job
8. Routine established – especially when handling communications with clients
9. Paying your assistant (all depend upon the type of business)
10. Hourly
11. Salary
12. Commission
13. flat rate per task

Not only does the business owner need to address certain technical requirements but the assistant does also.Communication as well as files will be moving back and forth between the virtual assistant and the client; therefore, software must be compatible and large file transfers must be facilitated.Specific job responsibilities must be determined according to the needs of the business. Pay must also be established ahead of time.1. Benefits of Virtual Assistants
2. Benefits to clients
3. save on healthcare costs
4. save rent on office space
5. no vacation or sick pay
6. increased productivity
7. increased sales/revenue
8. increased customer satisfaction
9. increased customer retention rate
10. Benefits to the virtual assistant
11. can work from home
12. flexible hours
13. flexible pay depending upon the arrangement
14. getting to know the details of the business
15. increased self-satisfaction by contributing to the success of a business

Utilizing the services of a cyber-assistant can prove to be a win-win situation for both the assistant and the client. There are many benefits but probably the most important for the client is the cost savings, and the largest benefit for the assistant is the possibility of a flexible schedule. Ask students to volunteer what other benefits exist to both parties.*Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for all special education students must be followed. Examples of accommodations may include, but are not limited to:*NONE |
| **Guided Practice \*** | Ask students if they have heard of the term “Virtual Assistant”. In pairs have them research what the duties of a virtual assistant actually are and have them write or type a list. Then display the lists on a wall in the room and circle the duties that the students have found that are the same.*Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for all special education students must be followed. Examples of accommodations may include, but are not limited to:*NONE |
| **Independent Practice/Laboratory Experience/Differentiated Activities \*** | * **Floor Plan Diagram Assignment #1** – Using word processing software, studentswill create a floor plan diagram of what their office would look like if they were beginning an online business, knowing that more than just a laptop may be required. Students should also list somewhere on the diagram the software they would like to have to use in their business.
* **Virtual Assistant Job Description Newsletter Assignment #2** – Students will research on the Internet to locate three different job descriptions from different companies’ job openings for a ‘virtual assistant’ and create a newsletter summarizing their findings. They will create a one-page, two-column newsletter that is attractive, easy to read, with separate sections for the definition of a virtual assistant and the three job descriptions. Each section should be identified with separate paragraph headings or subtitles that add creativity to the document.
* **Gantt Scheduling Chart Assignment #3** – Students will use spreadsheet or othersoftware to create a Gantt chart that shows the amount of time a virtual business owner might spend on tasks as compared to the tasks and time spent by a virtual assistant. Think of all the tasks that may need to be completed by the owner and the virtual assistant and estimate how much time would be required to complete them.

*Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for all special education students must be followed. Examples of accommodations may include, but are not limited to:*NONE |
| **Lesson Closure** | Q: List three advantages to having a virtual office.A: Low overhead costs, flexible schedule, larger market reachQ: What are four things that should be considered when planning a virtual office?1. Four things to consider are: creating a separate work space at home, creating a work schedule for yourself, having an organizational system, and purchasing essential assets such as a laptop and necessary peripherals.

Q: What are essential e-tools that your business will need?A: You will need email, document viewing software, word processing software, presentation software, and spreadsheet software at the very least.Q: What is a virtual assistant?A: A virtual assistant is similar to an administrative assistant in that they perform similar tasks but without a set physical location. They are also their own boss in effect.Q: Name two advantages of having a virtual assistant (for the client).1. Having a virtual assistant can save on healthcare costs and rental space for an office.
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| **Summative / End of Lesson Assessment \***  | Use the assigned rubrics to evaluate the two Independent Practice Assignments. *Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for all special education students must be followed. Examples of accommodations may include, but are not limited to:*Accommodations for Learning Differences: It is important that lessons accommodate the needs of every learner. These lessons may be modified to accommodate your students with learning differences by referring to the files found on the Special Populations page of this website.  |
| **References/Resources/****Teacher Preparation** | * Learning E-Commerce: Business Analysis and Design, Nancy Stevenson, DDC Publishing
* Start Your Own E-Business, *Entrepreneur Magazine*, Entrepreneur Press
* <http://www.sba.gov/content/starting-online-business>
* http://imedia.sba.gov/vd/media1/training/YoungEntrepreneurs/player.html
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| **Additional Required Components** |
| **English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) Strategies** |  |
| **College and Career Readiness Connection[[1]](#footnote-1)** | **English:****110.33(b)(1)(A) – Reading/Vocabulary Development**…determine the meaning of grade-level technical academic English words in multiple content areas (e.g., science, mathematics, social studies, the arts) derived from Latin, Greek or other linguistic roots and affixes.**110.33(b)(1)(C) – Reading/Vocabulary Development**…infer word meanings through the identification and analysis of analogies and other word relationships.**110.33(b)(12)(B) – Reading/Media Literacy**…evaluate the interactions of different techniques (e.g., layout, pictures, typeface in print media, images, text, sound in electronic journalism) used in multi-layered media.**110.33(b)(12)(C) – Reading/Media Literacy**…evaluate the objectivity of coverage of the same event in various types of media.**110.33(b)(12)(D) – Reading/Media Literacy**…evaluate changes in formality and tone across various media for different audiences and purposes. |
| **Recommended Strategies** |
| **Reading Strategies** |  |
| **Quotes** |  |
| **Multimedia/Visual Strategy****Presentation Slides + One Additional Technology Connection** |  |
| **Graphic Organizers/Handout** |  |
| **Writing Strategies****Journal Entries + 1 Additional Writing Strategy** |  |
| **Communication****90 Second Speech Topics** |  |
| **Other Essential Lesson Components** |
| **Enrichment Activity**(e.g., homework assignment) | 1. Interview someone who either works from home for someone else’s company or who is an online business owner to determine the biggest obstacles they encountered in working away from a traditional office. Also inquire about where they do the most business – on the road or from a designated office space at their home. Write a one-page report detailing your findings.
2. Interview someone who owns a business, preferably a virtual business, if they utilize the services of a virtual assistant. If they do, ask what tasks they have the assistant do. Ask if the assistant has any kind of required schedule to maintain for completing certain tasks. Also ask if they outsource any business functions to outside businesses instead of a virtual assistant performing those functions. Prepare a table of functions and record whether or not a virtual assistant or outsourcing company performs those functions.
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| **Family/Community Connection** |  |
| **CTSO connection(s)** | Business Professionals of AmericaFuture Business Leaders of America |
| **Service Learning Projects** |  |
| **Lesson Notes** |  |

1. Visit the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards at <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/collegereadiness/CRS.pdf>, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)