

## Quick Guide for Secretaries/PAs: Developing the Secretarial Role

The secretarial role is constantly evolving and will continue to do so. Keeping up to date with technology is probably the easy bit. Developing the role so that you are more valuable requires thought, determination and planning. So here are the **top ten tips** for Secretaries:

1. **See everything as an opportunity** rather than a threat. And don't wait or hope for things to happen - go and make them happen!
2. **Make sure you know what your key objectives** for the coming year are. If you don't have any, set some for yourself and document your progress for use in performance reviews and appraisals.
3. **Find yourself a role model** either within your own organisation or outside it. Ask them about how they work and use the tips and hints you feel will be of benefit.
4. **Join your organisation's mentoring programme**, if they have one.
5. **Volunteer!** For tasks, project teams and new responsibilities: it's the best way to develop skills and knowledge, and to get yourself seen.
6. **Make sure you are seen.** As Mae West said "I'd rather be looked over, than overlooked". Your image and profile are vital to your development and progression, so if you don't put yourself forward to be looked over, you certainly will be overlooked.
7. **Join a professional organisation for secretaries.** Network with other professional secretaries and broaden your skills and knowledge base.
8. **Consider your manager's role:** which areas, tasks or responsibilities would you like to become more involved with, or take over entirely?
9. **Talk to your manager!** They can help you develop the role by delegating to you. Find out what their objectives, priorities and hurdles are. Then suggest ways in which you can help them.
10. **Always tell yourself what you can do**, not what you can't. Passion for the role is vital if you are to develop it.

**Compiled by Des Whitehorn**