

## Hiring a Professional Organizer by Faith Manierre

A professional organizer can be of great benefit to an individual who is diagnosed with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. The organizer can work one on one with the client as well as collaboratively to include family and a therapist or psychiatrist. A professional organizer has the skills and resources to problem solve in the home and work environment. Many professional organizers specialize in working with hoarders and can assist the client in making changes in their environment.

So, how do you select a professional organizer? It is a great question. The relationship that is formed with a professional organizer is very personal. The first and most important factor is that you feel comfortable and confident in the organizer that you select. Does the organizer have empathy for your situation? You may wish to ask the following questions. How long have you been in business? What is your background? Do you have an area of specialty? Are you a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO)? Are you a member of the National Study Group on Chronic Disorganization (NSGCD)? How do you work with clients?

While interviewing your professional organizer, you need to know that the organizer respects and will honor your core values. I would be wary of someone who just wants to clean an area without understanding what you would like to accomplish. The organizer should be asking you questions as well to determine if he/she has the skills to work with you and that there is a good fit. You should be wary of an organizer who does not have experience with your diagnosis or who seems to push too hard.

Why would you hire a NAPO member? A NAPO member has dedicated themselves to their profession and has educational opportunities through conference, chapter meetings and teleclasses. NAPO members sign a Code of Ethics to insure your personal information will remain confidential. A professional organizer who is a NAPO member has made a commitment to their business and thus to you, the client. The NSGCD is a specialized group within NAPO for those who specialize in specific issues such as ADD, hoarding, OCD, traumatic brain injury and chronic disorganization. This organization offers frequent teleclasses for professional organizers with extensive information and educational opportunities.

You will need to talk about your organizers style. Be wary of an organizer that just wants to “chuck it”! You need to set the boundaries about what your problem areas are, what you would like to accomplish and where you would like to start. Your organizer can help you to focus your goals. You will set the pace. If you need to talk through the history of the items that you are working on, you should do so. You determine what to keep and what will be donated, discarded or given away.

Hiring a professional organizer may be a big step for you to regain control in your environment. It can be a productive and satisfying experience. A professional organizer can provide ideas, information, structure, solutions and systems, which can increase your productivity, reduce your stress and create a more comfortable environment and give you back control of your home. Good luck!

Faith Manierre is the owner of Busy Bees Professional Organizing, LLC, and the president of the Connecticut chapter of the National Association of Professional Organizers and a member of the National Study Group on Chronic Disorganization. She can be reached at 860-997-4740 or [www.busybeesorganizing.com](http://www.busybeesorganizing.com).