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On Business: On Task Organizing

When organizing, everything has a place

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Nancy Haworth, owner of On Task Organizing in Holly Springs, says the key to a clutter-free home or office is figuring what to keep and what to get rid of.

COURTESY OF JARED HAWORTH

By Wendy Mondello — Correspondent

HOLLY SPRINGS — Nancy Haworth has loved organizing stuff since she was a kid, whether she was color-coding school notebooks or helping friends tidy up bookshelves.

But it wasn't until a change in her own life a few years ago that she realized she could make a career out of

organization.

After her mother passed away unexpectedly, Haworth spent about a week helping her dad sort through boxes in his attic, basement and garage.

“I enjoyed helping him and seeing the changes I was able to make just by rearranging his space and giving him that organizational process,” said Haworth, who lives in Holly Springs. “I came home from that trip and I said, ‘I wish I could do that every day. I wish I could do it for other people.’”

Haworth gathered information from the National Association of Professional Organizers and joined the group’s North Carolina chapter. She took classes and shadowed other organizers to gain on-the-job experience.

Haworth opened On Task Organizing in February 2012 while still working at her job in media productionn.

In February of this year, she went full time with On Task Organizing, and now she brings order to local homes’ garages, offices and other spaces.

Q: How does the organization process begin?

I do a free phone consultation where I ask a list of questions to find out about the person’s organizational situation. Usually it’s a change-of-life situation, such as a move, recently deceased spouse or marriage. Sometimes it might be too much clutter and they want to clear out a guest room.

If it seems like a good fit, I do an in-home assessment. When I’m looking at the space, I’m thinking about solutions as to what would work for them in that space.

Q: How much time does it take?

It really varies. You don’t know how long it will take until you’re going through things. One box could have a few things that can be donated; another box could be full of 10 years of papers that we have to look at one at a time. ...

For most jobs I work side-by-side with the person. They have to decide what to keep and get rid of.

Q: What kind of help do most clients ask for?

Home offices are the No. 1 job just because paperwork piles up and bookshelves and file cabinets really fill up.

The other is the kitchen. I help people to move things in the kitchen so it works smoother.

Garages are also popular because people want to be able to park their cars in them.

Q: What are some of your favorite organizing tools?

I have my own label maker and I suggest people, especially with a home office, get one. It really helps, especially with a pile of papers to have a folder and label it.

Clear boxes are probably the No. 1 item I use and suggest my clients use. Shoebox-style clear boxes are clear and small, so they’re easy to move around.

A hanging shoe holder is a popular organizing tool. You can use it just for shoes, or you can put it on the back of a bathroom door to hold shampoos, on a closet door to hold socks, scarves or belts, or you can use it for toys like Barbie dolls.

Q: What do you like best about organizing?

Knowing there is a place for everything is a peaceful, calm feeling. Everything has a spot, and you know you can find it when you need to.

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