

Better Business Bureau Offers Tips for Hiring a Professional Organizer

Written by

Wednesday, 19 January 2011 17:37

The start of a new year kindles enthusiasm in some homeowners to create a more organized household. But when it comes time to actually do the work, we realize organization takes more time and patience than most of us have. We may need the help of a professional organizer. The Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota (BBB) offers advice to homeowners before they hire someone to come into their homes to sort through confidential paperwork and valuables.

“Organizing our homes is an important task and often helps us feel happier in our surroundings,” said Dana Badgerow, president and CEO of the BBB. “But you want to be certain you understand what an organizer does – and doesn’t – do, and how he or she operates before you allow them access to your home.”

The following tips were compiled by the Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota in consultation with the National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO)-Minnesota Chapter:

- Check out companies at www.bbb.org before signing a contract.
- Ask the organizer about their credentials, experience and training.
- Find out if the organizer is properly licensed and insured.
- Ask the organizer to explain their process so you can gain a clear understanding of what they do and how they go about doing it.
- Ask how you can best prepare for a professional organizer to come to your home or workplace. Find out specifically what the organizer needs from you (you may need to commit personal time to get your home prepared for the organization process).
- Ask about the fee structure – is it by the job or by the hour? Be clear about your budget and do not sign any contracts until you fully understand what is or isn’t included in the service.
- Ask for clarification on whether or not the service includes cleaning or purchasing of supplies for the organization process.
- Think about what kind of person you want to work with (example: will you work best in a drill sergeant environment or with someone who treats you like a friend?) Ask the potential organizer about their style.
- Ask for an estimate on how long the projects you have in mind will take to complete. Inquire about what might change/modify the timeline.
- Find out how the organizer disposes of items removed from your home and if there are additional fees (are the items recycled, donated, shredded?) Make sure you feel comfortable with the plan – especially if items are personal or confidential in nature.
- You can also visit the National Association of Professional Organizers website to review their code of ethics or search for an organizer at www.napomn.com.

The mission of the Better Business Bureau is to promote, through self-regulation, the highest standards of business ethics and conduct, and to instill public confidence in responsible businesses through programs of education and action that inform, protect and assist the general public. Our hours of operation are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact the BBB 24 hours a day at www.bbb.org or 651-699-1111, toll free at 1-800-646-6222.