

Betsi Simmons: Professional Organizer

Not much surprises Betsi Simmons. Since she started her business as a professional organizer three years ago, she's seen a few cluttered and chaotic spaces that you just couldn't possibly imagine.

"What you have to realize is that the things we own can give us joy or they can weigh us down," says **Betsi Simmons** (*Hotel and Restaurant Management* 95). "I've worked with people who have been paralyzed by all the stuff they've accumulated, surrounded by so much clutter they can't think straight. It can have negative effects on relationships, career progress and health but it's actually easier to change than you might think."

That's easy for her to say. Betsi's an expert in getting and staying organized. She has a whole arsenal of tips and techniques to help people divest of clutter and find a place for the important things in their lives. Her approach to each client is customized and depends on what they want to accomplish and how quickly they are ready to accept change.

She finds that her job is not just about arriving at a clean space in the end but about the process of getting there. "That's because so many clients call me when they are in crisis: going through a divorce, facing a career change, dealing with a sudden death, or a new baby on the way," says Betsi. "For example, I often get calls to help clear out a parent's home after death. That seems to be one of the most completely overwhelming tasks people face, but to me it's a challenge and totally do-able."

In choosing this career path, Betsi draws on all aspects of her diverse work experience. After graduation, she traveled extensively. She worked on a cruise boat for two years and she has worked in the foodservice industry, as head trainer, supervisor, and restaurant manager. On one work placement, she helped set up a North American style restaurant in England, training staff and getting the enterprise set up. As she says, "There's no room in a working kitchen for wasted space or lost utensils. Time is money in foodservice so I learned pretty quickly how to organize things for maximum efficiency."

She became interested in her current career path after returning to Canada and finding out that

her childhood room and the material things from the past no longer reflected who she had become.

"I grew up while I was away from home and found that I had to reinvent myself, my life, and particularly my space when I got back," explains Betsi. Once her space was cleared of clutter and redefined, she began helping friends and family members do the same thing. She loved it and soon people were calling asking how much she charged.

Like many entrepreneurs, Betsi has made a business by finding a niche and doing what she does best. Unlike many entrepreneurs though, her office is totally functional and her life is in balance! If you're not quite there yet, and would like some tips for tackling your clutter, visit Betsi's Web site at: www.betsi.ca.

