

BIZSMARTS

HOW I ...

Turned divorce into a business strategy

NANCY KAY PARLAYED A TOUGH BREAKUP INTO HELP FOR OTHERS IN SIMILAR SPOTS



Your business had its genesis in a difficult divorce you went through. When was that, how bad was it and how did that shape

you? I went through an extremely challenging divorce with children for two years that came to an end in August 2008, right before the banks began to crash and the job market sharply cut back, impacting so many of us with our personal finances. I attended Capital Law School's paralegal program during the divorce to prepare myself to re-enter the job market. Unfortunately by the time I started looking for a job, lawyers throughout Columbus were inundated with resumes from new law school grads, young lawyers who had been let go by the bigger firms and paralegals with many years of experience who recently had been laid off. After consulting with several job coaches, emailing many targeted resumes, and still only getting legal internships or part-time temporary legal positions that didn't include any benefits, I decided to start my own divorce and co-parenting guidance business in 2011.

What are the top reasons, in your opinion, that people get divorced and what do they fight most ferociously about during the process? Although there are many reasons why people decide to get divorced, often one person has made up their mind ahead of time and the other spouse is left struggling with how to deal with the reality of all the changes that come along with separation, divorce and co-parenting. I see many divorces that result from the loss of trust that comes with infidelity or long-term money conflicts that can't be resolved. Unhealthy communication patterns and ongoing emotional and verbal abuse often lie beneath the surface of a marriage before it goes off the deep end.

While couples are spending large sums of money and time with their separate divorce attorneys to continue



JANET ADAMS

A flood of qualified candidates who had been laid off by big law firms during the Great Recession made finding paralegal work difficult for Nancy Kay. So she started her consulting business, Moving Forward Through Divorce.

► CLOSER LOOK

NANCY KAY

Owner and divorce strategist, Moving Forward Through Divorce

Age: 50

Business: Guidance through separation and divorce, and advice on how to put together a comprehensive parenting plan that leads to less conflict.

Based: Lewis Center

Founded: 2011

Employees: Sole proprietor

Background: Bachelor's degree, journalism, University of Missouri-Columbia. Capital Law School paralegal program, experience as a family law and bankruptcy law paralegal. Published author and online news contributor.

2013 revenue range: Under \$500,000

Website: movingforwardthroughdivorce.com

the fight about money, who will pay for the kids' sports, who gets to keep the family dog and who will get stuck with the negative equity in the house, sensibility usually goes out the window and the whole process becomes a lengthy and emotionally-draining power struggle.

What is the one thing you should always do when going through a divorce? Be sure to apply for some credit cards that are in your name only so that you'll be able to continue to pay for legal costs and living expenses even if your spouse empties out the joint bank accounts and cancels credit cards

without telling you.

Also: Divorce often turns out to be the biggest business deal of your entire life. It's critical for you to make copies of all your financial records and retirement and insurance statements along with your last three years of tax returns and keep them in a safe and secure place outside of your home or business.

Without naming names, of course, can you tell us about the absolute worst divorce you ever witnessed? One of the worst divorces I've witnessed was with a woman whose husband worked as an expert in computer security. Due to her spouse's advanced IT skills, her emails often "vanished" before she ever saw them and she frequently worried about her privacy and security every time she used her phone, computer or car.

So much news that if we put it all in the paper, it wouldn't fit in your mailbox



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