

The Top 10 Myths Heard by Professional Organizers

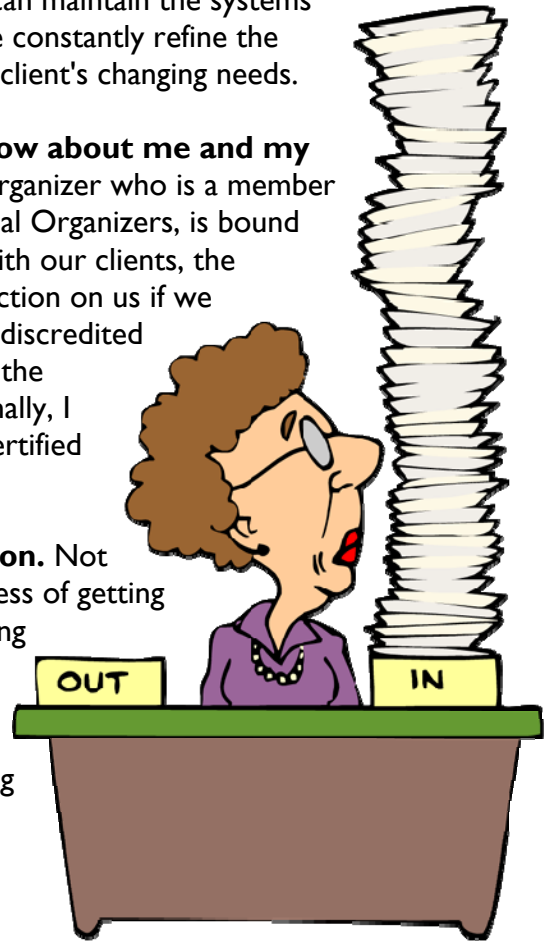
In my six years as a professional organizer, I have heard my share of perceptions about this profession and reasons why someone may be resistant to hiring a professional organizer. The folks at CoachVille put together the following list of the 10 most common myths about professional organizers.

1. **My mess is the worst you've ever seen.** We have seen it all, from guns to pornography to rodents to food left in the fridge for 20 years. There is nothing that will surprise or daunt us. We welcome a challenge and don't see mess. We see an opportunity to help you break old habits that no longer serve you and to establish new ones that will help you live a simpler and less stressful life.



2. **You're going to make me throw out all my stuff.** No we won't. We help you decide what you use, love, and want. If you have 15 vases in a closet, for example, and you like/use only 5 of them, why keep the other 10? Display the 5 you love and donate the rest. That space in the closet can be used to store other things, you enjoy your collection every day, and someone else can benefit from your generosity.
3. **You can do this without me here.** Sure, if you don't mind my deciding what is important to you. It would be easy for me to remove everything from a space and put back only what I think should be there, or recycle all of the files in the cabinet, but I don't think you want me to do that. What if I donate the ancient sculpture that Aunt Millie gave you when you were 5 or shred the deed to your house?
4. **It will look like the shows on cable TV when we're done.** Only if I bring in a team of 12 other consultants and construction professionals. You and I work together over several sessions to establish customized systems that work for you. That may mean the solution still looks messy to an outside party, but for you it is what works best. Organized does not necessarily mean neat.
5. **You're going to pass judgment, yell at me, and make me feel bad about keeping everything.** Not a chance. Professional Organizers go into the field because we have a genuine desire to help other people become more comfortable in their lives. We have the talent, training, and ability to organize and want to impart these skills to our clients. I always joke that you are a wonderful person; you just have too much stuff.

6. **Your place must be perfect.** Not so. I am a normal person with a family, including two young children, a home-based business, and several outside responsibilities. Having systems in place allows me to function effectively, even when life gets extremely hectic.
7. **It will cost a great deal.** Professional Organizers charge a fair hourly or per- project rate based on our experience, training, and specialty. We come to the profession from various backgrounds. Mine is public accounting. Factor in what we bring to the table and how much peace of mind, less stress, and more time is worth to you, and we are a true bargain.
8. **Getting organized is an end result.** Getting organized is a continuous process. Clients schedule several sessions, during which we work on different aspects of a home or business, until we get to the point where we can maintain the systems we implement. We're never actually finished. We constantly refine the systems we establish, so that they always meet a client's changing needs.
9. **You're going to go telling everyone you know about me and my private affairs.** Never. A quality Professional Organizer who is a member of NAPO, the National Association of Professional Organizers, is bound by a code of ethics that covers our interaction with our clients, the public, and one another. It would be a poor reflection on us if we bad-mouthed a colleague, spoke ill of a client, or discredited the profession to the public. Trust is essential to the Professional Organizer-client relationship. Personally, I am also bound by a code of ethics that covers Certified Public Accountants.
10. **There is a one-size-fits-all organizing solution.** Not so. Every person or business is unique. The process of getting organized is similar regardless of what area is being addressed (a closet, a filing system, etc.), but the ultimate solution must be customized to the needs of the user. That is why the personal interaction is essential to a professional organizing engagement.



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Note: I am also a member of Coachville and have permission to use these Top Tens as well, but wanted to acknowledge Kristin's great newsletters, which is where I saw this one.