



Darlene McDermott, left, and Janis Kowalski organize dishes and linens in Janis' kitchen.

HGTV Inspired Me

Two friends leave the corporate world for full-time organizing

FRIENDS JANIS KOWALSKI AND DARLENE MCDERMOTT WERE watching their favorite HGTV show when an idea for a new business venture "hit them like a bolt of lightning," Kowalski says. Until HGTV's "Mission: Organization" (weekdays, 2 p.m. et/pt) caught their eyes, the moms with three kids each faced unemployment when they were unable to relocate with the company they worked for.

"We just thought, 'Hey, we can do that,'" McDermott says.

Kowalski and McDermott, of Orangeburg, New York, said HGTV taught them to use their natural talent for organizing in a new way.

Their phone book listed few local organizers, so they kept watching HGTV to gain ideas for their new business, Organizers to the Rescue. For about six months, they took classes, read books and took on small organizing jobs for free to gain knowledge and experience.

Kowalski says they started out trying to mirror "Mission: Organization." "I was mesmerized by the show. It was like my Bible, I watched it every day. It gave us the confidence to surge forward," she says. "I wouldn't have thought of this idea on my own. I give total and all credit to 'Mission: Organization.'"

They learned how to work with every type of client, what to tackle in any given room and what tools to use for each project, Kowalski says.

Five years later, their business gives them the same income they had in the corporate world. But even with their business booming, they regularly tune into HGTV to improve and add new elements to their business.

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"My quickest way to keep up with things is to watch a show. It just keeps me on top of everything," Kowalski says. "It's kind of like going for a refresher class. You just never know what they are going to come up with that I might not know."

—By Kayla Webley
Photo by Gene Gouss

About the Subjects

WHO: Janis Kowalski and Darlene McDermott of Orangeburg, New York

WHAT: Started their own organizing business, Organizers to the Rescue

INSPIRATION: "Mission: Organization"

ON THE NET:
www.organizertotherescue.com