

Professionals You May Need In Addition To Your Lawyer

By Tom Norton, CPA, CDFA

Your lawyer will be the most important member of your team when getting a divorce. Depending on your circumstances, though, he or she may not be the only member.

Some of the most common other professionals you may need to hire include:

1. Financial or tax specialist
2. Appraisers
3. Private investigator
4. Therapist

While a financial specialist can help in almost any divorce, they are especially useful when you and your spouse earn more than \$100,000 per year combined, if alimony is going to be involved, if you or your spouse owns a business, or if you have significant assets and debts. He or she can do a lot of tasks your attorney would normally do, and do them more efficiently at lower cost.

Appraisers may be necessary to value significant assets such as your home, other real estate, collectibles, or a closely held business or professional practice.

Private investigators are useful if you suspect your spouse is being unfaithful, or to show that their lifestyle is not conducive to caring for the children.

A therapist can be helpful in a lot of ways. They may be called on to evaluate you or your spouse, or to give an opinion on what is in the best interests of the children.

Even if they're not needed as part of the divorce case itself, a good therapist can be useful for you personally during this stressful time. Many mental health professionals say getting divorced is as bad or even worse than the death of a loved one. Seeing a good therapist can help you keep perspective and learn to better cope with your changing circumstances.

To find any of these professionals, ask your divorce lawyer for a referral to one or more people you can then contact and interview.

Putting together a good team of professionals could be the difference between a mediocre (or worse) outcome in your divorce, and an outstanding one.

For more information:

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