

## Can a stay at home mom also be a successful attorney?

My client Anna, a busy appellate attorney, moved into her new home with her husband and one week old baby about two years ago. She called me for help because, as she said, "After having run my small business out of an office in my home for a little over two years I looked around and realized I didn't like working in my office, which doubled as a craft room, closet, playroom for my two year old and general catch all." Anna felt claustrophobic in her office, thus she didn't often spend much time there, doing less and less work, feeling less empowered and like she wasn't contributing her gifts and talents to the world.

I flew out to New Jersey and spent time with Anna and her family for a few days. First I looked at the office, which as you can see is cluttered and unorganized, thus whenever she was in her home office, she never really felt like working and didn't have the systems in place to feel successful. It was easier to say, I'll do it tomorrow, and we all know that tomorrow comes but we never get to those tasks of organizing, filing or getting rid of the things we no longer need.

When sitting at the computer, her back was to the window and she couldn't see out the main door of the office either. There are four very large, very dark bookshelves in this small space, which I think contributed to her feelings of being overwhelmed and claustrophobic. The bookshelves towered over her while she sat at her desk, almost creating a little prison. I also noticed that the desk is held up on one side by the bookshelf, which to me, represents that she needs to lean on someone else for support. When I shared this thought, it resonated within her immediately. I suggested that a free standing desk would allow her to gain her sea legs (she loves to sail) and have more confidence in herself and in her work.

As we worked on creating an efficient and beautiful office space, Anna revealed her deeper feelings that when she moved into her new home she was already a wife, an instant mother, but she never had time to set up her life as an attorney. It was time to re-empower her career choice so she could live a very full and rewarding life.

I shared with Anna that her office fell in the Creativity & Children area of the Feng Shui bagua, which is influenced by the color white. She instantly jumped up and showed me a picture of this desk from Pottery Barn that she had been eyeing. It would be perfect!

We reorganized her filing system, found her Diploma's tucked away in a box (another way of not acknowledging her accomplishments), framed them and hung them around an inexpensive but beautiful piece of artwork from Bed Bath & Beyond. We hung white wall mounted shelving also from Pottery Barn, which gave her the necessary space for her Law books, but without the heavy feel of the large bookshelves all around her. We cleaned out the office closet, which was simply stuffed with junk, and used it as storage space for her cases; paperwork she needs to access but not on a regular basis.

Anna is thrilled with her new office and feels like she is finally contributing her gifts to the world.

**"Now I have an office I love to be in! It is beautiful, very user friendly and extremely functional! It is the office I've always wanted but never quite knew how to achieve on my own. It is both professional and warm! Once it was finished all I wanted to do was to sit at my desk and admire it for a few days. Two months later I still catch myself doing that once in a while. I couldn't be happier with my new home office and I've never been more productive or profitable!"**

**Anna P.,  
Appellate Attorney, Mom, Wife  
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