MONEY + RELATIONSHIPS + EQUALITY

Manage Your Divorce or Break-up

When it comes to a long-term partnership ending, whether you've been living together or married, there are some specific tips that experts have found to be most helpful for you in the process. Here are some of those suggestions to help get you started as the manager of your divorce:

☐ Don't Fall Apart

Yes, divorce and separation is an extremely emotional time and it's all too easy to get overwhelmed. But the most important thing to remember is that *you* are the manager of the process. Sitting on the sidelines and watching the lawyers play your game might seem appealing, but the stakes are too high for you to be a spectator. Most successful business people have learned the art of balancing the emotional aspects of family and social life while still running a thriving venture. Take that mentality with you and be the active CEO of your separation process.

☐ Utilize Your Support Network

Balance is another powerful tool in this process. Even as you work to keep the divorce machine running effectively, don't forget you need emotional support. Utilize friends, family, spiritual advisors and, if needed, a therapist to help you deal with the myriad of feelings that accompany this major change in your life.

☐ Keep Good Files

Don't wait until lawyers or the court ask for financial and legal documents to start digging through file cabinets and desk drawers. You *are* going to need copies of any documents related to bank accounts, investments, debt, tax returns, etc. Save yourself time and energy by making copies of all these items as soon as divorce seems a possibility. Start a filing system with these documents and continue to keep records of all meetings, phone calls, and financial transactions related to your divorce.

☐ Be Knowledgeable

You can't possibly make wise decisions as the manager of your divorce if you don't understand the terrain. There is a wealth of information online, and at local bookstores. Our site contains lots of information and resources to help you in the divorce process. Examine all the options from mediation to arbitration to court trials. Realize that laws differ from state to state and become familiar with the legal precedent where you live.

☐ Manage Your Team

Whether it's a lawyer, financial advisor, or a therapist, look for the right professionals to join your team. As the active manager of your divorce, it's your job to build the best team possible within your resources. Research lawyers and advisors carefully. Ask for references. Constantly monitor the effectiveness of your team and have honest discussions at the first sign of problems. When all is said and done, you can't blame your lawyer, or anyone else, for a poorly run divorce.

☐ Look to the Future

Some days it will seem like the world is ending. The fact remains, there is life after separation. If the future seems bleak, start drawing a picture of what you'd like life to look like. We'd suggest that you avoid making any drastic decisions about career, relocation, or lifestyle in the heat of the divorce process, but certainly let yourself imagine the kind of future that will make you comfortable and happy.