



by Kristen Soles  
photo by Ken Krakow

Monica Premo (on right) with client, Danielle Bodony at Forever Young Photography Studio in Perry.

## Organizing Houston County "Practically Perfect"

Today in the era of Baby Boomer retirees yearning for a simpler lifestyle; multi-tasking families with something planned every night of the week; and young career men and women looking to have it all, home and office organization oftentimes seems more daunting than trying to be three places at once.

Enter Monica Premo. An actual certified professional organizer, Premo opened "Practically Perfect" in 2005. A mother of three boys and active homemaker, Premo previously worked in Operations Management at a medical products manufacturing company. She was looking to get back into the workforce with her own business, but needed a product. "I've always liked to organize and plan. A few years ago, I noticed other planning and organizing businesses starting up, so I thought this would be perfect for me."

Practically Perfect is unique in that the scope of services can help almost anyone from the small business owner to the career parent to the packrat who cannot let go. As for the latter, Premo offers, "Working with a professional organizer who has no emotional ties to their [client's] things makes organizing more manageable, productive, and even fun because we do it together. We're also talking about strategies, options, and ideas as we work so the client can continue to make progress and maintain the systems after we finish."

So, here's how the process works: in the beginning, you get a free telephone consultation with Premo in which she obtains information about you and your organizing needs. At that time, she'll tell you what to expect and if you like what you hear, you'll schedule an appointment to get started. Then, Premo introduces you to her "Five Step System," to becoming more organized.

1. **Prioritize:** Discuss what works for you, what doesn't work, how you would like your space to look and feel, and what is most important to you.
2. **Plan:** Develop an action plan to meet your goals for the space.
3. **Process:** Guide you through the process of sorting and purging, determining what to keep and what to donate, sell, or toss.
4. **Place:** Designate a place for the things you choose to keep based on your own habits and preferences.
5. **Praise:** Celebrate your progress and praise you for a job well done!

When this course of action is complete, Premo says you should expect to manage your time better, feel a sense of calm and control, always know where your things are when you need them, and quickly complete tasks and projects.

Here are a few of Premo's favorite organizing tips to take with you:

- Keep only what you need, use, and love. Make sure your belongings earn their place in your home or office.
- Designate a basket or bag for donations. Whenever you come across something you don't want, place it in the donation basket.
- Pick up after yourself. Clean up and put things away as soon as you are finished using them.
- Open your mail near the trash can. Immediately toss the trash and junk mail and separate bills.
- Store frequently-used items within easy reach and store the seldom-used items in the harder to reach areas.
- Make kits that include all of the supplies needed for a particular project or activity. Store them near the point of use.

Hence, if your office has stacks of files all around and you can't seem to find the materials you need or if you can no longer park in the garage because boxes of "stuff you might need later" are there, you may need a professional organizer. If the kids have moved away and you're moving to that smaller home, but can't seem to decide what's trash and what's treasure, Monica Premo has your answer.