

Come To Order®

...simplifying lives one space at a time

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The Art of Family Management

Kathy Jenkins, CPO®, FMC®, Come To Order

Do you manage your family like a CEO manages a business? This probably isn't the way you approach your job as a "family manager." But when you stop to compare the two, they really are quite similar. Both require skills in teambuilding, delegation, forecasting, creating a routine, and sticking to a schedule.

Here's how to apply "CEO" concepts to keep your household running smoothly:

1. Acknowledge the importance your job description.

Your home and family is the most important organization in your world. Approach it as if you were an executive manager of complex company.

2. Define your mission.

Like all good CEOs, you should be able to describe your values, principles, customs, and traditions. When you can describe what's most important to you, it is easier to make decisions and define daily priorities.

3. Manage by department.

If you put all of your family management tasks into categories, you'll be able to properly supervise and track all activities. Family manager Kathy Peel suggests these categories:

- Home & Property—your belongings, your house, your vehicles, your yard – basically, your tangible assets.
- Food—meal planning, grocery shopping, and preparing meals and snacks
- Family & Friends—relationships with parents, a spouse, friends, neighbors, or family members
- Finances—from budgeting to billpaying, saving to investing, everything related to your family's financial situation
- Special Events—events and celebrations like birthdays, holidays, vacations, garage sales, and family reunions
- Time & Scheduling—the family calendar and daily schedule, as well as making sure everyone gets to where they need to be, when they need to be there
- Self Management—caring for your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual self

4. Be true to your unique management style.

You don't have to fit into a "family manager" mold. Everyone has their own source of motivation and inspiration. Don't fight yours. Instead, work with it to help you accomplish your goals. It may look unconventional to others, but if it works for you, go with it.

5. Communicate and compromise.

Just as in business, families will experience conflict. Help family members learn to communicate their feelings in healthy ways and find ways to compromise and find solutions that treat everyone fairly and reasonably.

--Page 1--

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6. Use teamwork.

Encourage family members to share responsibility and contribute to the household using their strengths.

7. Establish daily routines and expectations.

Life will run more smoothly if everyone understands how the household operates. Establishing routines and expectations helps eliminate arguments, conflict, and stress. Make sure everyone understands their responsibilities and has the tools to complete them efficiently.

8. Prioritize.

You can't get everything done in one day, but you can get the most important things done if you prioritize and plan ahead. If there are important things that you won't have time to address, delegate the task to another set of capable hands..

9. Manage time and resources.

In *The Family Manager*, Kathy Peel suggests strategies such as the 5MinuteMaxim, Bartering, and Advance Work, to increase productivity, reduce stress, and create more time for things you enjoy.

10. Know the fundamentals of life in your house.

Sometimes life doesn't go as planned, and we can either react with panic or respond with calm resolve. By knowing the daily tasks that have to get done no matter what happens, you'll be able to effectively adjust to handle crises, whether small or large.

Excepts and ideas taken from The Family Manager by Kathy Peel, published by Thomas Nelson, 1996.

About the Author

As a Certified Professional Organizer and Certified Family Manager coach, Kathy Jenkins can help you run a more organized, efficient, and happy household and raise happy, healthy, responsible, and well-mannered children! Visit <http://www.cometoorderva.com> to learn more about her professional organizing services and one-on-one family manager coaching sessions. You can also follow her tips, advice, and recommendations by liking Come To Order on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/cometoorder>

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--Page 2--

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