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QUESTIONS WITH MEGAN METZGER

PRESIDENT AT PREFERRED CHILDCARE, INC., AND MEGAN METZGER CONSULTING

1. How did you get involved with the nanny industry?

As an only child to a single, working mother, things could get a little lonely at times. So, when I was old enough, I started babysitting. I was getting paid to play with other children, and I was pretty good at it! I continued babysitting all through high school, and when I got to college, I could not keep up with the time demands of my family's needs while taking my classes. So instead of quitting my nanny jobs, I started running up and down the halls of my dorm yelling, "Does anyone babysit? Does anyone like kids?" until I found other students willing to take over for me.

From there on out, when I wasn't available to work, I would send a pre-vetted "newfound friend" to fill in. By my senior year, one of my clients suggested I incorporate what felt like a hobby and make it a business. I did just that, and twenty years later, we have helped thousands of families and hundreds of nannies, and now we're even working with several hundreds of agencies across the country through my consulting business, MMC.

2. What did you do before starting an agency?

I babysat, nannied privately, and taught KinderMusik. Music was a big part of my life, and I spent time doing theater and singing in choir, which included traveling internationally to sing. The passion for music and kids came together in KinderMusik, which became the source of some of my first clients of Preferred ChildCare, my nanny agency.

3. What made you get involved with the nanny community at large?

I remember leaving my first INA conference and feeling like I was finally part of something much bigger than myself. It inspired me to grow my business and get more involved. I've had some incredible mentors during my career, one of whom invited me to join her for an INA board meeting. The rest is history. I had a lot of board experience and believed I could be a strong asset. I ended up making some incredible friends while learning how I could support not only the organization but the industry.

My first APNA conference was not so welcoming. In fact, I went to my room and cried three times that first conference. I felt very out of place and after that, I made it my personal mission to have everyone feel welcome and still set out to do that today. Since that time, the culture of APNA has evolved tremendously. I respect both organizations and am honored to be a part of them both.

4. What made you start your consulting firm?

I originally started doing public speaking about my experience at conferences and hosting workshops. I received tremendous attendance and feedback. At the advice of another one of my fabulous mentors, I attended a program in Boston focused on helping small businesses serve their communities by creating new jobs. My first idea was simply to grow the church side of my business. My partner in the program helped me see that the size of my impact could be greater if I could not only implement but teach and support other women around the country in doing the same. So, I did just that. I created a blueprint that could be taught and followed, including systems, programs, and strategies that hundreds of agencies have used to achieve success quickly and more effectively. We combined the tried-and-true methods with a community of support. It has been an incredible journey and is my true passion.



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5. What is the first piece of advice you give people considering opening an agency?

The biggest piece of advice I would give someone is to make sure you are passionate about doing this! There is lots of money to be made in this industry, but it should not be the driving force. Your heart and passion need to be in this before attempting to open an agency. After that, I would advise that you don't go at this alone. Just like raising children, it takes a village. A lot of time, energy, and love gets wasted when people try to figure it out on their own.

6. What is the one thing you wish people knew about having an agency?

Owning a nanny agency is one of the most incredible experiences you can have. You are impacting families and nannies every day. The intimate nature of what we do is often surprisingly stressful. You must remember it is not you they are upset with. It is the person's reaction to a situation, a process, or outcome—not you as a person. You are more important and differentiated from those things. It's easy to get in your head and be overwhelmed by others' reactions, which is another reason that having your village of support is so crucial.

7. What is the biggest lesson you've learned as an entrepreneur?

The biggest lesson I have learned is to trust yourself and those who work for you. Create the systems, train, and invest in people to run the system and step back to let them do their job. They will build your business in ways you could never imagine.

Delegation and trust were hard for me, especially as an only child. I cringe thinking about my leadership when we first started out. I thought I was protecting what I'd built, and it wasn't until a few (or many) negative experiences that I realized I was holding us back. If you are always looking over their shoulder or questioning your team, you will never get to the next level.

Trust and delegation are two of the hardest things for all entrepreneurs to learn and two of the most important.

8. What do people value most when partnering with you?

My clients have said they value my openness and candid advice. I truly want my clients to be successful as business owners and women. We work together to create a business that matches their dreams. I will take their phone calls late at night, calm them down, hype them up, get on a plane, and be there when they need me. They are more than a client—they become family. For better or worse, I show up authentically, and it's this level of relationship that allows my client to grow. We work on all parts of the business, including the personal side that is so needed and often overlooked.

9. What is the first question people who contact you for advice typically ask?

Honestly, the first question most people ask is about the value of investing in my services. People tend to call me when they are struggling, so spending money to invest in consulting or my online courses feels like a big financial and emotional risk.



One of the first things I share is my personal experience with coaching and the changes it has made for my businesses. Regardless of the size of the business, there is always a next level. There is no shame in needing support, and it takes courage to keep pursuing it. You and your goals are worth it.

10. What is the best piece of advice you have for nannies who want to score their dream job or start their dream agency?

The best advice I have for nannies is to highlight the skills the family is looking for in both your interview and resume. Often, the family wants someone who takes initiative. Tell them how you take initiative, and give them examples. Do not be afraid to talk about your strengths as well. It's also important for a family to trust that if you have limitations or don't know what to do, they can trust you to ask for help. If you don't feel like you are a good fit for the culture of a family, set yourself and them up for success by waiting for another opportunity.

For someone who wants to open their dream agency, I encourage them to do it—and do it right the first time. Take the time to build the systems and processes that you and your team will follow. It is a lot harder to move a yacht against the wind than it is a small dinghy. While you are small, you are more agile, so make the right changes and choices now.

ABOUT MEGAN METZGER

Megan Metzger is an entrepreneur, educator, and consultant. She is an expert and thought leader in the nanny and childcare industry. She founded her first business, Preferred ChildCare, over twenty years ago and since then has created Megan Metzger Consulting (MMC) because of her passion for helping other women become financially independent and able to comfortably provide for their families. With MMC, she candidly shares her secrets, processes, and expertise through her online courses and one-on-one consulting services. Additionally, Megan is an instructor at the UNC Greensboro Bryan School of Business and the previous president of the International Nanny Association and serves on numerous boards both in her community and industry. She is a proud mother of four amazing children and is grateful for the opportunity to be inspired and humbled as she witnesses the growth of women she serves daily.