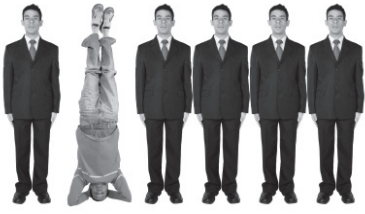


## You're all the Same! Aren't you?

Q



Dear Adia,

I am an OLD-pro when it comes to working with caregivers and services. My husband Joe and I moved to Hermosa Beach after the war and raised our 3 children. Once the kids grew-up and moved on, we migrated to a smaller condo in Manhattan Beach (it was supposed to simplify our lives). Unfortunately, around the same time, Joe suffered a stroke. I cared for him for almost nine years until his death in 2001. During this time, I had my fair share of help from a variety of people such as housekeepers, local members of the church, and several different caregiver services. Overall, I was not impressed! I am now looking into care for my own needs and I'm reminded of the disturbing problems with the services I used for my husband. Recently, I have seen different "lists" published by the hospitals, senior clubs, and church bulletins but I must admit I think all caregiver agencies are the same. What makes you different? "You use one agency, you've used them all!". Aren't they just rotating the same people anyway? What makes Adia so different, really?

Best regards,

Mrs. Skeptical

A

Dear Mrs. Skeptical,

Thoroughly investigate, investigate and investigate if you are concerned about a company's legitimacy or are seeking to learn why and how the caregiver companies are different, don't be afraid to ask tough questions. The "list's" are just that! An alpha list of names and numbers, NO assurances of quality service, safety, or legitimacy. For this reason, put yourself in the driver seat of the investigation. The real differences will be revealed about the owners, the level of community involvement and outreach, operating management standards and procedures, and ultimately, the values and principles in which the company operates. Start your investigation with...

- 1. Who are the owners and managers?** If there has been poor management in the past, it will be indicated in the company's track record. However, if the company is managed well, the good results are repeated. If there is a change in management, you may wish to look into the background of the new managers, experience, values, training and development as well as management systems put into place to ensure safety and quality service. Quality service doesn't just fall from the sky! It's deliberately created.
- 2. Who are the employees?** Ask about the employee turnover rate? Ask how the company "serves" the employee? Are there development and promotional opportunities for employees? These questions will shed some light on the level of commitment and value of the employees. In business, companies do what it ever it takes to keep "good employees." Ask about the employee(s) that have been with the company for the longest time. How does the company know they (good employees) are happy? Request a "meet & greet" free of charge?
- 3. What about Better Business Bureau (BBB)?** Ask if the company is a "member" versus "accredited." Ask for a reliability report filed on the company. Call the chamber of commerce. Just because the company is not a member, doesn't mean that they are not reputable.
- 4. Just good references? Ask for More** – Ask for references and call immediately. Also ask for references whereby there was a "problem" or a "challenging" situation but the company found a resolution.
- 5. As the saying goes, "you get what you pay for..."** This is true in the caregiving world. Ask companies why their price points are very high or very low? Insist on receiving specific answers. Operating above board? Or cutting corners?

Once you have collected information from a wide range of sources, the differences should be obvious. Additionally, realize that your research will be an ongoing process. Learning about a company, its employees and competitors is just the first part.

Yours Truly,

Adia LLC

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