

JOSEPHINE YANG-PATYI

FOUNDER OF YANG-PATYI
LAW FIRM & PRO-ACTION
REVENUE MANAGEMENT

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LAW

Photography by Steven J. Pallone

The Balance of Success

By Colleen Stapleton

Josephine Yang-Paty's office — where she runs her two businesses, Yang-Paty Law Firm and ProAction Revenue Management — is filled with home. Upon arrival at the Court Street office, guests are welcomed with an open-air-office feeling. The walls are painted both bold and buttercup yellows; potted plants cascade from indoor botanical baskets adjoined to glossy hardwood trim. Family-painted landscapes of waterfalls and other aquatic scenes emphasize change, flow and strength.

Perhaps the first thing to keep in mind about Josephine is her gift of expressing jovial, blunt, well-placed and expository counter-statements. When posed with the usual question "Talk about your business," Josephine quickly replies: "It's puzzling how people run businesses!"

Well-placed choices aren't exclusive to Josephine's pleasant way of talking, nor are they secondary accessories to Josephine's life. Strategic choices are integral to Josephine's approach, and a source of personal joy. The deliberate opening of her practice is no different.

"I intentionally picked February 8 this year, the Chinese New Year," she explained. A lot of things about Josephine's practice are just as strategic, infused with personal ideas about how life should be lived.

Having started her career as a bankruptcy lawyer, Josephine is no stranger to the art of purposeful conflict — something that carries over into her role as a collections attorney, primarily for agencies that serve the elderly. Everything she does involves social contract, from her approach to a changing law field to her body of clients to the emotional challenges of efficiently caring for the elderly. When dealing with her clients, Josephine balances direct action with sensible encouragement.

For Josephine, the accounts-receivable department is the heart of any business, but not all businesses follow her thought process. With a lack of proper training, many companies experience rapid employee turnover. Josephine takes a highly proactive stance when it comes to person-to-person training, stressing the importance of proper groundwork.

"I do seminars for clients. I train them on how to avoid problems and how to spot issues. I do a lot of training for the admission staff," she said, adding that the goal is to make nursing homes self-sufficient in those areas.

In large part, Josephine deals with somewhat reactionary mindsets. Conversations with clients are often difficult. "People just think that if they go into a home, somebody's going to pay for it, not themselves," she said. "It's the mentality, and there's a lot of education when I deal with families who are actually my adversaries."

With Josephine's straightforward approach to any type of conversation — from talks with clients to an interview — it's no wonder that she gets her point across so effectively.

"I think a good lawyer speaks plain language. I was talking to my off-counsel lawyer here, and she was telling me last night, 'You taught me to speak plain language,'" she said. "I said, 'Yeah, that's what you do.'"

Josephine has nothing but praise for the work nursing homes strive to accomplish. "They're such a crucial part of our society," she explained. "They take care of things we can't take care of, so we can go on with our lives."

Nursing home litigation hasn't always been Josephine's passion; she actually stumbled upon a few files back when her specialty was bankruptcy law.

"I was bored. I wasn't busy. I hated that. I was one of the younger ones, and usually the younger ones in litigation get the crappy files," she reminisced. "So I had a lot of time, and I was looking at them. I started thinking, what if I play psycho-logical warfare with these people and try to get money out of it?"

When Josephine talks about the mindset that makes her practice — and life — so successful, she grows serious and a little contemplative. Her head bows

a little bit and her eyes sparkle as she recounts her secret: applying Sun Tzu's "Art of War" to every facet of her life, from work to her husband, she said with a laugh.

"So I started thinking about it in that way," she said, thinking back to those first nursing home files. "I said, 'I'm going to twist it a little bit.' I did that with a few files, and I started getting money for the clients. The clients were like, 'We actually got paid on these.' Yeah — got paid a bit, too."

Now that she's established two successful businesses, Josephine admits with a laugh that she doesn't know what "balance" is. "I think you do whatever you need to do in both home and office, and you try to get everything done. I'm not sure if it's a balance, because I guess compared to most people I know, I do put in a lot more hours into work, and I bring my computer home, and I do it," she said. "I can just keep going." SWM

“I think you do whatever you need to do in both home and office, and you try to get everything done.” — Josephine Yang-Paty, founder of Yang-Paty Law Firm and ProAction Revenue Management

For more information on Yang-Paty Law Firm, visit yangpatylaw.com. To learn more about ProAction Revenue Management, visit proactionrevenue.com.