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**From:** Elizabeth Holekamp [mailto:lisa.holekamp@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 26, 2009 12:24 PM  
**To:** rbauer@fathertime.com  
**Subject:** Testimonial Letter

Hi, Rick--

At long last, here is my letter of thanks to you. Because it's rather long, I'm sending it as an attachment. Please let me know if you have difficulty opening it. Also, please feel free to quote any part of it as a testimonial for your business. I hope all is well with you!

With warm regards,

Lisa

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April 26, 2009

Dear Rick,

My apologies for having taken so long to write to you. As I'm sure you can appreciate (dealing as you do with people in such a state), life has not been without its complications these last months. But I feel as if I am finally beginning to come up for air!

That said, I do want to let you know, at long last, how very grateful I am for the service that you and your company provided me, my daughter, and my former husband's family in the wake of his unexpected death. Of course no such loss is ever straightforward or simple; I'm sure that in your years of handling this type of business you have encountered all kinds of challenges and difficulties, not the least of which is that of having customers who are all in some stage of grief and therefore not at their functional best.

The kind and thoughtful way in which you approached my particular situation was wonderful. I never felt as if you were feeding me a rehearsed script or a canned program. You were attentive, but never overbearing. You seemed sincerely concerned. You were gentle, but also direct and businesslike. To me, that last quality is a true necessity in a time of such emotional disarray within a family. I certainly required the guidance that you were able to provide; yet, at the same time, I needed to be heard. Listening for true understanding is, perhaps, the greatest gift one human being can give to another. My experience of you is that you are a person who listens well. This is undoubtedly because you are, above all, a person who cares. There is no way to simulate that—it simply has to be.

What a perilous tightrope you are constantly walking in this line of work! I can't imagine how difficult it must be to balance the interests of your business with the intensely personal aspect of the service you are providing. In agreeing to help with the sale of my former husband's household possessions, you were presented with a number of challenges. First, you were dealing with an out-of-town client in me. Next, you were unable to conduct an on-site sale, due to restrictions imposed by the neighborhood association. But you overcame these obstacles by thinking creatively and calling upon the power of technology and the Internet. In the end, what mattered was getting the job done, as simply and discreetly as possible, and you and your competent team made that happen. What we ended up with was the achievement of our goal: an empty house, with as little disruption to the family and the neighborhood as possible. You conducted two sales AND arranged for and supervised the pick-up of the remaining unsold items, in a fairly limited timeframe. An enormous burden, both tangible and intangible, was lifted.

Through all of this, I was in Dallas, some 600 miles away, and of course I worried at times about how it would all come out. I found myself in the unenviable position of being the person in charge, without ability to be on the scene with direct involvement. I felt I had no real control over how things would go, and putting the whole thing into your hands required a substantial leap of faith for me. The fact that I was able to make that leap and allow the entire process to go forward basically without me, ended up as a true blessing.

In retrospect, I now understand that although bereavement is essentially a solitary, uniquely personal journey, it is also a process that requires the assistance of others. One can only hope that those "others" will turn out to be just the right people for the job. In my case, Rick, you were just that—the right person for the job.

I am, and will remain, ever grateful for the assistance you gave in such a bewilderingly complicated time. My intuition tells me that you went well beyond the call of duty on this one. I thank you for your generosity, and I wish you well.

With warm regards,

Lisa Holekamp

Dallas, Texas