Family Law - Preparing For Your First Meeting

Going through a divorce? Feeling a bit lost and confused? We know how difficult this time can be and that the first meeting with your lawyer may feel overwhelming. If you take the time to gather some simple information, you will be more prepared and your lawyer will be able to move your matter forward more efficiently.

Here is a comprehensive list of information and documents you should begin to assemble:

- Your personal Income Tax Returns and Notices of Assessment for the last 3 years;
- If applicable, any corporate financial statements and/or corporate Income Tax Returns for any company(s) that you had/have an interest in for the last three years;
- Your most recent pay stub or alternative confirmation of your annual income;
- Any relevant documents, like previous agreements (marriage contract, etc.); and
- A “history of the matter” or summary of events leading up to your separation. Keep in mind that your lawyer will need to know the following:
    1. Why you’re seeking a divorce;
    2. What caused the separation;
    3. Your marriage and separation dates;
    4. Personal data about you, your spouse, and your children (names, addresses, phone numbers, birthdays, schools, places of birth, etc.);
    5. Information about your marriage (where you were married, whether this is a first marriage, whether there was a marriage contract, what the issues were that gave you trouble in your marriage, etc.);
    6. Financial information, including: what assets/debts you and your spouse brought into the marriage, what assets/debts you and your spouse had on valuation date, your respective incomes, and your expenses; and
    7. What property you have and who owns the matrimonial home.