The Matchmakers

As Sherri Murphy sat across the dining table from her future husband Bill on their first date in 1994, she simply could not believe her good fortune to meet such a "wonderful gentleman – a man I could truly fall in love with and marry."

The date was set up through a matchmaking service. It was the first time either of them had utilized it. "To find someone like Bill through a matchmaking service was incredible to me," Ms. Murphy says.

"About an hour into our date, I thought to myself, 'What an amazing way for single people to meet. Wouldn't it be great to have a matchmaking company and match people who wound up being as happy with their date as I was?"

As soon as Ms. Murphy hopped into her car to go home after the date, she began calling some of her closest friends to not only tell them about "the extraordinary man" she just met but also to tell them, "I'm going to start my own matchmaking company."



Tammi Pickle and Sherri Murphy

After Sherri Murphy met her husband through a matchmaking service, she decided to launch her own firm, Elite Connections, one of the top services in its industry.

Three weeks later, she launched Elite Connections in Los Angeles.

"Since it worked out so well for me, I wanted to do it for others so they could experience the elation of finding their spouse," she says. "My concern was getting quality people who were actually who they said they were. That's always been the problem with matchmaking from Day 1 – particularly with apps and online services. "But the bottom line is that it is a fabulous way to meet your future spouse and I loved the idea of devoting my life and career to it."

Today, nearly 25 years later, Murphy's company ranks among the top personal matchmaking companies in the country. The firm has seven Southern California offices in Beverly Hills, Orange County, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Westlake Village, Palos Verdes and San Diego. There are also offices in New York, Florida, Arizona, Las Vegas and Utah – and the company also works with international clients. They recently opened an office in Paris, France.

Many matchmaking companies – brick and mortar or online – have come and gone over the last 25 years. But Sherri Murphy and Elite Connections have stood the test of time. Its matchmaking success rate is nearly 100 percent -- thanks to its unique personal service that its clients rave about.

"We don't compete with apps. Frankly, there is really no comparison. We did not build and sustain our business to compete with dating apps. We're very passionate about this. We simple love helping people get through past relationships and into a new one. The most important thing in life is love and finding the right person to be with. Everyone needs it. It's just an unbelievable feeling to help people find a person they'll spend the rest of their live."
— Sherri Murphy, Elite Connections

"Fifteen of our most recent clients are engaged – that says a lot about our company and our process," says Murphy's daughter, Tammi, who is a Vice President at the company and is equipped with a degree in psychology, an invaluable tool that has enabled her to have "a leg up" on many other of her industry colleagues.

Elite Connection's strong psychological approach to matchmaking is one of the elements that separate it from the typical matchmaking service – especially the online services and apps. This mother and daughter duo delve deep into their clients' personality and lives in order to come up with "the perfect" fit.

"That's what differentiates us – our vetting and interview process," Murphy says. "We get into everything: their lives, what they do, how they got here, their past, their children, their family, what they do on a regular basis, what they do in their spare time, their activities and hobbies, past relationships, what worked, what didn't, and what's important to them such as religion or if they want children.

"We drill down so deep that we could write a book on our clients' lives," she adds with a laugh. "We really get to know them and what makes them tick. We want to know everything that is important to them. That way, we have a great idea of people we currently know that we think would be a good fit."

Naturally, with all the apps out there – OkCupid, Bumble, Tinder and Match – the question is: What is the advantage of a matchmaking service like Elite Connections versus utilizing an app?

"Would you use Craigslist to find a CEO?" Ms. Murphy says. "So why would you use an app to find a life partner?"

The big problem with apps and online dating services is that there is rampant fraud. Reportedly, more than $200 million in fraud was reported in just 2016 alone and statistics say 70 percent are married.

That just won't happen with Elite Connections and its rigorous vetting and prescreening process.

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