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Leave the Planning TO THE PLANNER

By Kristin Spear Soirée Productions

HIRING A WEDDING PLANNER MAKES SENSE FOR ANY BUDGET

YOU'RE ENGAGED AND WHILE VISIONS OF YOUR WEDDING DAY DANCE IN YOUR HEAD, PLANNING THE WEDDING CAN BE MORE THAN A LITTLE STRESSFUL. THE AVERAGE WEDDING TAKES OVER 250 HOURS TO PLAN AND INCLUDES 22 DIFFERENT VENDORS. WHAT'S A BRIDE TO DO? THERE IS SO MUCH TO NAVIGATE AND COORDINATE.

Wedding planners used to be something only celebrities and the ridiculously rich could afford. Luckily, that is no longer the case. Now there are many affordable options for having professional wedding planning services. Here are our top 10 ways a wedding planner can help you and your wedding:

1. BUDGETING

Your wedding planner can take your budget as a whole and make sure all of your vendors and selections are in line with your dreams and your means. Being honest about your budget will only help you in the end. It wastes your time, your vendors' time and your planner's time if you don't. Wedding planners are used to working with every budget and have seen it all. Planners know that not every bride likes to spend her money the same way, and they will help you allocate your funds appropriately so you will see your vision materialize on your special day. Be specific about your desires! If you would like to spend more on flowers or spend more on the food and beverages, your planner will be sure that you get what you want.



2. VENDOR REFERRALS / SELECTION

Your wedding planner is your best resource to the best vendors available. They work with different vendors all the time and can quickly distinguish between brilliance and mediocrity. This is going to help save time in the interviewing process. A great wedding planner is skilled at matching the personalities of their brides with the perfect vendors in order to keep you on track with your vision and your budget.

3. CONTRACT NEGOTIATION

a) Your wedding planner can help negotiate with venues, vendors and suppliers. Wedding planners have created special relationships with many companies, which directly benefit you. Ask your planner what she can negotiate for you. Because wedding planners are such a source of referrals for venues and vendors they often go the extra mile to serve and please you.

b) Your wedding planner works with contracts day in and day out and can help you review each vendor's contract and alert you to red flags that may appear. Your wedding planner is on your side.

4. ETIQUETTE

Don't know how to address an invitation to a doctor and her husband? Confused about what is out-of-date or improper? Never fear; your





wedding planner knows it all! Let's face it; etiquette can be confusing. Your wedding planner can guide you through this maze while spelling out all the unwritten rules about invitations, place cards, thank you notes and proper wording in general.

5. ORGANIZATION & SCHEDULING

- a) One of your wedding planner's main jobs is to keep things easy and organized. They can set up tastings, trials and mock-ups with all of your vendors around your personal schedule. Letting them handle it saves you the hassle and the stress.
- b) Your wedding planner will also keep you informed of each vendor's payment schedule and deposit requirements so you won't be late or incur more fees than you need.
- c) Your wedding planner can handle all of the final payments and tips for the vendors on the wedding day so your family can simply celebrate the day with you and not worry about payment details.

6. SAVE MONEY

One of the biggest reasons to hire a wedding planner is to save money. How can that be if I'm paying them a fee/commission? The first reason goes back to the vendor negotiations and referrals. Wedding planners can often negotiate a better contract with extras that you on your own could not. Your wedding planner can also save you money by recommending only the vendors that meet your price range. There are great vendors within every price range, and your wedding planner can narrow in on the ones that are most appropriate for you and your future husband (and maybe your parents too).

7. SAVE TIME

- a) Another major reason to hire a wedding planner is to save you time. Your wedding planner can do all the research and leg work for your ideas by sourcing linens, lighting, chairs, china and other décor options. They can price shop all the rental companies and wholesalers to find you the best deal, presenting only the best options directly to you. Leaving the window shopping to your wedding planner saves you time to enjoy the final products instead of searching for it yourself.
- b) Are you looking for something unique? Your wedding planner will hunt it down for you. Are you looking for that red rose printed aisle runner that Ashley Simpson used at her wedding to Pete Wentz? Your wedding planner can easily get that for you too (p.s. it was Original Runner Company).
- c) Does your mom or your soon to be mother-in-law have lots of questions that you just can't or don't want to deal with? Your wedding planner can answer them with a smile and save you the hassle and the headache.

8. MEDIATOR / MIDDLEMAN / BUFFER

Whether you think of it as a blessing or a curse, a marriage is often the blending of two families. Family situations are something your

wedding planner is used to handling. Don't have the heart to tell your future mother-in-law that she can't sing "My Heart Will Go On" at your wedding? Let the wedding planner explain the ceremony time restraints while leaving the relationship intact. Your wedding planner can be used as a neutral party and a helping guide for both sides through the planning process.

9. STRESS AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Planning a wedding can be stressful enough without the occasional crisis. A wedding planner can take the burden off your shoulders by being your ally in the process and providing you with advice and support. The unforeseen can and does happen but don't worry, because your planner has seen it all before. She has all the answers and solutions to any problem that may arise. Your wedding planner is a professional problem solver and will be able to fix anything.

10. SET UP AND STRIKE

As a little girl you imagined your wedding day as a day of beauty: getting ready with your bridesmaids, stepping into the perfect dress, walking down the aisle and seeing your future husband waiting for you, the sealing kiss, the dancing and the happy ever after. Somehow I don't think your little girl dreams include placing 250 votives on the dining tables and windows, making sure your guest book and gift cards make it safely to the reception, calling the vendors to see if they're going to make it on time and making sure the DJ is set up with a wireless microphone for your dad's toast. You want to enjoy your wedding without worrying that everything has been done the way you have so diligently planned it. You want your family members and wedding party to have a good time, not to pass out dinner and worry about the catering. Allow your wedding planner to take each detail that you have planned, set it up, take it down, pack it up and get it safely back to you. Because after you are pronounced "Mr. and Mrs.," you deserve to spend time with your husband without taking out the trash.

There is a wedding planner out there for everyone and every budget. As soon as you say "Yes" to the proposal you will be overwhelmed with what has to be done to make your special day special. Hiring a planner will ensure you that everything can and will be done. So enjoy making the dream come true by allowing your fairy god-planner to smoothly make your wedding day an amazing moment in your new life together.

About Kristin Spear - Soirée Productions

www.soireeproductions.com

After law school Kristin Spear moved to Utah and began her event planning career in 2006. Since then, she has become a prominent wedding planner and event designer for Soirée Productions, located in Park City. Her creative ideas and attention to detail make each and every event perfect.

Photography by Sparkle Photography
www.sparklephoto.com