

# Questions to Ask When Interviewing Potential Wedding Planners



In the first flush of joy after your engagement, you'll probably begin browsing magazines and wedding websites...and soon feel buried by a blizzard of checklists and a daunting array of decisions. That's when you and your fiancé might want to think about hiring a professional wedding planner.

Good idea. Depending on your budget and needs, you can contract:

- a full-service planner to arrange every detail
- someone to assist you only in choosing your wedding location and vendors
- a "Day-of Coordinator" (which really means 30 days before your wedding)

*NOTE: Many locations have in-house coordinators, but make sure you're clear on exactly what level of service they provide. Venue coordinators usually just handle "day-of" issues and offer a list of their preferred vendors, so having your own planner may still be a great help.*

Even though hiring a planner is an added cost, they often end up saving you money in the long run. And no doubt about it—the right wedding planner can definitely save you time and stress (*priceless!*).

## Now, here are THE QUESTIONS!

### Getting to Know a Planner:

1. What made you want to be a wedding planner?
2. Describe the most challenging wedding you planned and how you handled the problems that came up.
3. How would you rate your problem-solving skills?
4. How would you rate your communication skills?
5. Are you a certified wedding planner? If so, where did you get certified? What is your educational background?
6. Are you a member of any wedding association(s)? If so, does your association require you to satisfy yearly education requirements?
7. How long have you been in business? Do you have a business license?

**Before interviewing potential wedding planners,** you and your fiancé should have an idea of:

- How much money you have in your budget
- How many people you would like to invite
- Your preferred wedding date
- Your vision for your wedding (*NOTE: If you aren't sure yet don't worry—getting help with this is one of the reasons why you're hiring a wedding planner!*)

**After each interview is complete,** ask yourselves:

- Did we feel heard?
- Does the planner understand our vision?
- Did we get a strong sense she will work with our budget?
- Was there a good connection and did our personalities mesh well?

**Listen to your gut.** If an interview doesn't feel right, then maybe that person just isn't a good fit for you. Your wedding planner is the vendor you'll be spending the most time with, so it's important to pick someone who's compatible with you and your fiancé.

8. How many full-scale weddings have you planned? When was your last one?
9. How many wedding clients do you take on in a year? How many do you expect to have during the month of our wedding?
10. Is wedding planning your full-time job? If it's part-time, what is your other job?
11. Do you have our wedding date open and do you anticipate any issues with the date such as weather, travel for our guests, difficulty booking a venue, etc.?

### Working With the Venue:

12. Have you ever worked at the venue we've chosen?
13. If our event is outdoors, what contingency plan

would you have for bad weather? (Describe an event where you had weather issues and how you resolved them.)

### Hiring Other Vendors:

14. Are we required to book only the vendors you recommend or do we have the freedom to hire someone even if you haven't worked with them before?
15. Do you take a commission or discount from any of the vendors you would refer us to?
16. Will you be present at all of the vendor meetings and will you assist us in reviewing all of the vendor contracts and making sure everything is in order?
17. Will you invoice us for all the vendor fees or will we need to pay each one of them ourselves?
18. For the vendors who will be on site the day of our wedding, can I provide you with checks for final payment that you will distribute to them?
19. If issues arise with the vendors before, during or after our wedding, will you handle them or are we responsible for this?

### Scope of Work:

20. What kind of planning do you offer? Logistical only (i.e. organizational—handling things like the timeline and floor plan) or Design and Logistical (i.e. bringing a client's vision to life as well as taking care of all the organizational aspects of the wedding)?
21. If you just do logistical planning, can you refer us to a vendor who can assist us with event design? (*NOTE: Floral designers often do full event design, as do vendors who specialize in design.*)
22. Will you handle every aspect of the planning or can we do some things on our own? In other words, what parts of the planning will we be responsible for?
23. Will you be the person on site the day of our wedding or will it be another planner? How many assistants will you have?
24. In case of an emergency that prevents you from being at our wedding, who will be the back-up planner? What are their qualifications?
25. What time will you arrive and depart on the day of our wedding?
26. Will you stay on site after our wedding to make sure everything has been broken down and all vendors have left the location?

27. Will you provide us with a timeline of the wedding and a floor plan of the wedding venue?
28. Do you offer different package options or is everything customized based on what we're looking for?
29. How many meetings and phone calls are included in our package?
30. Is the wedding day rehearsal included in your services?
31. Do any of your packages include planning the rehearsal dinner and/or post-wedding brunch? If not, would you provide that service and what would be the extra cost to include it in our contract?
32. Do any of your packages include honeymoon planning? If not, would you provide that service and what would be the extra cost to include it in our contract?
33. Do any of your packages include assistance with finding my wedding dress and wedding party attire? If not, would you provide that service and what would be the extra cost to include it in our contract?

### Getting Down to Business

34. Once we book with you, how quickly can we expect to receive the contract?
35. Once we give you our budget, will you provide us with a breakdown of how the money is going to be allocated?
36. As changes are made to our plans, will you update us with a revised estimate and updated contract?
37. How do you charge for your services? Hourly, percentage of the wedding cost, or flat rate?
38. Can you provide a detailed list of all the items included in your fee?
39. What is your payment policy? Do you accept credit cards?
40. How much of a deposit is required to book your services? When is the final payment due?
41. Are there any fees that won't be included in your proposal that we should be aware of?
42. What is your refund or cancellation policy?
43. Can you provide a list of references?
44. Can you provide us with a portfolio and/or video of weddings you have done?