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Wedding Topics: Wedding Coordinators--Why do we need them?

Johanna Kaestner with Jubilee Lau, Reminisce



From the time I got married almost 35 years ago, weddings and their wedding planning have changed so much. Read what now-a-days a competent wedding coordinator do for you, besides saving money and keeping you family sane.

Jubilee Lau of Reminisce Your Wedding, helped me with this article.

"Why do we need a wedding coordinator? My mother did not have one, we can handle it," you might say. Before you make your final decision, please compare your mother's wedding with yours: did your mother and grandmother work during the planning stage? Did they have the same guest count? Did they spend the same amount of money? Were there as many vendors to choose from? Did they have to deal with vendor contracts, complicated logistics, and extra details? Let's face it, if you want the perfect wedding, you need a coordinator; if you don't have one, you, your parents, or your friends will be exhausted before the wedding day arrives.



Jean Marks helps with the gown

Hiring an event coordinator is a great way to save time, energy, and—often—money because you avoid making costly mistakes. Many offer varying degrees of service, from simply finding the right vendors for you to creating a realistic budget, to coordinating the month prior to the wedding, to hand holding from start to finish. Wedding coordinators know where to save money in a most sensible way.

Good coordinators have only your best interests in mind. They will help you work within your budget while realizing your visions for the wedding. They are aware of current prices in all areas and will make sure you are not overcharged. They will assist you in selecting the best professionals to fit your style, review all contracts, and make sure that expectations are met and contracted terms are honored.



Tosca fastens the veil

Among all the professionals serving the event industry, the wedding planners may have seen the greatest amount of change in their work. The brides that became coordinators right after planning their own weddings have been replaced by highly trained professionals. A good wedding coordinator can serve as a family counselor for brides and their mothers. BRO event coordinators have extensive training in all aspects of event planning. They belong to professional organizations and continue to attend educational seminars. A few have apprenticed with established coordinators, but most have taken courses and are certified by the leading training programs in our area.



Tosca distributes the flower baskets



...and ties the groom's bowtie.

Almost all of the BRO wedding planners have college and university degrees and previously had successful careers in other fields. Looking at my list, some were teachers like Kay; Marcia, a former paralegal was the first instructor of the ACPWC, Katherine was a clinical psychologist, Jubilee a logistics manager, Morgan a financial marketing consultant, Taylor a television news producer, Annena a successful caterer, and Amy a pastry chef who graduated from the Culinary Academy in San Francisco.

You might ask why these successful women would leave their jobs? I asked the same question. The answer comes from their one common passion: "We love to help the brides at such joyful occasions; we love to help create the wedding of their dreams; we love to make the impossible happen." To me, they are mothers, sisters, best friends, and true advisers all in one--always available, always patient. Very important! You need to feel comfortable with the professional you choose, as you know not everybody is on the same wave length.



Marcia Coleman-Joyner and two of her happy clients.

As I learned during my visits, all event planners are extremely organized. Luckily, the computer has helped to cut the paper output of earlier years. Instead of file cabinets and note pads, a notebook computer is all you find on their fashionable desks. Reminders are sent via email. Jubilee uses an on-line program that allows her clients to access all their essential wedding-related information through her website, any day, any time. They can log in and know exactly when the next payment is due, or which appointments are coming up.

Today's coordinators see themselves as facilitators who work together with all the other event professionals. Only when everybody works together as a team can a flawless event be guaranteed.

The term "Day-Of" coordinator is a misnomer. Today, most professional coordinators

require that they come in at least a month prior to the wedding to help finalize all the details prior to the wedding day. It is virtually impossible to hire a coordinator to come in a few days before the wedding and expect them to do a flawless and remarkable job handling all the details on the wedding day. When a coordinator comes in towards the end of the planning process, she/he still needs to spend a significant amount of time reviewing contracts, understanding your vision and expectations, reviewing timelines, conducting walk-throughs, and corresponding with vendors about final details. Thus, the fee associated with such extensive work can be more than you expect, but it is well worth it. Everyone could benefit from having someone on the wedding day who is unemotionally attached, who has the experience and expertise to run the event smoothly, who is calm and clear-minded, and who is detailed-oriented. Responsible coordinators don't hope for the best; they plan well.

Some people wonder why they have to pay the coordinators; don't they get paid by the other professionals? Think about it! Shouldn't they work for you? If they rely on being paid by the vendors, they may want to recommend those who will pay them the most and not the ones who will serve you best. Also, it is possible that a conflict of interest can arise if the client's wishes do not coincide with the vendor's plans.



Jubilee and her clients during the ceremony

Here is an example I heard some time ago: A coordinator accompanied his clients to a tasting in a hotel. It turned out that the price quoted during the tasting differed quite a bit from the one that later appeared on the contract. The coordinator made sure the clients were properly billed and saved them money on their food charges.

Even with the best preparation and planning, accidents still can happen during a wedding. Lost keys, wrong rentals, late deliveries, or other mishaps do take place. If you hire an event coordinator, chances are - you never will know about such mishaps because your "angel" has taken care of it all.

For all that you are spending on your wedding, it makes sense to hire a professional coordinator to guide you through the process. Whatever plan you choose, the event coordinator will give you the peace of mind to allow you to enjoy the day itself. Coordinators are experts at creating that perfect wedding day that you have envisioned for so long!

[Recommended wedding coordinators](#)

Jubilee's picture captured by [Meg and Michael Weddings](#)
All pictures from Tosca were captured by Ron Schreier.