

Questions to Ask the Wedding Planner



□ **1. Have you worked at the venue or with the vendors I have in mind? What are the pros and cons of each?**

Right off the bat, this will give you a sense of her taste and insight. If she is negative about your choices and provides new options not in line with your vision, she is probably not a good fit. Should she, on the other hand, offer valid reasons for you to look elsewhere—and make suggestions that are similar in style to your ideas—you know she has done her homework. Even if she loves your choices, it's smart to hear why.

□ **2. How many weddings of my size and budget have you planned?**

Overall, it's important to find someone who can help you find options in your price range. If she primarily handles six-figure parties and yours is half that, you're probably not a good match. She may have brilliant taste, but she's not going to have the vendor relationships you're looking for.

□ **3. Who are your favorite florists, bands, caterers, stationers, and so on?**

Ask to see her portfolio of previous weddings. This will give you a sense of how you can benefit from her contacts. Hearing about her contacts and ideas will shed light on her experience, not to mention whether it's in sync with your own thoughts.

□ **4. What role do you feel I should play?**

Before the ball gets rolling, be clear about how her responsibilities and yours will gel. Who has the final say in big decisions? You don't want to be butting heads for months.

□ **5. How many weddings do you handle each month? How much staff do you enlist to help, and what are their qualifications?**

The wedding-planning field attracts a lot of hobbyists, so be sure your planner takes her job seriously. Conversely, many experienced event planners dabble in weddings. Your planner's

numbers should reflect a familiarity with the event's requirements. And know that if she takes on many weddings each month, she may not have time to concentrate on you.

□ **6. How do you handle dicey situations? For example, how aggressively do you negotiate? How would you handle something like a groom with a broken leg?**

You will be spending a lot of time with your planner. So determine exactly what you're looking to get—whether it's contacts, someone to drive a hard bargain, or a sympathetic supporter—and choose a person who meets those needs.

□ **7. How often do you expect to meet with me prior to the wedding? How many hours do you work on the event day, and what time will you begin and end?**

If a communicative back-and-forth rapport is important to you, don't choose a planner who thinks she can pull off the job after three phone calls with you. And if she works for a large company, check whether you'll be working directly with her or if a lower-level employee will be filling in once the major decisions are made.

□ **8. May I see your client and vendor references? Would you mind if I phoned a few of them?**

Client references provide insight into how people appraise the planner's service. Equally important is vendor feedback. Vendors are emotionally unattached, and they observe how organized and efficient a planner is. What's more, unlike onetime clients, vendors can compare different planners.

□ **9. How do you charge? Is there a flat rate? Are there add-ons? What exactly do the costs entail?**

It's good to know as much as you can about the package at the outset, as each planner has her own billing method. While you're at it, check to see if the quote includes help with the rehearsal dinner and the day-after brunch.