



# **A Guide To Becoming A Wedding Planner**

*By Jeri Joynor*

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## Introduction

As a little girl growing up in a small town in Ohio, I would play and imagine having a grown-up job where all my clients were always deliriously happy, where each job's setting would be beautifully decorated with plenty of scrumptious food, and the financial rewards would make me a princess.

Like most starry eyed young women, after saying the opposite, nature took it's course and I met a wonderful man and soon became a young mother.

After being a stay at home mom for five years, with the strong encouragement of my husband, I decided I wanted to do something for myself. I wanted to do something that would give me an honest feeling of self worth while awarding me with good thoughts about myself.

That's when my little girl dreams of beautiful weddings came rushing back, and I am happy to say my youthful dreams came true, for that's what it's like being a *wedding planner*.

And my best to you, if you are thinking of choosing a rewarding career as a wedding planner! You will be joining a flourishing industry, for it's estimated that more then several million weddings took place here in the United States in 2007.

It seems, brides-to-be are turning to wedding planners in ever increasing numbers to supervise the massive amount of details they don't have time to handle themselves. Your potential clients aren't essentially wealthy, as they tended to be in the past.

To a great extent, they are often ordinary working women who want to have a beautiful fairy tale wedding, and who also realize they need the services of an organized, detail-oriented wedding planner like you to make their *dream wedding* happen.

As a wedding planner, you will put on many different hats, including those of, a co-coordinator, administrator, director and designer. You will at the end of the day be assisting your bride and the groom with planning and creating a magnificent stress-free wedding experience to remember for the rest of their lives.

Believe me, you'll soon realize, there's more to being a wedding planner than just selecting flowers for the head table and picking bands.

You will also have to be a savvy businessperson who can *competently* do things, like manage your clients' finances while paying your own bills on time, sometimes coping with resources and schedules to accommodate several weddings, and handle the paperwork and personalities that go along with your employees or contract help.

This book can help, as it's an all-inclusive guide to creating your own wedding planning business and making it run smoothly.

Included, is fundamental information on; setting up your business structure, discovering your market area, acquiring professionals to keep your business on track, marketing and advertising your services, as well as, using the Internet to generate new business, along with finding financing.

I have provided suggestive worksheets to help you estimate your costs keeping your budget in line.  
(*Sample Wedding Forms - Appendix*)

Then it's up to you; to add your own courage and desire to be a successful business owner, in addition to your a genuine love for people. With this book you'll have all the tools you'll need to help both your clients and your own dreams come true.

You're going to learn how to do things right the first time, the nuts and bolts of the wedding business, and you'll find it's all as fascinating as you have imagined.

As for yours truly, wedding planning has been more than good to me. I live comfortably these days with plenty of work, sure we all have bad days, yet when I consider the other choices I could have made over time, I'm glad about my life in weddings, it's been challenging, and rewarding.

May you enjoy great success in your new venture, and may all your dreams come true!

Best of good fortune;

*Jeri Joynor*



## Being A Wedding Planner



As a *Wedding Planner* you'll provide a mixture of services, including; the complete or partial planning of an organized wedding, along with a preceding run through, as well as, the final wedding day service, itself.

Your services will vary, at times couples will desire a capable wedding planner to *co-ordinate* the entire wedding, while some others will want to plan parts of the wedding themselves, and hire you for the other services, such as dealing with photographers, vendors, caterers, florists, etc..

You'll also find some couples who have decided to plan the complete wedding themselves; on the other hand, they understand the value of having someone take charge of and direct everyone at the rehearsal and on the wedding day itself, thus they will hire a wedding planner for these tasks.

As pointed out above, some of your clients will want to put the complete planning of their wedding, from start to finish, using the talents of a professional wedding planner.

The following is a brief range of services that a wedding planner can make available.

- An initial conference with the couple along with constant meetings and advice, as necessary,
- Preparing a budget and timeline for the services.
- Lend a hand with selecting; a theme, color scheme, as well as the design, printing and mailing out of the invitations.
- Reviewing vendors' contracts, such as the caterer, florist, photographer, musicians, etc..
- Also, finding, negotiating with and booking suitable vendors.
- Reception planning, etc..

All in all, your function is to make available a *stress-free* day for the bride and groom.

In reality, planned weddings are as much a staged production as the most intricate Broadway show. Even if the nuptials are more intimate and the budget more modest, weddings still require a great deal of advanced planning and follow-up to make sure each element of their important day comes together as planned, on time and within budget.

There was a time, when the wedding plans were consigned to the mother of the bride or some other female family member who had an eye for fashion and a flair for floral design.

Alas, all this changed with society and the invasion of women into the workplace. Today, the mother of the bride is most likely a working woman herself without time to think about these details, much like the bride herself.

This has opened up a world of opportunity for efficient, passionate wedding planners. Professional wedding planners treat their profession as a business, and not as a pleasurable sideline or hobby.

In fact, often wedding consultants habitually serve as *event planners*, as well as; etiquette experts, budget troubleshooters, and on-site supervisors.

Often, they go along with brides-to-be to; fitting appointments, floral meetings, and other services. At times you'll even offer a shoulder to cry on and an understanding ear for your stressed-out clients.

There are some wedding planners who prefer to offer consulting services only, and may provide an all-inclusive "*wedding blueprint*" package that calls for; detailed schedules, realistic budgets, along with a list of trustworthy vendors. While, others provide assistance and insight on the social etiquette of a wedding experience.

Naturally, the extent of your own involvement *is completely* up to you. Still, on the other hand, the trend in this industry, has been more toward offering total management of the entire event for the reason that, brides and their mothers just don't have the time needed to attend to all the details required to provide the wedding day that they have dreamed of.

This means, that like any quality profession you must come to terms with an in-depth knowledge of every aspect of wedding planning and know how to make all the details fit together smoothly and effectively.

Next the basics of the wedding business.

## **The Right Stuff** **To Be A Wedding Planner**

Wedding planning is a well-paying career that combines imagination and creativity. If you are looking for a fun and exciting field, the wedding planning business could be perfect for you.

One advantage of our business is you can enter the wedding business, a \$150 billion per year industry and growing, with no previous experience.

As a wedding planner, you can certainly earn a comfortable living, many wedding planners charge their fees as a percentage (15-20%) of the total cost of the wedding. Naturally, as the cost of weddings goes up, so does the wedding planner's potential income. Experienced wedding planners who work with wealthy clients earn over \$100,000 plus, per year.

An assortment of titles are used to describe people hired to plan weddings. You may hear any of these as you embark upon your new career.

Some of the job titles used to refer to someone who plans weddings, are:

*Wedding Coordinator* The term "wedding coordinator" is occasionally used in place of "*wedding planner*." but, some of these individuals are involved only in coordinating the wedding ceremony.

*Wedding Consultant* The term "*wedding consultant*" refers to someone who owns a wedding planning business. A wedding consultant may plan the entire wedding, part, or simply give advice to couples who want to plan their own weddings.

*A Bridal Consultant* Nearly all bridal consultants are *wedding planners* who assist with all aspects of the wedding.

This title is also used to refer to people who work in retail stores, like bridal shops, and focus on working with brides.

*A Wedding Director* This term is every so often used in the southern part of the country for a wedding coordinator who is occupied only with the wedding ceremony.

*Wedding Planner* A *wedding planner* assists in actually planning and organizing all or *any* aspect of a wedding ceremony, along with the reception.

These titles may be used by people who have their own wedding planning businesses, they may also be used to depict people who work *full or part-time* in the wedding industry. Such as, a person who works for a hotel or resort and spends the majority of their time booking services for weddings, and may be referred to as a "wedding coordinator."

The wedding industry is a healthy, thriving, prosperous market to enter for anyone who has an indisputable love of weddings, along with great people skills (a must!), and who is looking to set up a business of their own.

Today's bride is spending more money than ever before to ensure that her wedding day, the single most important day of her life, is planned to perfection.

Once reserved only for the very rich, today's brides-and grooms-to-be, who are often busy with individual careers and yet wanting to make their wedding *uniquely personal*, are turning to wedding planners for help. The help to save time, money and significant stress when preparing for their wedding.

*So what does it take to be a successful wedding Planner?*

I can tell you myself, the first thing it takes is an honest, "*sense of humor*," and I'm not kidding! This is a business where you're constantly depending on the professionalism and reliability of up to a dozen or more people to create a bride's dream wedding, there's always the possibility that something will go awry or bomb out completely.

That's why, having a sense of humor and the ability to think on your feet are key to keeping things on track or fixing the problems that will inevitably turn up. Believe me, a healthy *sense of humor*, will make your job easier, it sure has mine.

Also, being a people person is pretty much a requirement for this job, as you'll be dealing frequently with weepy brides, exacting mothers, irritable suppliers, and others who will struggle for your attention.

Remember, you'll be negotiating with vendors, overseeing the actions of a flock of hired helpers, and mingling with the guests at wedding receptions.

So it helps, if you; really love working with people and having an upbeat, positive outlook which will benefit you as you weather the *inescapable* problems that can and will arise. And, it goes without saying on the more practical side, it also helps you to have a strong business background.

*Personal Qualities You Must Cultivate*

Major traits that mark a great and successful wedding planner, are:

*Organizational skills*

Remember, you are being assigned to "*organize*" a wedding. There will be countless times that you will have to cope with a number of errands in addition to dealing with several people, *and all at the same time*.

It's essential to ensure that these numerous tasks and details are handled in a timely manner so that your wedding runs effortlessly.

*Interpersonal proficiency*

A necessary trait to needed to attract new clients and to work successfully with many people, also to profitably correspond with the bride and groom to discover what they really want.

*Imagination*

A wedding is the most important high point in most people's lives as well as something they will want to remember and cherish for their lifetime.

As a wedding planner, you will be called upon to use your ingenuity to come up with exclusive ideas for ceremonies and receptions even when hired to put on a "traditional" wedding. Bear in mind, each couple that hires you will be different and have elements of their wedding that are special to them.

### *Persistence*

Above all, patience is a virtue that is critical for your success. You" find, you'll have to be patient, both with your clients and your business itself, because each wedding you're hired for will require different things of you.

And, it is exactly that variety, that challenge, and that desire for excellence that makes the wedding consulting business so vital and exciting.

### The Pleasures of The Business

I'd be the first one to tell you there are countless challenges in this business, to be sure, but along with these challenges come great personal rewards.

You are always working with happy, while justifiably nervous people. You are the channel that can make the biggest moment of their lives become special and memorable. n addition, you will have the satisfaction of seeing all the details you have so carefully planned come together *impeccably and effectively*.

Take it from this gal, the end result is definitely the best part, all I do is eat, sleep, and dream weddings, but *it's worth it* for the reason that it's so much fun."

Add to the bargain, the satisfaction of being able to make dream weddings come true for your clients, then there's another really appealing reason for embarking on a career in the wedding business.

The reality is, you become the proud chief executive officer of your own small business. As such, you answer to no one, except, yourself and of course, the IRS.

- Within reason, you can *do things your own way*.
- You can set up shop in a spare bedroom or opt for a commercial space.
- You can set *your own hours* and construct your own schedule.
- Also, you can accept as much or as little work as you wish.

Still, wedding consulting is hard work, as you'll have a incredible number of details to manage; heaps of suppliers to baby-sit, long days, and legions of fretful brides you must comfort. Now, ask yourself honestly; does this sound like fun to you, too? If it does! Great! Then you have come to the right place.

The guide you're holding in your hands will show you how to start a wedding planning business. We'll go over your responsibilities and the various tasks vital to running this type of business. In addition,

we'll also touch on the myriad issues a new business owner will face, such as taxes, insurance, and financing issues.

But perhaps best of all, you'll find that this guide is punctuated with advice and words of wisdom. from successful wedding consultants who have turned their personal dreams of working in an industry they love into reality.

Ask yourself, these few questions and see if you have what it takes to become a successful wedding Planner:

- A. Can you handle a variety of tasks at different stages, and all at the same time?
- B. Are you *detail* oriented?
- C. Are you *motivated* and able to work without another's direction?
- D. Are you *disciplined enough* to work even when it's sunny and warm outside, when you can hear the birds are singing, or the house needs repairs?
- E. Are you happy working alone without the benefit of conversational coworkers.
- F. Can you handle emotionally fragile brides, demanding mothers, and irritable suppliers, without succumbing to the impulse to flatten them?
- G. And finally, can you laugh graciously when things do go wrong, then think fast to fix them?

If you can answer these questions, truthfully, and in the affirmative you have the qualities of a wedding planner.

## Your (Fees) Income

To arrive at a reasonable fee or charge, at some point in your talks with your prospective clients, it is *imperative* to conclude exactly how much the bride wants you to do.

At times, she will fancy to do much of the groundwork herself, such as; ordering the cake and flowers, selecting the reception hall, and auditioning the band or DJ, and then will ask you to coordinate all the services as well as being on-site during the reception.

Or, a busy bride will want to turn over *all or many* of these tasks to you, restricting her part to endorsing the choices and signing checks for the deposits.

As a wedding planner or consultant, you'll offer a variety of packages with varying degrees of service. The idea is to provide choices that will permit the bride to tailor her wedding to her exact terms.

Your wedding packages possibly will include:

- A complete service package, with you doing the wedding planning and supervision of *each* event from beginning to end.
- Only, the rehearsal and wedding service with your on-site management.
- Providing a wedding-day-only service with full or limited supervision of wedding party celebrations and suppliers.
- Just a *planning package*: with the accent on; budgets, vendor recommendations, along with spreadsheets, plus other details.
- A party package, containing; planning and organization of the engagement party, rehearsal dinner, and any bachelor and bachelorette parties.

Long before you meet with your first paying clients, you will need to come to a decision as to how much you are going to charge for your services, and not surprisingly, as your reputation and skill increase so will your fees.

As you might imagine, the fees charged for planning or managing weddings are as wide-ranging as the services offered by the planners themselves.

Some planners or consultants, like to charge a *flat rate* for their services *based* on a percentage of the total wedding budget, while others offer separately priced packages in relation to the number and type of services the couple desires.

## Typical Industry Fees

Ways wedding planners, on average, charge for their services:

Either by;

- A separate consultation fee,
- A set percentage of the overall wedding budget,
- An hourly fee, or flat fee,
- Or, no charge to the clients, as they receive their full compensation from vendors (suppliers) as the result of a discount. (Often called a "kickback")

### As For The Consultation

Usually, wedding planners charge an hourly or flat fee for their time, regardless of any other fees collected from the couple, that is, unless their entire compensation comes from other sources, or the consultation charge is included as part of any package or percentage offer.

Your fee will depend on two factors, your reputation and skill, and second, the market you practice in. Therefore, a flat fee for a three-hour initial consultation may range from \$150 in rural areas to as much as \$500+ in large cities.

### A Percentage of The Wedding Budget

A common way for wedding planners to charge for their work, is a percentage of the total wedding budget, normally 10 to 15%, or higher in larger cities with more affluent clients.

Tell your clients, that retaining you on percentage as their wedding planner, will not be an added expense to their total wedding budget, due to the savings caused by your expertise.

### Free Of Charge to The Client

As stated, some wedding planners earn their money from commissions paid by the vendors. Naturally, the percentage of commission you receive will depend on how successful a negotiator you are.

Right off, loads of vendors will give you 10% off simply because you asked for a discount. In some cases, where you have already established a relationship with a vendor, they may offer you a higher percentage for referring business to them.

A friend of mine, who works this way, when someone says these "kickbacks" are unethical, simply reminds them of our elected officials in Washington, *enough said!*

When I charge for my services, I remind them, *that one of the best reasons* for the couple to hire a wedding planner is to reap the *rewards and benefits* of the our expertise in negotiating the lowest possible prices from vendors.

### By The Hour

When providing *partial* wedding planning services, you may want to charge by the hour. Most wedding planners charge fees ranging from \$30 to \$150 per hour, although \$50 per hour is average.

### By Flat Fee

Some clients may have a preference for paying "flat fee" rather than an hourly fee so they know exactly the cost will not go above a certain amount.

Here, you first settle on what your time is worth by the hour, day or week, and charge according to the amount of time you feel each individual event will entail.

### For The Wedding Day (Other Services)

A lot of couples and their families, will have accomplished all the legwork and the only thing missing is for a person to make sure the wedding day itself, or other services, are as perfect as possible. Just make sure you take all *your* costs into account when making your charge.

### As Time Goes By

Once you have been planning weddings for a period of time, you may decide to adjust your fees, or charge amounts based on different methods.

For example, some wedding planners charge both *a flat fee* and *a percentage of vendor costs*. Another option is to charge a fee based on the number of guests, with a set minimum.

No doubt, with experience, education, and time you will want to boost your fees. However, when making up your mind on what to charge, mull over the services you provide, the size of your market, and what your local competition charges.

## *Start a New Career As a Wedding Planner...*



**Become a wedding  
planner/consultant  
and make their special day  
*tremendous.***

**Get information about having a  
successful career  
as a *wedding planner.***



Thanks for reading these brief few pages, of one of the most successful and original career course manuals available on building your own home-based **Wedding Planner Business**. Learning from an established professional is the best way to starting your own profitable home business.

If you'd like to consider the complete course, [click here...](#)

**For information on our other career courses go to either [anezbizz.com](http://anezbizz.com) or [ahow2.com](http://ahow2.com)**

Note: To read another *sample edition* of our famous home study courses follow this link... [Learn](#)

Whatever, your decision may I talk this opportunity to wish you the best of good fortune, and remember, don't leave your future to *the whim of others*.

Your friend;

*Joe Myna*