

You've emailed us your questions, so we brought in the experts. Danielle Bobish of Curtain Up Events, José Rolón of José Rolón Events, and Bianca Blag of Bianca B., Inc. dish out planning advice for your most common concerns.

Ask The Planners

I've heard that using a planner can actually help bring down the overall cost of a wedding. Is this really the case? –Willa

Danielle Bobish: Hiring a planner, although an additional cost, can *definitely* help you *save* on other aspects of the wedding (not to mention, save you stress during the planning process and on the day of your event!). Planners have solid vendor relationships. An experienced planner will know which vendors are reliable, and that can save you from making costly mistakes. It is very common for a couple without a planner to find themselves over-spending, or- worse-

relationship with them doesn't. Part of my job as a planner is to read and understand the agreement of each vendor hired. If your videographer doesn't honor the agreement at any point after your wedding, I would be more than willing to jump in as a mediator to remind them what we signed up for. With whomever you hire as a planner, because this is a major concern, feel free to bring it to their attention from the get-go. This will also allow your planner to have a separate conversation on your behalf to make sure everything runs smoothly.



Photo by EXO Photography

planning out a wedding without realizing they are underfunded.

My sister had a problem with her videographer after the wedding, and she was really devastated that their original agreement wasn't ultimately honored. If I use a planner and a similar issue should arise, will they help me handle it, or am I on my own after the wedding has taken place? –Erika

José Rolón: Even though the agreement with your planner typically ends once you walk away happily ever after, hopefully the

How important is it that my planner has previously done a wedding at my venue? We're planning an out-of-state wedding, but I'd like to work with someone nearby us in the city. Is it a mistake that we hire a planner that is working with an unfamiliar venue from a distance? –Amy & Matt

Bianca Blag: A good planner can work in any venue, anywhere. The most important thing would be for the planner to do a site visit well in advance of the wedding so that they know the ins-and-outs of the territory throughout the process. They should also meet

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and have consistent contact with the venues' catering manager. A good planner can make any venue or situation work to the benefit of their client!

My fiancé and I work a lot and have very busy schedules. I have a vision for what I want our wedding to be like, but I just don't have the time to execute all of the details. I think having a professional wedding planner would be helpful, but I'm afraid that the affair will lose my creative touch if I delegate control to someone else. What would you recommend? –Shari

Danielle Bobish: Planning a wedding is a full-time job. It can be very stressful to carry a busy schedule and plan the wedding of your dreams. A professional planner should be able to get to know you and execute your vision.

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It's our job to bring it to life. If you interview a planner or designer and find that they want to have full creative control that serves their own vision instead of yours, then it's not the right fit. The goal should be to take what's in your head and make it a reality.

My venue has a recommended vendors list. Is using their recommended planner and vendors the best way to go? –Nicole

José Rolón: If there's a decent amount to choose from, I say yes! When you're assembling a team, it's always ideal to choose talented folks who already have a history of working well in the space you choose. That being said, these are recommended vendors, and not required. If you find a florist, photographer, or fire-juggling clown that you love who is not on the list- go for it!

One of the first decisions I made for my wedding was selecting a photographer. This was really easy for me because I loved my photographer's previous work. Now that I'm trying to organize more elements of our wedding, I'm beginning to feel overwhelmed, and I think hiring a planner would really help. How do I make the right choice in choosing a planner? What should I be looking for? –Julie

Bianca Blag: You need to choose a planner that you like, first and foremost. This should be someone you feel comfortable with, someone that is professional, has solid references, and a great portfolio. Beyond that, this person should be someone you feel comfortable discussing all aspects of your wedding day with, because they're there to be a support system to you. You will be spending a lot of time throughout the planning process with this person, and since a wedding is a monumental event in your life,

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you want to make sure it's done right, and that you have fun in the process. Choose someone that keeps you calm and has a nice demeanor. When you find the right planner for your needs

and personality, you'll likely know it.

I'd like my wedding to be unique and original- not a cookie cutter wedding that's been done a million times before. Would a planner help or hurt me achieve this? –Claire

Danielle Bobish: I think a planner is the best way to achieve this! I can't tell you how many brides come to me with the exact same images as every other bride, with the thought that they're being unique. Pinterest is a great tool to pull from for inspiration, just know that everyone else is pulling from it too. I have never done the same wedding twice, and I work in certain venues quite often. It's all about bringing the unique personalities of the bride and groom into their wedding so that it radiates you, but in an elegant way. **SW**



Photo by Ryan Brenizer