

## A Day in the Life of a London Wedding Planner



Working as a wedding planner is certainly different to the average career, especially in a busy metropolis like London. It is, for example, one of the few businesses where it's not necessarily a good thing if you're getting repeat business from the same customer.

This is actually the result of another interesting thing about being a wedding planner, because you can actually find yourself sometimes being quite emotionally invested in the event. Learning later that the marriage didn't work out can feel surprisingly disappointing, and the more sensitive types may even wonder if it was because they didn't do a good enough job of planning the wedding event (which is ridiculous, by the way).

But by far the best thing about being a wedding planner is that, although like other jobs you're essentially doing the same thing each day, every couple is unique, and so are their weddings.

There's nothing quite like the sense of accomplishment you will feel after planning your first successful wedding event. You're in the business of creating joy and cherished memories for people, which of course is wonderful. Plus there are endless entertainment opportunities, because people really do the most amazing things at weddings.

So if this sounds like something you'd like to be a part of, here's a glimpse at a typical day in the life of a London wedding planner.

### **Waking up before dawn is normal**

As a wedding planner, you'll probably be putting in quite a lot of long days. Fortunately there's not usually a wedding every day of the week, and you should make sure you give yourself time off, because while it's a rewarding job, it's also a demanding one.

If there's a wedding on today that you're a part of, it's very likely you'll need to make an early start because you have to do the organising for everyone else. For those days where there are no weddings, you may get to sleep in a little later. We'll stick to what happens on wedding days for the rest of the article, because that's the thing that makes your job different to any other consulting job.

### **Communications and scheduling**

The first order of business is to check all your messages and emails to make sure that none of your suppliers has suffered an overnight crisis. Cancellations and no-shows are very rare at this stage of the

proceedings, but are not exactly an impossibility. Should such a disaster occur, you'll need to act quickly to organise a replacement.

You'll also do one last check of the weather forecast, to make sure you can plan any required adjustments if it looks like the weather may take a turn for the worse. If everything's still on track, you're ready for the next step, which is getting yourself ready.

### **Preparing for the big day**

Well, it's not *your* big day, but for your clients it's a pretty important one. If they've gone to the trouble of hiring a wedding planner, then they're taking it seriously, and that means you need to be every bit the professional they're expecting.

And so you'll spend considerable time on your personal grooming, so you can present immaculately and appear to be the calm, safe harbour everyone can turn to while the stormy sea of an impending marriage is raging all around them. That analogy, by the way, is not an inapt one. It's not uncommon, even, for people to be so shaken up with nervousness that they vomit or pass out. Part of your role is to keep the excitement level at just the right pitch, soothing away jitters and anxiety.

### **Arriving at the venue**

People get married in all kinds of places. One of the great things about doing this work in London is that you'll get to experience the full range of venues and themes. Most of the time you'll be the first to arrive at the venue, and this is as it should be. From here, you'll monitor the ingress of all your suppliers and supervise them as they set up their section or make their deliveries.

### **Welcoming and directing the guests**

With everything in place, you're ready to receive guests. Ideally all of the preparations should have been prepared well in advance of the arrival of the first guests, so always be certain that you've allowed plenty of time (this is one of the reasons why you need to get up so early on a wedding day).

As the number of people on the scene increases, you'll be trying to keep a good situational awareness of where everybody is and where they're supposed to be. When people are given too much opportunity to stray around freely, it can introduce delays in the proceedings, and this could reflect negatively on you if it is not managed.

### **Attending to the bride and groom**

Fortunately your duties with regard to the stars of the show are mainly going to be handled by bridesmaids and groomsmen, so this should be a breeze, depending on the individual personalities of those involved. You'll still need to pop in to give some advice, a kind word, a dash of confidence. Above all, you'll probably find that the number one positive contribution you can make at this stage is preventing well-meaning (or perhaps malicious) friends from fortifying the bride and groom with too much alcohol. How much is too much? Probably any at all, if funny home video shows can be considered a reliable source.

### **The main event**

Even seasoned veteran wedding planners will confess to sometimes being swept away by the moment. If you're a romantic at heart, the ceremony itself will often prove to be the emotional highlight of the day. And because anything can happen, there's a nice edge of tension to keep you suitably invested in what's happening. But even before the post-nuptial kiss has ended, you'll need to be back in command mode.

The vehicles must be ready and waiting to whisk everyone away to the reception venue, and you'll also need to be checking in and making sure everything is ready for the guests to be received there. If everything at the reception is being handled by a third party, you will have a relatively easy time from here on, but you'll still need to attend and make sure the service is up to par.

If the bride and groom were more ambitious and elaborate, however, you may still have serious work ahead, scheduling the various entertainments and special effects (or whatever) that have been dreamed up in the planning process, and ensuring that everything goes perfectly.

### **The send-off**

Well, finally the reception has drawn to a close. The bride and groom, tired but ecstatic, thread their way through the throngs of well-wishers to their appointed chariot. Everyone is happy, a few people have fallen down, the search is still on for Simon's missing artificial leg, and Aunt Peggy has finally been persuaded to put her blouse back on. You can congratulate yourself on the completion of another successful mission.

Leaving the clean-up to the individual suppliers, you make your way home. It's been a glorious day, and now all you have to do is attend to your emails and messages, relax and unwind. You'll need to, because it's quite possible that the next day you'll be repeating all this again, just in completely different circumstances and with a brand new cast and crew. But you wouldn't have it any other way, because it's all part of a day in the life of a London wedding planner.