

# Hiring a Wedding Coordinator

SIMPLIFYING THE PLANNING PROCESS

by Lucy Burningham

**Y**ou remember Franc in *The Father of the Bride*, the wedding coordinator with good taste and an odd accent. Have you ever considered hiring your own personal Franc to help with your wedding? Lillie Garrito of Soiree Productions in Park City, spoke with us about hiring a wedding coordinator.

**What are the duties of a wedding coordinator?**

LG: The duties of a wedding coordinator can include budgeting, referring vendors, negotiating contracts, creating themes, decorations, and a menu, as well as assisting with the wedding rehearsal and most importantly, the wedding day itself.

**Why should couples consider hiring a coordinator?**

LG: Most couples are busy with their careers and personal lives so there is little time to deal with planning. A lot of people think that wedding coordinators are only for larger, high-end weddings, but they can actually save the couple money

on the smallest of weddings. Most coordinators have preferred vendors who provide discounts.

**Who delegates the planning duties?**

LG: The wedding coordinator is working for the couple. Many couples just want to show up at their wedding and have a great time with their family and friends. Others choose to plan it all and use the coordinator as a reference.

**Does the coordinator choose styles and themes or just arrange details?**

LG: Personally, one of my favorite aspects of working with a bride is helping her choose the style of the event. I enjoy helping the bridal party choose their colors, dresses, and tuxedos. However, I have found it very important to only give an opinion when asked.

**What is an average price range for a coordinator's services?**

LG: Most coordinators provide a consultation at no charge while services range from \$250 for a vendor list to \$1,000 to

\$5,000 for service packages. Some coordinators offer assistance with the rehearsal and wedding day coordination for \$500, but packages can be customized depending on needs and budgets.

**What questions should a couple ask a consultant?**

LG: What is your professional background (years of experience, specialties, primary vendors)? Describe your role in the wedding (look for too many "I's"). How will you incorporate moms into the planning? How often can we meet or talk about the progress? Who will handle on-site coordination? What *exactly* do your fees cover?

**Can a wedding coordinator help plan entertainment for out-of-town guests?**

LG: Absolutely! For weddings with an out-of-town guest list of any size, I recommend offering options for lodging, air and ground transportation, and entertainment before and after the wedding. Get the coordinator involved early.