

WEDDINGS

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A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WEDDING PLANNER

Every wedding is different and subject to highly individual tastes, demands and budgets. There are no typical days when it comes to managing weddings. However, there are some core event management tasks which you'd expect to be responsible for across all the preparation days as well as the wedding day itself:

- Budget, negotiation and contract management
- Venue management
- Sourcing and supply
- Schedule and time-management

A wedding planner role is essentially about people, being a great communicator is an essential skill. Every day will involve you communicating with a whole range of stakeholders, to ensure that arrangements are made and carried out without misunderstandings or delays.

You will also be required to have a creative flair in order offer innovative and unique ideas, as every couple will want to feel their day is special.

Every day will also involve you using your eye for detail and a pro-active mind when it comes to spotting and dealing with problems, which will need to be solved with no disruption to the wedding couple.

Wedding planning involves high level negotiation skills, budget and contract management. Our accredited event qualification can help build these skills so you are ready for any career proposal.

Sometimes wedding planning roles (particularly in-venue or industry-related roles, such as wedding dress design and retail) involve significant skills in marketing. For instance, as an in-venue wedding planner you're marketing the venue and services available; as an industry wedding planner, you could be involved in planning and marketing wedding events, fashion shows and exhibition events.

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GETTING INTO WEDDING PLANNING

Many people get into wedding planning after the successful enjoyment of planning their own or weddings for family members and friends. This kind of 'informal' (but still high-pressure) experience is a great way to start, but it can be limited: one wedding, one couple, one budget.

Wedding planning is a growing sector: same-sex; low-budget; alternative-venues; cultural weddings; eco-friendly; themed; outdoor; top-end; celebrity; exotic destinations; extreme weddings – there's a whole party of wedding types with varying budgets out there!

Contact local wedding planners and offer your services as a volunteer. This will help you to get used to planning for, and working with, paying clients.

Gaining formal work experience in the sector is crucial to achieving a salaried role, or the testimonials you will need to attract clients.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Due to an increase in venues that are now licensed to hold weddings, the opportunities for becoming an in-house wedding planner have really grown.

Think stately homes and gardens, museums, outdoor and indoor venues, castles, lighthouses, theatres, civic centres, hotels – even iconic venues such as London's Gherkin.

THE QUESTION IS HOW TO GET STARTED?

Before we deep dive into the details it is worth understanding the different (typical) stages of a career in events to know at which stage you might be entering.

The first step is just realising this is something that you want to do. It could be that you've organised a private party/wedding/charity event and just loved it. Maybe you have worked in an associated part of the industry like hospitality, music, project management or design and felt your skills would transfer nicely into events.

Now you need to bridge the gap. You need to get some experience. Get some volunteering under your belt. Build your confidence, knowledge and CV (we will be coming back to this one) You may also be able to get yourself an internship or a placement in an events agency/role/organisation.

The first real rung on the event businesses ladder is a junior executive role. Here you learn the basics and get involved with everything from laminating signage to designing core elements of 'the show', to budgeting, buying props and costumes, to working on site and to junior client/supplier management.

From this level the roles vary. You could graduate to an event manager, project manager up to a project director, account director, event director and finally producer.

Obviously, these roles can be accessed in any order. Within different projects and in different companies you may be involved in some and possibly all these roles. There are also many specialised event roles... for example the 'showcaller' - directing sound, lighting, film and action cues from an event 'bible' or script through the course of the experience. These special event roles take some years of experience and skill so you are unlikely to be involved with these at the outset, although every event needs someone 'calling the show' (even if it's only a private wedding).

GOING IT ALONE. SETTING UP YOUR OWN BUSINESS.

The other route you can take is to set up your own business. This is obviously a risky venture and not recommended unless you have had either some appropriate training (degree or postgraduate level course) or at least two/three years' experience.

Setting up and running a business is a totally different skill to being an event manager, but if you are still determined to take this route then ensure you are ready to meet all the demands not only of being an event manager but also marketing yourself and managing your business.

The route we recommend would be:

GENERATING EXPERIENCE, CONTACTS AND EVENTUALLY A JOB THROUGH WORK EXPERIENCE VOLUNTEERING AT EVENTS.

Both networking and volunteering are key to your success as an event manager. Event Academy offers a broad range of volunteering opportunities to our students and alumni to enable them to clock up the hours in the events world at a broad perspective on the different type of events.

This allows you to qualify in or out what each role or industry is really like while facilitating a broad range of experiences in diverse roles. Work experience through volunteering can also be a lot of fun. For example, we place students into The Brits every year enabling them to see a big global event going live as well as rubbing shoulders literally with celebs, rock stars and the music business royalty!

Networking is similar, in that you need to get yourself out there and generate the levels of motivation to do that. There are many on and offline experiences, meet-ups, events and hot dates in the calendar that can provide you with the opportunities to advance your career in events plus we run our networking events with major players attending like Lego, Secret Cinema, Bridelux and The Department.

NETWORKING

It's crucial that whatever stage of your career you are at, you get out there and get networking. Follow the key players in the industry online or on social media via hashtags like eventprofs. Go to networking evenings, meet-ups, event conferences, big shows like confex...keep in touch with your course mates, your lecturers and see what they are up to. Try to be creative in how you approach people who may have some influence and then make sure you are polite but to the point...just be you in any live or online networking. Follow, be inspired, then dive in and get involved. You've got to get in to get on.

So the opportunities for a career in events are many and various. The options are almost limitless. Just focus yourself on your skills, your passion, your experiences...then have a look at the following list and/or give one of the team here a call to see if we can help you with your career!

TOP 8 TIPS FOR CREATING A CAREER IN EVENTS...



Volunteer/do anything/start anywhere



Follow/network/use social media to build a network



Get a recognised accredited qualification

(the best you can afford ideally)

Don't start your own business until you are ready

(contacts, clients, funding, and experience)



(blog/vlog)

Capture and publish your experiences



Build a creative CV and target your search



Network, network, network



Do your own event, however small. You will learn the most from your mistakes.

CHAT TO US

Feeling inspired?
Why not live chat with our team now!