

Helpful tips for planning a successful event.

1) Determine the maximum amount of time the event will last.

Restaurant banquet halls usually have a curfew.

Backyard parties are usually OK until 10 to 10:30 PM (Unless you invite the neighbors to the party)

Some event halls have curfews, and other halls just give you the keys and you're on your own.

The event should end no less than 30 minutes before the time you must vacate the premises.

2) Plan early. Don't wait until the last minute.

Start shopping around early for the services you intend to contract for your event as soon as you can.

Entertainers, Caterers, Bartenders, Photographers, Videographers and Event halls

get booked sometimes a year or two in advance. They may not be available if you wait too long to book them.

The more lead time to plan, think, call, delegate and organize, the better off you will be on the day of the event.

3) Write down a timeline for your event. This is the draft itinerary.

[Click Here for a sample itinerary \(Adobe PDF\).](#)

a. Give ample time for travel if the wedding is at one place and the reception is at another place.

Remember the photography after the ceremony takes time. Your guests are going to the reception hall while you have your pictures taken.

Make sure the entertainment / bartenders are at the reception hall to greet the guests.

b. Keep in mind that your caterer/food server needs to have dinner served near the time you scheduled to serve dinner. Dinner being a little late is better than trying

to serve earlier than scheduled. Food caterers/ servers should have a copy of the itinerary as do photographers & videographers.

If an item is not on the itinerary, it probably will be forgotten.

4) The more "moving parts" in your event, the more risk of something breaking.

a. Plan for things you can do without devoting an extraordinary amount of resources, time and people to actually do these tasks. Don't plan for something that is difficult to achieve.

b. A ceremony with many participants is fine as long as those people know what they are supposed to do and actually come to the ceremony. Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse!

c. If you contract to bring in 4 belly dancers at 6PM, and the belly dancing time is delayed to 7:30PM, you are bound to pay an extra fee to the belly dancing troupe.

5) "Open floor" dance time.

Open floor dance time is a time when the overhead lights go out, the dance lights go on, and people get some exercise. Some people take their dancing time seriously.

If we dance for 40 minutes and the overhead lights go back on, it is harder to get dancing rolling again. My recommendation is to plan the open floor dancing as the last major item on the itinerary so no matter how off-schedule we get, dancing is always the refreshing finish and may not last as long as planned, but will not be broken up.

I also recommend two dance playlists.

The first playlist includes 1 hour of music that young and old will dance to.

Most older people are not interested in dancing to newer Hip Hop/Rap, Alt Rock, Goth Rock.

They will dance to 50's & 60's Rock, 60's Motown R&B, Standards, and even some big band music.

These are people that bring gifts!. I can tell you they really do appreciate it when we play music that brings up memories of their youth and gives them a chance to dance to that music if only for a little while.

And once they tire, they leave happy. And now we can start dance playlist #2..the wilder stuff...