



# The wedding planner



Organising the most important day of your life can be a daunting prospect – and that's where Jacquie Warner, every bride's best friend, comes in. Jacquie, who lives near Newmarket, tells the Journal about her own events planning service: called Significance, it caters for birthdays, anniversaries and, of course, weddings...

Weddings really are magical events. I know it sounds a bit trite, but isn't it all about two people being in love? Out of all the weddings I've attended, the most memorable moment of all was seeing a bride and groom sitting quietly on a bench, just the two of them. It was at their reception, in between the meal and the speeches, and they'd managed to steal a quiet moment; they were so obviously in love – and obviously best friends. It was lovely to see.

My background is in PR, marketing and communications. Having organised numerous events for my clients, I started working as an on-the-day manager at a beautiful wedding venue. Almost as soon as I started, I saw a niche in the market for a wedding planning service: there are so many elements involved, it's easy for a bride to feel overwhelmed. What I offer is a helping hand.

Every couple is different and, as a result, every wedding is different too. I tailor my service to each bride's needs – it's usually the bride who organises the day, though I have come across one groom who was responsible for the whole thing, right down to the flowers. He was definitely a 'new man' and I'm all for that!

I can help with every element of the wedding: invitations, venue, caterer, florist,

photographer, videographer... I can organise one thing – or everything. But it's not about me taking over. A lot of brides have been dreaming about their wedding day since they were little; it's my job to listen to all their ideas and help make them a reality.

There's so much to think about when planning a wedding – and so much admin to do – that it's easy for brides to feel daunted. I knew one bride who started planning her big day two years in advance: she carried a ring binder of wedding stuff wherever she went and it was all she could talk about. A wedding planner is there to take off some of that pressure.

Weddings come in all shapes and sizes. From the outset, you have to decide what kind of event you want. Is it going to be a large family affair, catering for everyone from little children to grown-ups and your 90-year-old granny? Or is it going to be a smaller, more intimate wedding, with mostly friends on the guest list? Will it be

formal or informal? Classic or themed?

I've been to all kinds of weddings. Recently I attended one with an Indian theme, complete with traditional dancing between courses. Another couple chose to play their vows on a big screen in the garden, so people who weren't attending the actual ceremony could watch. Budgets vary as much as the style: they go from £300 to £30,000, right up to £300,000.

I'm a Londoner by birth, but I've lived in the countryside for a long time. I live in a village in an 1860s cottage which apparently used to be a granary; I love it. When I'm not at work I ride horses, play tennis, ride my bike and, now I'm training for the Cancer Research Race for Life, I can often be found pounding the county's roads!

Having lived and worked overseas in the past – I did horse racing PR in the States – I am also very much of the opinion that good friends and family are very important in life.

And when you're working closely with brides you do get to know them quite well; you become friends, to be honest. There's something lovely about being able to share in their big day.

■ Because Jacquie tailors her services to each client's needs, prices vary – guide prices are available on application.



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