

專業行業專訪：「認可婚禮統籌師 CWP」

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The wedding planner

WEDDING planning as a paid 'profession' has become a dream job for many people. To them, helping couples organise their nuptials is a sacred task, one with an added bonus... the happiness they gain by helping others, writes Sara Chan.

WHENEVER a couple decide to get married nowadays, usually there are wedding planners lurking in the wings. At one time the planners would be friends or relatives of the bride and groom - those with a natural gift for organising a successful event when asked... and without pay.

Nowadays couples, and especially their families, realise the benefits of hiring a paid professional - the wedding planner. *interviewed two experienced wedding planners, Wayman Kwok and Kelly Lee, graduates of the Wedding Management Academy (HK):*

ES: Can you describe your job as a wedding planner?

Wayman: The term 'wedding planner' is just a name. Actually we can play many roles in a wedding. For example, we are the designers who decorate the wedding hall and create the theme for our clients. We are also financial planners who advise the client on how to draw up the best budget. We can also act as the master of ceremonies, who controls the flow of an event. And we can also provide the photographers as well as the videos and still pictures of the event.

Sometimes we act like a middleman who speaks on behalf of our clients to their parents. As some of them are quite conservative, they don't really accept the



Wayman, also the photographer taking the best shots for the couples.



(Left to right): Wayman, Kelly, Angel (Programme Director of the Wedding Management Academy), and the writer, Sara.

idea of an elaborate celebration. Our role is to explain to them and balance the interests of all sides.

ES: How long does the whole process of a marriage take?

Wayman: Normally it takes about 18 months to organise a wedding. Our job begins at betrothal. We even help our clients to propose. Then we will provide the whole range of service such as booking a restaurant or making the wedding gown. There are too many people waiting to get married, but few auspicious days.

ES: What qualities should a wedding planner possess?

Kelly: Be organised and pay attention to detail. A wedding planner is like a nanny to the clients. For every single thing, we have to plan ahead



He is also a nanny taking care of the couples' needs.

and keep an eye on their needs.

Wayman: Also, be creative. People's ideas of a wedding are changing fast. Some of our clients require an avant-garde ceremony.

ES: What is the most special wedding that you have ever seen or organised?

Kelly: The one we organised in just two months' time. We worked overnight almost every day during the period. After the ceremony, the couple thanked us profusely for our efforts. It was the greatest job satisfaction we had found.

ES: How much does a wedding cost?

Wayman: It depends on each client's choice. It can take a huge amount of money for a luxurious ceremony. From the cases I have seen, \$200,000 is the average amount. If you hire a wedding planner, I am sure that you will gain more than you expected. Wedding planners usually have a large network of vendors that can offer discounts. A wedding planner will provide sound advice on this and other subjects.

ES: How many weddings do you organise in a month?

Wayman: About four or five weddings a week in peak seasons and one or two each week during off-peak times.

Chinese auspicious wedding dates

Most Chinese would prefer to wed on auspicious days as they believe that it will bring them luck.

Auspicious days are set by fortune tellers who provide an analysis based on Chinese culture and history. The dates are marked in the Chinese calendar.

In Chinese culture, the seventh lunar month is considered inauspicious as it falls during Ghost Festival time. Some Chinese believe ghosts wander the earth during that month and so they should not be invited to anyone's wedding.



A foreign bridegroom follows the Chinese culture and weds on an auspicious date.

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