

12 WAYS to AVOID DISASTER when HIRING ENTERTAINMENT for your WEDDING and other events.

by Bill Strain

- 1. MEET with the actual person that will be performing at your function for a prescreening BEFORE you make any commitments and give them a deposit.**
- 2. COLLECT as much INFORMATION as you can prior to meetings. More reputable performers will have print literature as well as their websites. When you are MAILED information from a vendor it shows they are more likely to care about obtaining you as a client.**
- 3. Make sure the DJ or band director UNDERSTANDS your musical tastes and you feel comfortable they can deliver. Don't let them tell you how great they are. Make them prove it.**
- 4. BUDGET your entertainment dollar appropriately. 80% of the success of your once in a lifetime event will be because of this. 71% of brides wish this was their #1 priority after their wedding reception was over. When hiring humans, you almost always get what you pay for. Expect more from someone at the upper end of your budget. Most will want you as a satisfied client and hope for referrals because you are happy. The best even give money back guarantees.**
- 5. Make sure you really LIKE the person who will be in charge of the music at your reception. Many entertainers have big egos, promise you everything and aren't really capable of doing what you expect. Meet those who are of interest and make sure your personalities fit.**
- 6. Avoid anyone who tells you that something MUST be done a certain way. Your party may have similar aspects to others, however, what works for someone, may be very inappropriate for you and your guests. The most experienced entertainers will do best with a variety of tastes and age groups.**
- 7. Make sure there will be NO SURPRISES. DJ's are famous for this. The last thing you might want is your MC all of a sudden flapping his arms and running around with a chicken head on! Your event will have a timeline and you need to know (and be involved in the planning) of ALL formalities.**
- 8. Don't think of your entertainment as an after thought. It's a fact, the two things your GUESTS will remember are the ENTERTAINMENT and the FOOD. Although an important part of your overall experience, your dress, cake, table linens, centerpieces, favors, photographer, videographer, limo driver, justice of the peace, etc. will all be forgotten except by you.**
- 9. Make sure your entertainer is relaxed and confident. Avoid someone who is uptight, high strung, and anxious. It is important that their personality fit the image you want to project on your day.**
- 10. Listen to potential entertainers suggestions and make sure they are receptive to yours. There are NO RULES. When it comes to your wedding there are many choices in entertainment. Many good, and ten times as many that will leave you unsatisfied. Unfortunately, after your wedding, it is too late.**
- 11. SHOP the market. Find out exactly what you're getting for your money. When hiring anyone don't compare "hourly" performance rates. Professional wedding entertainers should also be valuable ENTERTAINMENT CONSULTANTS. To make an accurate comparison take into consideration everything you are really paying for. There are many more hours that must be invested that go into all of the planning and details. Many DJs are just jukeboxes. In most cases, this is not what you want.**
- 12. Understand that if you think you've found a "bargain", it might not be the BEST DEAL if you can't get in touch with them, they don't return your calls, and worst of all, they call you the week before and cancel! It happens all the time! Most people rarely need to hire entertainment, but when they do, it's a much more important decision than they think. Do your homework and you won't be disappointed.**

About the author...Bill Strain is a full-time professional DJ/VJ/KJ/MC that has been providing romantic wedding receptions throughout New England for over 20 years. He can be reached at 603-644-7660 or e-mail by visiting www.TheMusicMasters.com.