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Book Review — Published Version

## The Practical Guide to Wedding Planning

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## BOOK REVIEW

# The Practical Guide to Wedding Planning

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**JEL Classification:** L83, F52, H12

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## 1 BOOK REVIEW

This book could be assimilated to a ‘one-stop-shop’ that conveys to scholars, students, and practitioners alike, all the information they require to plan and deliver a successful wedding. At the moment, there is no guide on the market, doing so, and yet weddings as a family event is celebrated across the world, and in all communities (Dawson & Bassett, 2018; Duncan, 2016; Getz, 2012). Additionally, in almost all communities there is the expectation that individual should get married at one stage or another of their life (Ahuvia & Adelman, 1992).

The book is articulated around twelve chapters, but not clustered into sections. As a result, this review is not only providing a critical analysis and discussion of the book, but also suggesting a thoughtful articulation around two sections: The wedding industry and its stakeholders (section 1), which would include: chapter 1 (Weddings and the event industry), chapter 2 (The wedding planner), chapter 4 (Your clients), chapter 7 (The venue), chapter 10 (Food and drink) and chapter 11 (The wedding team). The second section (section 2), which is the operation side of weddings, would include chapter 3 (Where to start?), chapter 5 (The wedding budget), chapter 6 (The vision), chapter 8 (The ceremony), chapter 9 (The stationery), and finally, chapter 12 (The wedding day). The first section of the book proposes a very detailed and specific overview of the genesis of weddings (as a family and social construct), followed with an overview of how weddings are celebrated in different country, alongside the growth and weight of the industry (chapter 1). This section of the book also focuses on one of the key stakeholders of wedding planning, namely the wedding planner and her/his team (chapter 2 and 11). An emphasis is placed on how its importance and relevance varies from one culture to another, while also offering caveats in terms of how to become a wedding planner, and skills and qualities to get to that point

(chapter 2). Because chapter 2 and 11 are discussing the same topic, and because chapter 11, is rather brief, both chapters could have been merged into one. The other key stakeholder this guide to wedding focuses on, are the clients. Reading this section, it becomes apparent that being a wedding planner is quite a challenging job as it involves liaising with a wide range of stakeholders involved in the wedding industry ecosystem. The main challenge being to manage the expectations of the bride/groom and their family (chapter 4). The venue which is a central element in the success of any event (Nolan, 2018), as contributing to the experience, ambiance, memories, etc (Powell, Dosquet & Séraphin, 2015), is given a central place in this book, while also shedding light on one of the key industry actors within the wedding industry ecosystem. The author provides readers with all the steps to follow until their dream venue is booked (chapter 7). When talking about weddings and venues, catering (food and drink) is the next topic on the list. Chapter 10 is covered rather briefly. As a result, this chapter and chapter 2 could have been covered together. Additionally, the quality of the chapter could have been enhanced by adopting the same approach adopted with chapter 1, i.e., by providing a genesis of the type of food served at weddings in different communities.

The second section of the book as mentioned earlier is the bespoke, operational section. Indeed, in this section, the author is suggesting ways for anyone planning to become a professional wedding planner, to proceed (chapter 3). As for section 5, it discusses an important aspect of wedding, which is the budget. This parameter is determining the framework of the wedding planner. However, in this section, the author mainly discussed working with smaller budgets, and short notice wedding. What about wedding with unlimited budget, and with long notice? As for chapter 6, despite its relevance and importance, it is mainly providing complementary information, as opposed to adding something new to the



discussion, subsequently, it could have been covered alongside chapter 5. Indeed, despite the fact the budget determines the framework of the wedding planner, it is very important for the planner to have a vision of what the final version of wedding should be, bearing in mind the budget. Chapter 8, 9, 12 are very informative. The information provided in these chapters are also very useful for couples, particularly the section on the type of wedding ceremony, and the type of wedding stationery they can choose from, and equally important when invitations should be sent. Chapter 12, which is the conclusion chapter should ease the nerves of any nervous couples, as this chapter clearly shows that the wedding planner is looking after them until the very end. These three chapter (8,9, and 12) are relevant to both wedding planner and the couples getting married.

All in all, the content of the book, the writing style, the illustrations (pictures), the activities, the resources provided in the appendix section, and the stories shared by the authors make this book highly appropriate for practitioners, couples, academics, and students alike. In short, The Practical Guide to Wedding Planning represents an important source for readers seeking to deepen their understanding of the role, importance, and relevance of wedding planners. Having said that, with an academic aspect (even if limited), this guide would have been even more appealing to academics/researchers and students.

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