

## Relationship Building

# Preparing for Your Career

By now you've realized that an event planner has to manage a huge number of details at once and **keep all the balls in the air**, appear calm under fire, and be the ultimate host or hostess. This takes some special skills, including attention to detail, follow-through, and good organizational traits. It also helps if you can handle the unexpected and change directions quickly, and have a knack for dealing with people.

In this chapter we will outline the skills you need to succeed in your new Job, and give you some terrific resources to help you acquire and hone these skills.

## Skills

What does it take to be a **success** in this field? Let's take a closer look at some of the traits and skills you'll need.

## Interpersonal Skills

Events are about people, whether they're guests, attendees, clients, or vendors. Here are some key interpersonal skills and why they can be so helpful to your career:



## Relationship Building

Building **good relationships** is important to the success of any event. Ideally, everyone involved with the event, from the ticket takers to the florist to the VIPs, will walk away feeling great about the experience. To do this, you will have to ensure that everyone gets what they need out of the experience, and talking to them is the only sure-fire way to learn this. Be **friendly**, be **sincere**, engage in small talk and learn more about the person you're dealing with.

These behaviors can help not only during an event – they can help you get hired. If you are like most of us, one of the reasons you continue to do business with certain people

is because you **like** them.

When it comes to hiring an event planner, employers and clients usually have a number of event planners to choose from. Given a choice between two capable people, the job will often go to the person who is well liked. In fact, when people like you, their feelings toward you can extend to their perception of your work (this is called "**the halo effect**").

So they may actually see your work in a more positive light because they like you.

In addition to developing relationships with clients, event planners also need to develop relationships with **vendors**. Having a good relationship with vendors can help you get what you want when you need something in a rush or when you need something that's difficult to track down. A supplier who likes you will be more likely to go the extra mile for you, which in turn will help you look good to your client.

Traits that can help you build good relationships are a positive attitude and enthusiasm. Nothing builds excitement about an event faster than a planner who is passionate about the affair. If you project a positive, **enthusiastic** attitude, others will naturally be drawn to you and want to be involved.

Be upfront and honest about challenges and obstacles when appropriate, but **never complain** about how much work you have to do or how hard a particular task is to complete. Remain upbeat and high-charged, and you'll generate a real buzz about your event. And perhaps most importantly – do whatever it takes to keep your word.

An excellent resource to build stronger relationships is the classic book:

***How to Win Friends and Influence People, by Dale Carnegie***

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0671723650>

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