

Tips for Working with Contractors

You are ultimately responsible for how well contractors do their jobs, so you will need to find people you can depend on to **do the job right**, by the agreed-upon **deadline**, for the agreed upon **price**.

To help you choose contractors, make appointments to **meet** either by phone or in person. Ask what services they provide, their rates, and their **availability**. For example, if you will need carpenters, it is wise to find out if they are available on short notice, if they can only fit you in on weekends, and what will happen to your project if another project they are working on ends up taking more time than they expected. You need to know that you can depend on the contractor, and that they will be willing to work overtime if necessary to keep their agreements with you. (Unfortunately, some busy contractors consider deadlines to be “suggestions” rather than requirements.)

As the event planner it will be your job to supervise them and ensure they get the job done. Remember your name (not the contractor’s) is on the line if you bring in a contractor to do any work and they don’t come through in a timely or professional manner or within cost. So look for someone reliable, and have at least one back-up for each job.

Wherever possible, get agreements (e.g. for costs, delivery dates, services to be provided) **in writing**. Also check if the contractor holds **liability insurance**, which covers both them and you if the client’s property is damaged, or if the work is not satisfactory for some reason.

Before working with a contractor, check their references. It is also advisable to contact the Better Business Bureau to find out if any complaints have been lodged against them or their company.

To locate a BBB anywhere in the U.S. or Canada visit their website:

Better Business Bureau <http://lookup.bbb.org>

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