

Getting Paid



Whatever type or combination of fees you decide is best for your company to offer, make sure you and your client agree to it in writing. A sample contract appears in the next section, but you will need to revise it according to the specifics of your arrangement with your client.

Deposit

It is normal for event planners to be paid a deposit (also known as a **retainer**) to begin the work. At the end of your initial consultation, or once the client decides to hire you, you can ask for a non-refundable deposit, such as **50% of your fee**, with the balance payable on the event day. (The client will bring a check to the event.)

Paying Vendors

Many vendors will expect to be paid at the time they supply the product or service. Vendors that supply services at the time of the event (such as music or catering) can be paid at the event. However, in some cases, these vendors will expect a **deposit** (e.g. 50%) to book the date. Other vendors may have to be paid **in full before** the event. For example, if you buy party favors from a retail store, they will likely expect you to pay when you make the purchase.

Some event planners pay all costs upfront out of the deposit (or on their credit cards), then invoice the client. To avoid risking your own funds, you have a couple of options. One option, if you are purchasing for a major corporation that has good credit, is to have the vendor supply the product and **invoice the client directly**. (Make sure you arrange this in advance with the client, so the invoice will be paid.) Another option is to get a check from your client so you can pay the vendor when you pick up the products or book the services.

Invoicing

The client may ask you to bring an invoice to the event (to exchange for your check). Or you may need to invoice the client after the event for any incidental expenses that you were billed for after the event. (However, many event planners do **not** charge for normal business expenses such as long distance telephone, office supplies, or photocopies. Those costs are built into their fee.)

Corporate clients are usually invoiced at the **end of each project**, or they can be invoiced **monthly** if a project is ongoing. (For example, if you are planning a series of events.) A challenge with invoicing on a monthly basis is that corporations normally expect at least 30 days to pay, and some wait 60 or 90 days before putting a check in the mail.

Your invoice should be on your letterhead and include the following (see the next page for a sample).

- The client name and contact information
- The date of the invoice
- A purchase order number (if the client gave you one)
- Services you provided
- Any taxes payable
- Any expenses you have paid (also known as **disbursements**)



- The total amount due
- Terms of payment (e.g. "Payable upon receipt" or "Payable within 30 days")

Sample Invoice

(On Your Letterhead)

INVOICE

DATE: November 3, 2006

TO: Carla Client
Public Relations Department
XYZ Corporation

123 Main Street
Sunnyday, CA 90211

RE: Event Planning Services for November 3 Open House

Project Fee (as per contract of Sept. 7, 2006)	\$2,000.00
Tax on Project Fee (<i>insert your own tax rate</i>)	200.00
Expenses (receipts enclosed)	195.23
Supplies for information kits	\$146.44
Gift for Mayor	\$48.79
TOTAL	2,395.23
Less: Deposit	(1,000.00)
Total – Please pay this amount	\$1,395.23

Terms:

Payable upon receipt.

Thank you for your business.



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