

Vendor Contracts

Once you've selected your vendor, get it in writing! For some suppliers, a signed quote or spec sheet for the products you've chosen will suffice. In other cases, you could have a simple letter of understanding. (See the sample on the next page.) For most vendors, however, a contract is critical. This is your insurance policy that the vendor will provide what you've agreed to.

Most suppliers are familiar with and are comfortable working with contracts, and will probably be able to **provide this document for you**. Review it carefully before signing, and make sure all key points are covered. Some of the critical information that must be spelled out includes:

- Exactly what the vendor will (and will not) **provide**, e.g. if the vendor is a caterer and the venue is a community hall you need to know if the caterer will provide wait staff, linens, dishes, glasses, and set up/clean up staff.
- Exact **times** for set up, delivery, performance, etc.
- Any **technical requirements** or set up that you must provide.
- Detailed **payment schedule**, including deposits and when payment is due in full.
- Cancellation policy, including any fees payable if the event is cancelled.

TIP: Some vendors will give you a “corporate rate” or subtract 10% from the price simply because you ask for a discount.

Remember, contracts are **negotiable**. If there is anything in the contract that you don't like, or anything you don't fully understand, discuss it before signing. Once that document is signed, you will have little recourse if something goes awry.

TIP: As mentioned regarding venues, make sure the contract is between the vendor and your client, not between the vendor and you. If you enter into a contract with a vendor, you will be held personally liable for payment if the event is cancelled or postponed.

Sample Initial Vendor Letter

ABC Bakery
123 Anywhere Road
Small Town, USA

Re: Jack Smith 50th Birthday Party – June 30, 2006

Dear Billy Baker,

I am writing you today to confirm the arrangements for the Smith birthday party, which is to take place June 30, 2006. As Event Planner for this party, I will be responsible for coordination of your services and will now be the contact person on any matters relating to the birthday cake. My understanding of the arrangements is as follows:

- Birthday cake will be delivered to: The
Central Park Hotel

1131 Central Park Avenue

Aspen Room (room layout attached)
- Cake to be delivered and set up by 3:30 p.m.
- Set up and decoration of cake table to be discussed

My client (Jill Smith) is responsible for payment to you for all services rendered including deposits and for any penalties or charges for cancellation of your service.

I will be sending a follow up letter to you two weeks before the party to ensure everything is in place and on schedule. Please feel free to contact me when/if the need arises. My contact information is as follows: Eva Eventplanner

ACME Event Management
555 Anywhere Street
Big City, USA
Telephone: (888) 555-1212

Cellular: (888) 555-1234
Email: eva@evasevents.com

I look forward to working
with your company
again and I know Mr.
Smith will be delighted
with

his cake.

Sincerely,

Eva Eventplanner

ACME Event
Management



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