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Entertaining with Style

Party planning tips by Dana Coates, Event Producer

Be Organized Article 1

So you say you want to host a party! Whether you are working with a professional party planner or you decide to go it alone, organization is key to a successful outcome. Remember Party Planner is just what the title implies, you must have a plan. If organization is not your strong suit, enlist a friend to help or hire a professional

Binder Rule...

On day one of your planning stage, purchase a binder. You may now begin the first phase of organization.....write everything down!

Dear Diary...

Maintain a journal of conversations and a calendar documentation of promised dates. Accumulate décor ideas, menu plans and make notes on any thoughts that pop up. On the front page of your journal record names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of everyone with whom you are working. Try and obtain cell phone numbers in case of event day emergencies. Keep this party related info with you at all times. Depending on the significance of this event, this notebook will become your lifeline to a successful event.

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Check and Double Check...

As your party date grows closer, create a time line (critical path) leading up to the big day. Make check lists and task schedules. Faithfully follow up on progress and make sure things are on track. Plan and coordinate every detail, thoroughly and completely, but expect that some of your plans may not cultivate as planned—accept this. If you do your best to plan, mishaps will be minimal.

D-Day...

One of the most overlooked details of party planning is the “event day” schedule. If you coordinate a time line for load-in items (tables, chairs, linens, floral, décor, etc.) it will prevent everyone from tripping over one another. Don’t just have friends or volunteers show up and have no specific jobs for them. It will prove to be a hindrance rather than a help.

Follow the Leader...

Assign a “point” person for these people to report to and have specific jobs lined up. If they will be setting tables, make a prototype table for them to mimic. If they will be decorating, show them exactly what you want them to do. This will make set up day flow smoothly and conserve precious time.

Kindness Counts...

If you have volunteers or friends helping, allow them to have ample time to go home, relax and get themselves ready for the big bash.

Applause! Applause!...

Your guests will be delighted and amazed by your skills and your hard work will have paid off. Now relax and enjoy your event!

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