

HIRING YOUR CATERER – Questions

- 1) Describe your past experience. How many years in business?
- 2) Type of caterer – food only, food and service, or all inclusive?
- 3) What types of meal service is offered – sit-down, buffet, stations, family style, cocktail, dessert
- 4) Do they specialize in certain types of food or service? Will they accommodate for special dietary needs?
- 5) What are the menu options and do you have the option of creating your own? Do they provide sample menus? When can we sample the different menus and what is the cost involved?
- 6) Do they offer packages or is everything priced separately? Can they provide a detail breakdown of each item and related cost? How are the servers paid – by the hour, as part of the package? What if they are in a situation of working overtime? Do your fees include gratuities for the staff? If not, what is customary?
- 7) What is the ratio of staff/servers to guests?
- 8) Do they provide bar service? If so, do they provide the liquor, have a liquor license, pricing involved and if you need to get liquor to them how soon do you need to get it to them?
- 9) Do they provide separate meals for vendors in attendance and if so cost and menu?
- 10) Identify the cost difference between having hors d'oeuvres as a buffet and having them served the staff.
- 11) Do they provide a dessert table, a wedding cake, or late night food table? Is there an extra cost involved and a fee for cake cutting?
- 12) Should the venue not provide linens place setting, barware, etc. do they offer and again the cost involved in the rental of each item. Can you inspect these rental items? Do you unpack and repack these items?
- 13) What is done with the leftover food?
- 14) Is the catering company covered with proper insurance? (most venues require this and will not allow the caterer to work at the site without it)
- 15) What is the cancellation and refund policy?
- 16) Ask for a list of references, and then contact them.