

What to Look for When Choosing Your Celebrant

Your choice of celebrant is perhaps the most significant decision that you will make with regard to your wedding, for it is the celebrant who actually marries you to each other and who starts you out on your journey through life as a married couple.

Whilst you may have engaged a most professional photographer and have contracted a highly recommended wedding planner to help make your day special - it is the beauty and elegance of the ceremony that your family and guests will remember above anything else when they talk about your wedding in the years to come.

Your wedding should be celebrated in style. It should be unique and memorable, and while all celebrants are required to meet the same legal requirements in registering your marriage, no two celebrants will go about the planning and presentation of your ceremony in the same way.

It is therefore important to choose your celebrant carefully and within reason to not make your decision based upon cost alone.

Your celebrant should be able to listen to and react to your needs, and to give you the confidence that your ceremony will be professionally orchestrated.

Because you want the best celebrant that you are able to afford it may be prudent to consider the following points when talking with the celebrants that you might have short-listed:-

- Do you want a fun ceremony, a traditional ceremony or something different?
- Does your celebrant have lots of great ideas and does he/she give you the impression that your marriage is as important to him/her as it is to yourselves?
- Is the product that the celebrant is offering in tune with what you might want?
- And if you change your mind about the content (or style) of your ceremony is your celebrant sufficiently innovative and flexible to adapt as well?
- Does your celebrant have both a professional air as well as a friendly approachable demeanour?
- Do you feel that you will be welcome to contact your celebrant about any issues regarding your ceremony and not be considered a nuisance or a bother?
- Does your celebrant have a clear speaking voice and will all your guests be able to hear the ceremony? Perhaps your celebrant provides a PA system and unobtrusive amplification gear.
- Is the charge that the celebrant has quoted you earlier the total charge or are there (hidden) extra charges that might be levied should you decide to add elements to your ceremony? Perhaps you could ask your celebrant whether

he/she will provide the roses if you decide that you would like to include a rose-gift ritual and if so at what additional cost.

- Does your celebrant have references or testimonials from previous clients that you could peruse? Are you able to speak to any previous clients?
- Does your celebrant take bookings for more than one ceremony per day? What happens if your ceremony runs over time or there is an inordinate delay in agreed upon time for the start of the ceremony?
- What happens if after paying any required deposits or periodic payments your ceremony needs to be cancelled?
- You might like to ask your celebrant – “How do we know that you are an authorised marriage celebrant.” – for there are some imprudent persons masquerading as marriage celebrants? These impostors are not able to conduct a legal marriage ceremony nor are they able to register your marriage after the ceremony.

The answer you should receive is that your celebrant’s name is listed on the Attorney General’s website (<http://www.ag.gov.au/celebrants>) - that the registration number the celebrant will quote you matches the number against his/her name on the web-site and that when you meet face-to-face for the first time your celebrant is able to show you his/her letter of authorisation (which should bear the same registration number).

- Will your celebrant permit you to have an input into the preparation of your ceremony? Can you write your own vows? Will you get a chance to peruse and provide feedback on drafts of the ceremony script? In what ways will your ceremony be personalised?
- If you have children what suggestions does the celebrant have for including them in the ceremony?
- Will you feel comfortable working with your celebrant in preparing the content of your ceremony?
- Does your celebrant inspire you with a feeling of confidence?

If you feel comfortable with the responses your celebrant has given to these considerations then you have probably just made the most important of all the decisions you will make in regard to the planning of your ceremony – so go ahead – give him or her a call and book your location, time and date.

Remember you are welcome to ask me any or all of the above questions and I promise to provide you with honest, open and frank responses.

Allan Hope
Authorised Marriage Celebrant A6186

Telephone: (08) 94563272
Mobile: 04399 41649
Email: ceremonies @celebrantwa.com
Webpage: www.celebrantwa.com

Excerpts from some Cards & Letters

- *Thank you for your hard work in making ours a truly memorable and uniquely special day for us. Everyone commented on how perfect you were – relaxed, humorous and solemn where you needed to be. We are most grateful to have had you as our celebrant. (M&J)*
- *Your commitment to excellence, your compassionate understanding and highly professional approach to everything you had undertaken in both the pre-ceremony and the ceremony arrangements through to the execution of the ceremony is of extreme credit to you and the industry you represent. It was obvious to us from our first meeting that we had nothing to be concerned about with the preparations for the ceremony and this came to fruition in your delivery on the day.. It was indeed a pleasure to us both to meet an individual who obviously takes extreme pride in the services they provide. Our sentiments were cemented in the fact that our guests continually commented in the excellence of your service stating that it was the best they had the pleasure to witness.(N&S)*
- *You did a fantastic job and we had a great time! (P&S)*
- *A really big thank you for all the time and effort you put in to make our day so special! (C &D)*
- *Just a short note to say “thank you” for making our day so lovely. It was just what we had hoped for. Everything was perfect. (C&A)*
- *We wanted to say a big thank you for conducting a wonderful ceremony on our wedding day. It was truly touching and we have had the most comments by far that our ceremony was the most unique, personal and beautiful that our guests have seen ever. Our day will be all the more memorable because of the your sincerity of your service. (C&S)*