



How to Hire a Professional DJ

TAKE A CLOSER LOOK - Unlike a doctor, fireman or policeman, there is no definition or standard of what is professional in the entertainment industry. No professional degrees. No special certification or license. There are many large and new companies. Reading a crowd is nice. What's more important is talent.

DJ TALENT IS: The ability to prepare before the event in such a way that the client should feel like a guest at their own event. You must also present yourself in a way that it looks as if it's easy & fun. It takes several skills to do this & a quality DJ can do this simultaneously and make it look easy. Plus, you must blend your presentation to the clients tastes and needs. Here's some of the skills a DJ must possess. The ability to Host an event into a smoothly flowing continuity, A sense of timing, Style and Variations of presentation, ~PLUS~ the ability to use your musical knowledge to achieve the results your client wants at any given event. Reading a crowd is nice. But, doing it effectively is the key. **Picking that one song out of "81,000 top hits", at the right time, and using a song like a tool to make a crowd dance into a frenzy is a discernible skill. It's harder than it looks & remember, you can only play about 15 songs per hour.**

DISTINCT KNOWLEDGE? It's probably not necessary to teach a dance or play a musical instrument at your event - BUT - DJ's whom possess such skills have a distinct talent in understanding music. These DJ's naturally understand how to use music to motivate any crowd. The more familiar a DJ is with the dynamics of how music motivates people - the better off your party will be. Keep in mind that playing music is only part of the game - anybody can press a button. The better DJ's go far beyond the music to make your event happen. ((**EXAMPLE - Carpenters use glue for one job, screws for the 2nd job and nails for the 3rd. All for specific reasons - "just like a DJ".**))

Getting a quote often does not get you the full picture. DJ's are like wines, most are cheap - but - there are a few exceptional ones out there. Having a quote does not accurately measure a DJ. What about credentials such as: Experience? Talent? Qualifications? References? Investment? Flexibility? Creativity? Peripheral services?

Comparing DJ's is like comparing a grape to a fine wine. If you're not careful you could pay a "premium wine price" for just a grape. So, Be Careful! Booking agents and DJ companies often sell you on the experience or the ability of the people running the company (or how many years or event's they have completed) & **NOT** on the person actually entertaining your event. There's a good reason to call them employees or subcontractors. Hiring a cheap DJ and selling it to you at a premium price is the booking agent's mission. (Would you be happy to pay up to 75% commission to a booking agent or DJ company with only 25% of your payment trickling down to the entertainment?) Believe me, it happens more often than you probably guess. The success of your event should not be affected by some one else's profit margin.

Martha Stewart says, "The entertainment you choose for your wedding, or party, is responsible for 80% of the events success and the memories you will have for the rest of your life." "Entertainment sets the mood, ambiance and tempo of your event. Entertainment will make or break 2-4 hours of your event. Entertainment will likely be the most important purchase for your event. Entertainment is what will leave the biggest impression on people after your event. Entertainment will reflect on you ~ how much you care about your event & your guests."

People commonly fail to see that saving \$200 to \$500 is not worth sacrificing THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS of their investments. Entertainment is the most important decision you'll make in planning your special event.

Entertainment represents you & Sets the mood, ambiance and tempo of your event & Creates memories for your guests.

. . . . Entertainment makes or breaks 2-5 hours of any event.

Most Brides and Grooms would be unhappy if the party failed to achieve culmination. Yet, most fail to put time and effort into making sure they've made an educated decision. They often buy on impulse without thinking in these terms:

If your party: A) Stops being interesting or B) Doesn't have continuity or C) Loses its energy ~ your guests are likely to leave 1-2 hours early Is that what you paid for?

Any one can be a DJ, but not necessarily "everyone" has the ability to do it "extremely well". Before you hire any entertainment I suggest you personally meet at least 3 different entertainers.

Here are some tough & specific questions:

1. **A)** Is this your only occupation; are you a full time DJ? - - **B)** How Long Full Time?
2. What kind of skills and experience make you a quality DJ?
3. (How much did you invest in me?). - What's your equipment's retail worth?
4. Will you personally meet me to talk about what you can do for me? & Who will be the DJ at my event?
5. Is your style flexible? (Ask them to explain - Listen carefully -)
6. Can you host my event? How? - (Listen closely to their explanation).
7. What kind of extra's do you offer?
8. Did you pay a referral fee or marketing fee for me to be referred to you as a potential client?
9. Do you have references? (Get 6 references from events in the past 4months).

DID YOU NOTICE I skipped a common question? A Song List? Anybody can go to Tower Records and buy CD's. What makes a DJ special to you is the knowledge a DJ possesses in using the songs to motivate your guests.

If a DJ tries to impress you with a song list & not enough with how to use it ~~ ASK YOURSELF ~~ IF, hiring this one is like allowing your 12 year old nephew to drive "Your" Ferrari.

10. Ask the DJ if they can "guarantee" the crowd will dance? - You might be surprised by what you hear.

Don't forget to get it all in writing. A contract is a must.

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