

Love Never Stopped Working as a Wedding Planner During the Pandemic

Jahzeel Pérez-Voynick

BEFORE YOU READ:

1. Judging from the context, what do you think the author means when she says in the title, “Love Never Stopped”?
2. Describe some of the ways the job of a wedding planner might change during a pandemic.
3. Did you attend any weddings during the pandemic? What were they like?

Our Job Is to Make Everything Go Smoothly

I started working in event planning in 2005, but weddings are my specialty. Why? Because I love to prepare everything for a couple’s perfect moment.

A wedding planner is like a fairy. The couple trusts you to make everything right.

I love making everything just right as they start their life together. I love helping them enjoy their day without any problems. I am not just a

wedding planner, I’m a wedding lover!

Couples hire wedding planners because they want the event to go smoothly. They want



Jahzeel Pérez-Voynick works as a wedding planner.

the wedding planner to solve any problems that might happen on the wedding day. But what can a wedding planner do about a pandemic?

Postponing, Waiting, and Postponing Again!

In March 2020, clients began to *postpone* their weddings due to the pandemic. Most couples moved their weddings to the end of 2020, thinking that the pandemic would not last. As a wedding planner, I felt enormous frustration. I did not know how to help my clients or how to solve their problems. I wanted to tell my clients that the pandemic would be over in a few months, but the pandemic had no end in sight. I started to worry.



“We used the appropriate protocols.”



“I love making everything just right.”

I started to worry about my staff, the *venues*, and all the *vendors* that are involved in the weddings, and of course, for my couples. They waited a long time to organize the wedding, and suddenly, they couldn't.

One of my weddings was postponed three times, and this couple is still waiting! The first date was in June 2020; the second was in October 2020; and the third was in March 2021. Finally, they decided that they would get married in March 2022. It is very tiring for them and for me, but I will be there for them. They want a nice and wonderful day. A wedding planner is like a fairy. The couple trusts you to make everything right, and I will do my best. (Thanks Erika and Edgar for waiting almost two years!)

It wasn't just the wedding planners and the brides and grooms who were having a hard time. All the people and businesses behind the scenes were also having a hard time: bridal shops, florists, chefs, musicians, entertainers, waiters, photographers, videographers, and companies that rent furniture, dance floors, and wedding venues. All of them had no income and no idea when the pandemic would end. We never thought the Covid-19 crisis would last so long.

We Reinvented Weddings

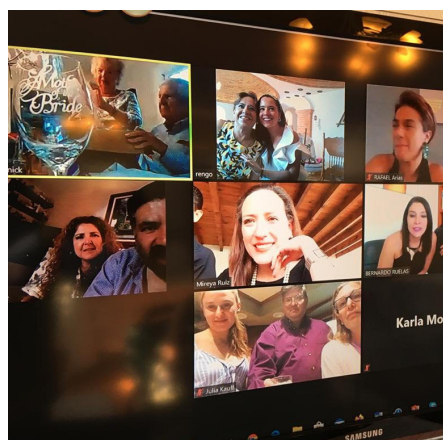
There was no choice! We had to reinvent ourselves. We started planning smaller events—just 10 to 20 people—and most of them at home. Small events do not bring in that much income, but we



Jahzeel was also a bride during the pandemic.

were able to start working and thus keep our business alive. Happy to start over again, we created a new normal. We used the appropriate *protocols*, and we coached our clients on how they could have a wedding safely. Now the mask was our best friend! We bought new equipment to sanitize the event space and came up with creative ideas for relatives to enjoy each other while keeping so-

If the wedding had to be small, we could still make sure it felt sacred and romantic.



"Part of the new normal was Zoom."



"We focused more on the decorations, so people on Zoom could see something beautiful."

cial distance. We learned how to how to make a pandemic wedding feel like the perfect day.

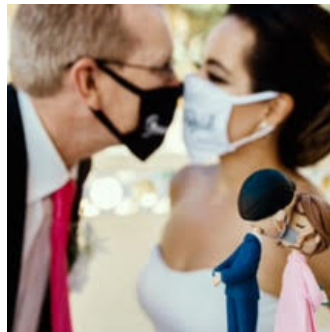
Part of the new normal was Zoom. Although it did not feel the same, at least friends and family could see loved ones get married. We focused more on the decorations, so people on Zoom could see something beautiful. If the wedding had to be small, we could still make sure it felt sacred and romantic. That is how, little by little, we returned to making the dreams of many couples come true.

Even as the pandemic ends, we will keep doing some things in the new way. For example, we may not go back to having so many in-person planning meetings. We now know we can use Zoom instead. We can do more destination weddings by selling the location through live video calls. We are not limited to local clients. With video calling, we can have clients who live far away. We can *globalize* our market! We can change our sales strategy by offering *hybrid* events — both in-person and by video.

Not Just a Wedding Planner

We have advanced a lot. We know how to survive as a business, but we can't lower our guard. We have to continue to take care of ourselves and make our clients and guests aware of how to stay safe. Most of all, we have learned that, whatever happens, love never stops. I know that to be true, not just as a wedding planner, but as a bride myself. Yes, I got married during the pandemic. And, yes, I had a perfect day!

Jahzeel Pérez-Voynick, originally from Mexico, is a student at Shoreline Adult Education in Branford, CT. She wants to thank all the frontline workers who continue to fight to help people and make the best of the vaccine program. Also, she says, "Thank you to my clients and vendors. I appreciate your patience."



After You Read



Vocabulary

Notice the vocabulary words in bold italic in the article: ***postpone***, ***protocol***, ***venue***, ***vendor***, ***globalize***, and ***hybrid***. Can you tell from the context what they mean? Try writing your own definitions and then look up the definition in a dictionary.



Use a Suffix to Make a New Word

Take the verb **postpone** and add the suffix **ment** to it. Now you have the word **postponement**, which is a noun. The suffix **ment** means "the result of an action." So, for example, if you **postpone** a wedding, the result of that action is a **postponement**. Try adding the same suffix to other verbs, such as enjoy, encourage, commit, and punish.



Punctuation

Notice the author's use of **em dashes**. (Sometimes called a "long dash," an em dash is about the length of the letter "m," which is how it got its name.) Find at least three or four places in the text where the author uses an em dash. What role does the em dash play in the text? Explain why she sometimes uses a single em dash in a sentence, and other times, she uses two.



Writing Practice

Try writing your own sentences using em dashes and some of the new vocabulary you have learned from this article.