

DOES YOUR OFFICIANT KNOW . . .

- How to guide you through the marriage application, license and certificate process?
- How to prepare a wedding ceremony?
- How to personalize your ceremony so that it is a reflection of your love story, your personalities and style?
- How to write a ceremony that is unique to you, and not a copy/paste cookie cutter script?
- How to make sure the ceremony is the appropriate length?
- Can they add humor without it being inappropriate or “jarring”?
- Can they keep the humor sweet, centered on you and seamlessly return to tenderness?
- What about their public speaking skills?
 - Are they completely relaxed and confident in front of a crowd, large or small?
 - Is their confidence & skill level going to be calming and soothing for you as you stand in front of your guests? Or will their “nerves” be contagious?
 - Does their speaking style hold the attention of your guests without being a “hyper/loud” energy that detracts from the romance and tenderness of the moment?

DOES YOUR OFFICIANT KNOW . . .

- Do they know how to be professional without being an entertainer and stealing the spotlight from you and your story?
- Do they have multiple options of ceremony wording for you to choose from?
- What about a simple, user-friendly system for you to participate in customizing your ceremony script?
- Do they know the Number One MUST for having a fabulous wedding day experience??
- Spoiler. The answer is: “Keep the Bride stress free”! How is this accomplished? What are the 5 things to put in place to make sure she is relaxed and focused only on looking fabulous!
- What announcements need to be made to the guests pre and post ceremony?
- When should they have the guests stand and sit?
- How to advise on the proper way to escort the bride?
- What is the proper and most attractive way for the bride (and bridesmaids) to hold her (their) bridal bouquet(s).
- What should the groom have in his pocket for the ceremony?
- What should the groomsmen have in their pockets during the ceremony?

DOES YOUR OFFICIANT KNOW . . .

- Do they know how to conduct a rehearsal? (Making it informational, beautiful and FUN?)
- On which side the groom and bride are to stand during the ceremony? And the fun fact of WHY this is tradition? :)
- Do they know how to advise you on the Maid of Honor taking the bride's bouquet and "fluffing" the bride's gown during the ceremony -- when/ how this should be done. (This is something that should be choreographed for seamless execution.)
- On which side is best for the parents to sit? (yes, there are options and reasons for the options)
- What THREE things does Florida law require in the ceremony itself for the marriage to be legal?
- What in the ceremony is purely there for added romance and is optional?
- What legal course should be taken if, heaven forbid, you forget to bring the license to the wedding? (Spoiler: It is illegal to perform a ceremony if the license is not present and verified pre-ceremony, or the dates on the license are not valid. BUT, there is a way to "save the day"!)

DOES YOUR OFFICIANT KNOW . . .

- What is the proper and legal way to fill out the license?
- What are the legal steps after the ceremony for returning the license?
And in how many days?
- What is the safest way to mail in the license to the courthouse so that you are protected?
- What happens after the license is mailed in? How do you receive the marriage certificate -- the legal document/proof of marriage?
- What is the exact moment that you are legally married? :)
- How do you go about changing your name after the wedding? What steps and in what order?
- What creative and personal touches can be added to the ceremony?
- Is your officiant skilled in creative writing should you choose to add the telling of your love story? Or will it sound like the reading of a book report (all facts & dates)?
- What about symbolic unity ceremonies? (unity candle/unity sand/wine box etc . . .) What is needed for them, and where to find the materials needed? (best quality and best prices)
- Do they have an attractive table they could provide for you to hold the symbolic unity items? (It will forever be in your photos.)

DOES YOUR OFFICIANT KNOW . . .

- Will they take the time to get to know you and your story, your vision for the day, walk you through options, ideas . . . explore your family dynamics, questions about your wedding party, vendors and questions to ask them . . . ?
- How does the bride's escort "present her" to the groom?
- On which side of the bride do they stand?
- What is the escort asked when presenting the bride?
- What options are there for their response to the question?
- What do they do after the response?
- Where do they go to sit after the presentation?
- What are the four options for your vows?
- What is the proper and lovely way to put rings on one another?
- Who will hold and present the rings?
- What are the helpful tips for the Best Man & groomsmen?
- What is a big mistake with regards to their suit jackets?
- How do they hold their hands during the ceremony?
- What are some sweet and fun things they can do when they enter, during the ceremony and as they exit?
- What do they do with their phones during the ceremony?

DOES YOUR OFFICIANT KNOW . . .

- What are some helpful tips for the Maid of Honor and bridesmaids:
- How to hold their escort's arms
- How to hold their flowers
- Who will receive the bride's bouquet?
- How will she hold it?
- WHEN does she take it from the bride and how?
- When does she return it to the bride?
- Who will fluff and arrange the bride's dress/train? At what point in the ceremony? How many times does this happen? How does she do this with TWO bouquets in her hands (hers and bride's)
- What are some tips for your first kiss as a married couple?
- What is the BIG thing the photographers appreciate, that your officiant should do at the end of the ceremony?? (Because your officiant is in your photos . . . forever! LOL)
- What is some advice when there are children in the ceremony for keeping them safe and helping things run smoothly?
- Are pets allowed at the ceremony? What is advice on keeping them safe and taken care of?
- Do they know how to tenderly and appropriately memorialize a loved one dear to you who has passed, if that is something you wish to include?

DOES YOUR OFFICIANT KNOW . . .

- Do they know the latest trends with regard to the following:
 - First look
 - First touch
 - First look or touch with a blessing
 - Turning the groom as the bride enters for a more impactful reveal
 - Escorting grandmothers
 - Escorting mothers
 - Flower Girl -- it's not just for little girls any more! LOL
- What the appropriate officiant attire should be so that it looks neat, professional and not distracting in your photos?
- Are they comfortable blessing you if you choose to add that into your ceremony?
- How to guide you through changing your last name, should you choose?
- Will they “surprise you” by adding things into the script that you prefer they not? (Yes. It's happened!)
- Will they get cold feet at the last minute and leave you hanging and scrambling for a pro? And now all the good ones are booked?
- Do they have a list of other highly qualified professional officiants they can share with you in case of emergency?

DOES YOUR OFFICIANT KNOW . . .

If they cannot answer all with confidence . . . call me! LOL
I will be happy to give them a crash course on all of the above.

Not all SKILLS can be taught, but at least your ceremony will be LEGAL,
safe and sweet.

FINALLY, ask yourself these honest questions:

1. Why am I choosing this loved one to officiate my big day?
2. If it's to save money . . . is it really worth it?
3. If it's to honor them, is there a better, less risky way to accomplish that and have my ceremony written and performed by a professional?

(Yes. There are multiple lovely options!)

4. Do both of us -- bride and groom, feel comfortable being emotional or vulnerable with this person standing so near during our most precious promises?

It's a big decision for a once-in-a-lifetime day!