

Robyn Ashley Weddings

NYC WEDDING OFFICIANT

THE OFFICIANT'S CUT

The Officiant's *Address.*

The words that win a distracted room, beat by beat, with the timing on each one and the cues for what you do while you say it.

AS SEEN IN

Tamron Hall · Brides · The Knot

FROM ROBYN'S DESK

The part you *say* *out loud.*

Most of what an officiant gets handed is a story about the couple. The thing that actually carries a ceremony is the address, and the address is mostly traffic-directing.

This is that address, set out the way I read it: the opening that gets a room off its phones, the couple's story shaped so it does not sag, and the cues into the vows, the rings, and the pronouncement. It is in large type so whoever is up front can read it at arm's length without losing the line.

Beside each beat is a time. Those are the numbers I keep in my head over 300+ ceremonies, the difference between a clean twenty minutes and a forty-minute ceremony on a hot rooftop.

Read it once, out loud, in your own voice. Cut anything that sounds borrowed. What is left is yours to say.

Robyn

ROBYN ASHLEY WEDDINGS · BROOKLYN ·
NYC



Get the room to *look up*.

— *[Step up. Wait for the processional to fully settle. Find one face in the back row before your first word.]*

We are here for a love story that started, of all places, **[ONE TRUE, SPECIFIC DETAIL: a shared and indefensible taste in bad sci-fi movies]**.

— *[That first sentence is the whole job of the opening. Make the ceremony about these two by name, never about weddings in general.]*

ROBYN'S NOTE

"Dearly beloved" tells the room they can keep half-listening. *One concrete, true detail* in the first sentence snaps every head to the front. Pick the odd, specific thing, never the sweet generality.

The phones, *down.*

Before we go on, do me one favor. Take one quick photo of these two, right now.

— *[Pause. Let the room actually do it. This breaks the formal silence and turns every face forward.]*

Got it? Good. Now put the phones away and just be here with us, because the next twenty minutes are better lived than filmed.

— *[Wait for the screens to drop before you move on.]*

ROBYN'S NOTE

This one line does three jobs at once: it warms the room, it gets everyone looking at you instead of a screen, and it clears the aisle of forty phones blocking the photographer you hired.

Greet, name, *then step aside.*

Friends, family, those who flew across the country and those who walked down the block, welcome.

I am [YOUR NAME], and I have known [PARTNER] since [ONE LINE: we were both too broke for real dorm furniture].

— *[One line about you, then pivot straight back to the couple. The opening is not about the officiant.]*

[COUPLE], your parents are here, your people are here, and there is nowhere else any of us would rather be.

ROBYN'S NOTE

Name a few key family by name, the parents especially. People feel seen the second they hear their own name said out loud at the front of a room.

The line everyone *forgets*.

Please, take your seats.

— *[Wait for everyone to actually sit. Do not rush it. Do not start talking over the shuffle.]*

ROBYN'S NOTE

I have watched whole ceremonies where the guests stood the entire time because nobody said this. It feels too obvious to write down, so it is the first thing that vanishes under pressure. Script it anyway, and pause until they are down.

Their story, *on an arc.*

Before they met, [PARTNER 1] was the kind of person who [made a five-year plan and color-coded it]. [PARTNER 2] was the kind of person who [had never made a plan and somehow always came out fine].

Then, one [rainy Tuesday in October], at [a party neither of them wanted to go to], they met. One said the wrong thing, the other laughed at the wrong moment, and something started that neither could plan their way out of.

— *[Two or three true, specific details. Never a timeline. A résumé of a relationship is where ceremonies go to die.]*

ROBYN'S NOTE

Under five minutes is the rule everyone repeats and the spot everyone runs long. Five minutes read aloud is about seven hundred words, a page and a half. If the story is three pages, you have a chronology, and you need to cut.

The beat that *earns the tissue*.

What I love about these two is **[ONE TRUE THING: how they make each other braver]**.

So do something with me. Close your eyes for a second and picture them five years from now. The **[tiny first apartment]**, the **[Sunday arguments about coffee]**, the ordinary Tuesdays that turn into a whole life.

— *[Let the picture sit for a real second before you go on. This forward look is what reaches the third row.]*

That future, the whole unwritten thing, is what we are here to bless today.

ROBYN'S NOTE

First-timers skip this beat because it is not part of the story they were told. It is the one that pays off in the room. The story is the past; this is the future, and a wedding is about the future.

Hand them *the moment*.

[PARTNER 1] and [PARTNER 2], please face each other and take both hands. You have each written words for the other. Whenever you are ready.

— *[Step half a pace back. The vows are their moment, never yours. Do not fill the silences.]*

— *[Carry tissues even if both swear they will not cry. If a voice goes, hand one over, then wait.]*

Thank you. [PARTNER 2], whenever you are ready.

ROBYN'S NOTE

Your only job here is to cue it and get out of the way. The hand-holding cue keeps a nervous partner anchored. The half-step back tells the room where to look without you saying a word.

A circle, *no end.*

The rings you are about to exchange are a circle, with no beginning and no end.

— *[Hand the ring to the speaker before the line, not during it. One less thing to fumble in front of everyone.]*

[PARTNER 1], take **[PARTNER 2]**'s ring and repeat after me: I give you this ring as a sign of every promise I have made, and I mean to keep them.

— *[Watch their hands. Cue gently if the ring sticks. Then repeat the whole line for the second partner.]*

ROBYN'S NOTE

Feed the vow line in short pieces a nervous person can hold, four or five words at a time. A long sentence repeated back is where people stumble; a short phrase almost never trips them.

By the power vested *in me.*

THE LINE THE LAW NEEDS TO HEAR

The marriage is not official until you say a version of this out loud.

Requirements vary by state, so confirm yours before the day.

By the power vested in me by the State of **[STATE]**, and by the love that brought every person in this room here today, it is my honor to pronounce you married.

You may kiss.

— *[Step back. Let the kiss happen. Let the applause build before you raise your voice over it.]*

If it gets *away from you*.

If a page blows away. Loose printer paper is the classic disaster, and wind takes it off a rooftop in one gust. If it goes, say, "Bear with me, the wind wants a word too," find your place, and carry on. The room reads it as ease.

If you lose your line. Say, "Give me one second, this part matters and I want to get it right." Look down, find it, continue. Care never reads as a stumble.

If your own voice goes. Say, "Forgive me, I have known these two a while and this got me." It is true almost every time. One breath, then on.

ROBYN'S NOTE

The difference between a first-timer and a pro is not that the pro never freezes. It is that the pro has a warm line ready for the freeze, says it, and keeps moving. Carry the script on note cards or in a matte dark folder, never loose white paper.

The timing, *on one page.*

The whole ceremony wants to run long. These are the limits that keep it clean, and the one habit that protects them.

**10–15
min**

Your spoken parts, all of them added up.

Every word you say across the ceremony totals ten to fifteen minutes. You are not the headliner. The couple is. Build the address to fit inside that, not the other way around.

1–3 min

The opening welcome.

The hook, the phones request, the greeting, and the be-seated line all live inside three minutes. Past that and the room cools before the vows even start.

under 5

The couple's story.

The spot everyone runs long. Five minutes read aloud is about seven hundred words. Two or three true details, never a year-by-year history.

20×

Times you read the whole thing aloud, with a stopwatch.

Spoken always runs longer than it reads, because you pause, you get emotional, the room laughs and you wait for it. Time it out loud before the day, never in your head.

"I was the friend who got asked to officiate and had no idea what I was doing. This kit is the only reason I did not embarrass myself. I have done two more weddings since."

JAMES · OFFICIATED HIS BROTHER'S WEDDING, 2024

IF THIS ADDRESS IS DOING ITS JOB

The whole role, *not just one speech.*

This is one address in one tone. The Officiant Kit is how a first-timer gets to pro: the fill-in-the-blank templates for every part of the ceremony, my opening lines that win the room, the timing notes for each beat, eight complete scripts in different tones, the day-of cue sheet I work from, the recovery cards, and the license-and-legal walkthrough so the marriage does not get rejected on a technicality.

\$150

Open the Officiant Kit →

ONE-TIME PAYMENT · LIFETIME ACCESS · 48-HOUR MONEY-BACK

Where this *came from*.

**PULLED
FROM**

The address I read aloud at weddings across NYC and the Hudson Valley, with the timing and cues I actually use. The shape is field-tested over *more than 300 ceremonies*.

**WHAT IS IN
THE KIT**

The full method, eight complete scripts, the couple questionnaire, the day-of cue sheet, the recovery cards, and the license-and-legal walkthrough. All of it in *the Officiant Kit*.

**USE THIS
FREELY**

Print it, mark it up, read it at the rehearsal, hand a copy to whoever is standing up front.

**IF YOU
OFFICIATE
ONE**

Email me. I read every one.
hello@robynashleyweddings.com.

*Marked from a working address, with the timing and cues
I read from at the front of the aisle.*

*About this
address, and
where it has
been read.*