



Event Planning Tips

1. Develop strategies for success

1. Make sure the purpose for the special event is important enough to merit the time and expense needed to properly stage, publicize and evaluate the event.
2. Carefully match the type of event that is selected to the purpose that it serves.
3. Ensure that the committee is in place and fully supports the special event. (Select a working committee with broad representation.)
4. Target groups that have a special stake in the event such as past cancer patients, funders, politicians, business leaders, senior citizens or parents.
5. Start planning at least three months, and in many cases, a year ahead of time.
6. Develop ways to evaluate the event's success.

2. Make a checklist

1. A checklist provides a step-by-step guide to organizing and executing a special event.

Sample Check List

The following checklist provides a step-by-step guide to organizing and executing an open house. Include projected deadlines for each step.

- ✓ Select chair and members of your planning committee.
- ✓ Develop a master plan and set the event date.
- ✓ Select chairs for subcommittees such as refreshments, setup and cleanup, activity guides, traffic and safety, volunteer speakers, and invitations.
- ✓ Organize volunteers for each committee.
- ✓ Formulate a publicity plan. Decide when/how media should be contacted. Be sure to alert the media of photo and interview opportunities.

- ✓ Prepare copy for program and printed materials.
- ✓ Hold a "tie down" meeting the day before the event Distribute a schedule of events to each committee member. Discuss assignments. Distribute identification badges. Answer any questions.
- ✓ Set up several registration tables and stagger tour schedules to avoid bottlenecks. Distribute a program as guests arrive, so they know what to expect.
- ✓ After the event, mail the printed program with an appropriate letter to "significant others" who were unable to attend.
- ✓ Remember to thank everyone who participated. Send photos if possible.
- ✓ Conduct an evaluation

3. Create a budget

1. The objective is to provide event planners with a financial blueprint. The budget should be specific, and include revenue opportunities (sponsorships, ticket sales, donations, concession sales, pledge sheets for miniature golfers) as well as expenses- printing, permits, insurance, speakers, food, supplies, security).

4 Consider logistics

- With many activities going on simultaneously, there are many details to be checked. Major areas to consider and plan for include: size of space or building used, utility support needed, setup (tables and chairs, tents, portable toilets, parking, signage) coordination, cleanup, emergency plans, transportation, and public services such as police and fire departments.

5 Plan publicity

1. Promoting a special event takes creative thinking balanced with practicality. The primary objective is to publicize the event, but secondary objectives should be considered.
 - Are you trying to inform, educate or entertain?
 - Increase awareness or attendance of the event?
 - Build a base support from a specific audience?
 - Facilitate good community relations?

Brainstorm all the available media in including marquees, school newsletters, church announcements, and cable and commercial stations. Make a detailed list with names of whom to contact and when.

6 Evaluate the event

- Take time to evaluate right after the event while the details are fresh. You may want to consider having a questionnaire for participants to fill out. Some general evaluative criteria include:
 - Did the event fulfill its goals and objectives? Why or why not?
 - Identify what worked and what needs fine-tuning. Which vendors should be used again?
 - What items were missing on the checklist?
 - Was the event well attended?
 - Was informal and formal feedback about the event positive?
 - Given all that went into staging, was it worth doing?