

Event Checklist

By Jake R Brady

☐ 6 to 12 months in advance:

- ☐ **Purpose** Choose the purpose of the event. Is it a celebration, a fundraiser, or something else? This will influence the kind of event you will hold.
- ☐ **Theme** Choose a theme that is relevant, but also interesting. Cliche themes won't attract many guests.
- ☐ **Site** Look around for places that can hold the event. Meet with potential space providers.
- ☐ **Manager** You might need to appoint someone, or yourself, as event manager.
- ☐ **Committees** Build committees if they are required. With a big enough event, you might need several of them and need to appoint a chair for each.
- ☐ **Estimates** Get estimates for food, drinks, space and rental equipment. This will help with budgeting.
- ☐ **Event entertainment** If providing artistic entertainment, hire well-known entertainers or hold auditions.
- ☐ **Sponsorships** Determine if you will require sponsorships. Build a sponsorship sheet, with the different levels, so that potential sponsors know right away at what level they want to participate.
- ☐ **Budget** Get an initial budget from the financial committee. This step is very important.
- ☐ **Licences** Check if you need any kind of permit or license to hold an event or serve alcohol.
- ☐ **Proposals** Review proposals for decorations and printing.
- ☐ **Admission** If charging a cover, decide the price.
- ☐ **Mailing list** Build a mailing list with potential guests or businesses to contact.
- ☐ **Date** Choose a final date and check for conflicts with your providers.
- ☐ **Designer** Choose your graphic designer and draft the documentation and invitations.
- ☐ **Printing** Order the printing for invitations, hold-the-date reminders and other early stationery.
- ☐ **Marketing** Build your marketing timeline with your public relations specialist.
- ☐ **Reserve your professional photographer and have any pre-event photos taken.**

☐ 3 to 6 months in advance:

- ☐ **Committees** Hold committee meetings regularly, and request reports.
- ☐ **Funding** Send your requests for funding to your potential donors.
- ☐ **Sponsors** Ask your confirmed sponsors for their logos for publicity printing.
- ☐ **Stationery** Meet with your graphic designer and confirm the design for all printed material.
- ☐ **Printing** Order the printing for posters and other stationery after the design is finalized.
- ☐ **Tickets** If required, have the admission tickets printed and ready for distribution.

- ☐ **Mailing list** Write down the final mailing list for guests, and print the letters or send the emails.
- ☐ **Contracts** Sign the contracts with the entertainers.
- ☐ **Posters** Build a list of potential poster locations. Send out people to verify the availability of space.
- ☐ **Public relations** Plan your publicity and interviews with television and radio stations, and printed media.
- ☐ **Catering** If serving food, build the menu with your caterer. Make sure you consider the dietary requirements of your guests.
- ☐ **Permits** Request permits from your municipality if required.
- ☐ **Insurance** Sign an insurance contract with your insurer.
- ☐ **Celebrities** Confirm celebrity participation in writing.
- ☐ **2 months in advance:**
 - ☐ **Pre-event party** Organize a party that coincides with the sending of invitations.
 - ☐ **Invitations** Write personal notes for the invitations and have them mailed.
 - ☐ **Posters** Have your posters distributed and placed at previously chosen locations.
 - ☐ **Accommodations** Reserve accommodations for your VIPs, if required.
 - ☐ **Transportation** Arrange transportation for your VIPs, if required.
 - ☐ **Media** Confirm the presence of the media at your event. Assign journalist passes.
 - ☐ **Sponsors** Confirm sponsorships and request logos for the final program.
 - ☐ **Committees** Request final plans from each committee chair.
 - ☐ **Budget** Review and finalize the event's budget.
 - ☐ **Tasks** Build a final task list leading up to the event.
- ☐ **1 month in advance:**
 - ☐ **Tickets** Follow up on ticket sales. Call any guests that haven't responded yet.
 - ☐ **Publicity** Place your ads in newspapers, television and radio.
 - ☐ **Staff** Hire staff for the day of the event.
 - ☐ **VIPs** Confirm VIP participation in writing.
 - ☐ **Space planning** Build space diagrams for the room or rooms, build a table plan and assign seats.
 - ☐ **Catering** Provide guest estimate to your caterer, and request a final quote.
 - ☐ **Timeline** Review the timeline for the event, and confirm the scripts with participants.
 - ☐ **Traveling** Organize the traveling arrangements with VIPs.
 - ☐ **Security** Confirm security needs and appoint a security agency.
- ☐ **1 week in advance:**

- ☐ **Meetings** Schedule last-minute meetings with committees. Work out final details.
- ☐ **Attendance** Confirm final attendance with ticket or table sales.
- ☐ **Staff** Confirm the staffing for the event. Hire any necessary extra staff.
- ☐ **Timeline** Provide the timeline to all event participants.
- ☐ **Catering** Confirm final catering order.
- ☐ **Beverages** Confirm final alcohol order if not provided by the caterer.
- ☐ **Media** Confirm media coverage with journalists or stations.
- ☐ **Rehearsal** Schedule and hold rehearsals if necessary.
- ☐ **Cheques** Write the cheques that need to be given to providers on the day of the event.
- ☐ **One day before:**
 - ☐ **Attire** Lay out your clothes for the event. Prepare a change of clothes in case of emergency.
 - ☐ **Supplies** Verify that all supplies are available or confirm with providers for their delivery time.
- ☐ **Day of the event:**
 - ☐ **Arrival** Arrange to arrive early to receive all deliveries and finalize last-minute details.
 - ☐ **Inventory** Make sure that all supplies are on hand.
 - ☐ **Timeline** Confirm scripts and timeline with VIPs.
 - ☐ **Staff** Confirm positions and tasks with staff.
 - ☐ **Technical setup** Make sure the lights and sound are working properly with your technicians.
 - ☐ **Rehearsal** If holding a final rehearsal, have it a few hours before the event, after the sound and lighting have been set up.
 - ☐ **Have a great time at your event!**