

Tips for Planning a Successful Event

When tackling a project, it's often a good strategy to develop a checklist that specifies when certain tasks need to be completed.

General Planning

- **Goal of Event:** Determine how this program meets organization's goals/mission (cultural, educational, community service, social). Be sure to brainstorm ideas based on your audience and what is feasible.
- **Date and Time:** Find a convenient date for members in the group and for the entertainment/guest speaker. Choose a date that does not conflict with other existing campus programs. Determine a convenient time for your targeted audience.
- **Location:** Estimate the attendance to make sure that you reserve an adequate facility. Determine the type of space that is needed for your event and any special needs you may have. Specific facility needs may include the need for: chairs, tables, lighting, sound, a stage, open space, a cooking area, an outdoor area, lecture hall, etc.
- **Budget:** All costs associated with the event will be assumed by the student organization. Project all expenses and income such as fees, advertising, security, food, etc. Brainstorm additional funding sources.
- **Audience:** Determine your intended audience. MSU Student, Faculty, Staff and/or off-campus guests (i.e., general public).
- **Entertainment/Speaker:** Determine the type of entertainment/guest speaker you would like to invite. Research local, regional and national possibilities and negotiate a fee.
- **Publicity:** Design publicity strategies for targeted audiences. Design promotions to fit the style and theme of the program. Be creative. Make the publicity neat and accurate. Include the name of the program, date, time, place and ticket information if necessary. Distribute publicity at least two weeks in advance.
- **Food:** Determine food needs. Will the program be a dinner or reception? A dinner requires a full meal, and a reception only calls for light refreshments. Will your organization prepare the food or hire a caterer? Be sure to verify that the intended vendor is an approved caterer for your venue.

Event Approval and Promotion

- Student groups should fill out the appropriate event request form and should not advertise the event until approval has been received.
- Events are not considered approved until the person making the request has received an email confirmation.
- Once approved, begin to advertise to group members and rest of student body via e-mail, word of mouth, flyers/posters, Facebook, Announcements, etc.

Implementation

Before the event:

- Develop a list of tasks that need to occur before, during, and after the event
- Determine who will be responsible for each one.
- Examples: clean-up crew, stage crew, publicity, and hospitality.

On the day of the event:

- Arrive early to check on room arrangements and the set up.
- Prepare a brief introduction statement to welcome guests and begin the program.

Following the program:

- Create an evaluation of the program to distribute at the next meeting.
- Determine if you have accomplished your program goal.
- Record both positive and negative results for future planning.
- Prepare a financial statement of actual expenditures.
- Send thank you notes to appropriate people.