



UNIT-2

Types of Events

Learning Outcomes

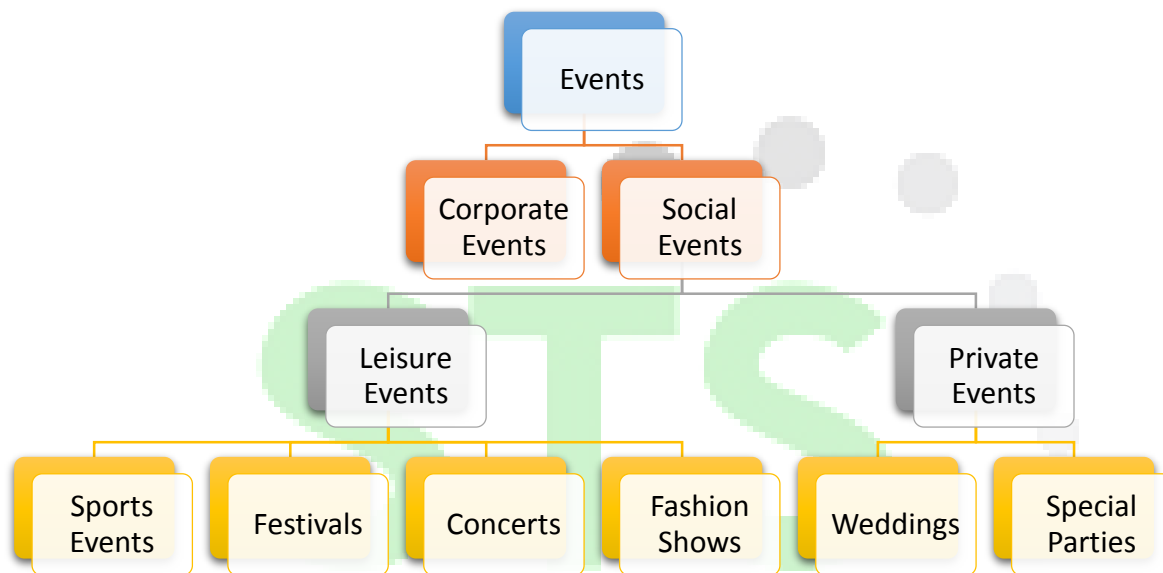
By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

Unit 2

Types of Events

There are two major categories of events and many subcategories which fall under these two types.

- Corporate Events
- Social Events



Corporate Events

Corporate events are held by corporations or businesses for their staff, clients or stakeholders. These events can be for large audiences such as conventions and conferences, or smaller events such as retreats, holiday parties or even private concerts, meetings, conventions and educational seminars. These events may be specifically for those who work within the company, or they may be public relations, marketing, or sales efforts that are intended for industry insiders, consumers, or the press.

There are many different kinds of events held by corporations. Some have unique cultural needs and others have a specific vision. It is up to the corporate event planner to figure out what kind of event the corporate head wants to host. For example, they may want a casual family picnic, a black tie gala, a celebrity fundraiser or a unique carnival experience.

A corporate event planner plans, coordinates, and manages a corporate event. Some events are on a large scale and may require a team of planners. Other corporate events are smaller in nature and they may only need a single person to plan the event. All the important decisions are made by the corporate host; however, the planner gives the host a few options. For example, the planner may inform the host that a charity fund raising event may be held at a hotel, a city landmark, or at a convention centre. The host will pick one venue option from the choices. If the host chooses to have the event at a hotel, the planner will then select a series of hotel choices — again giving the host the opportunity to make a well-informed choice.

Once the kind of event is decided upon, the corporate event planner deals with all aspects of the event. Besides reserving the venue, the corporate event planner selects a caterer, makes bookings for the entertainment, arranges for local tours, manages the event accounting, and sets up audio/visual equipment. In addition, if there are out-of-town guests for the event, the planner may need to set up travel arrangements, such as airfare and ground transportation, and help guests obtain passport or visas. On the day of the event, the corporate event planner makes sure that everything flows smoothly.

Main types of corporate events are given below:

- Conferences
- Seminars
- Meetings
- Conventions
- Party and special events

Conferences

Conferences are among the most important events that professional event managers organise. Conference planning can be the responsibility of a corporate employee or a professional meeting planner.

Conference Planning

There are two important questions to ask when considering to organise a conference:

- What purpose the conference has to achieve?
- How that purpose will be achieved?

Some of the more common purposes are to:

- Co-ordinate Activities
- Build Morale
- Secure Agreement
- Brief Staff/Clients

- Solve a Problem
- Exchange Information
- Initiate Policy
- Product Launch

Conference Planning Essentials

Conference management and planning includes several key components:

a) Venue/Facilities

Selecting the correct Venue may require lots of time. Preparing a check list for the conference facilities and requirements helps narrow down the search for appropriate venues for the conference. The following points should be decided prior to searching for a conference venue.

b) Location

To help decide the location, ask the following questions:

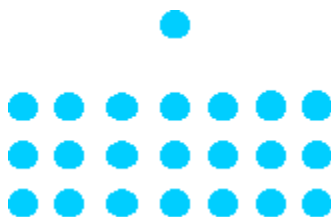
- How far are attendees travelling?
- If attendees are being flown in, how far the venue is from the nearest airport?
- How are attendees arriving to the venue? if by car, how long is the drive?
- Does it need to be close to the workplace? Or should it be away from the busy workplace?

c) Capacity

Ensure that the venue can provide enough space for the number attending the conference and the room layout is appropriate for the conference purpose. The following types of room layouts may be used:

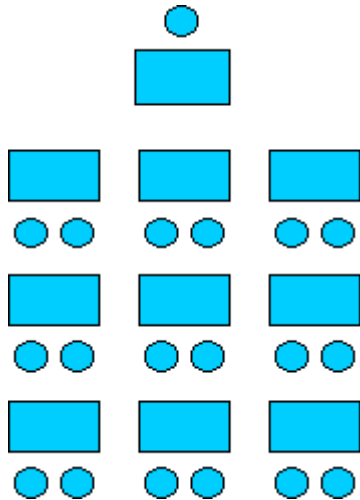
Theatre

This type of layout can be useful when the conference is held for briefing a large group, initiating a policy or for building morale and the attendees are not required to write anything.



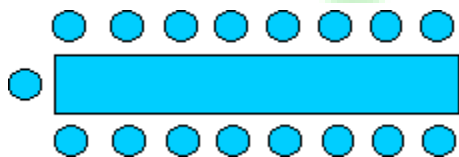
Class Room

This type of layout is used for briefing the large groups who are also required to take notes and to work in small groups of a maximum of 4 for exchanging information, or solving a problem.



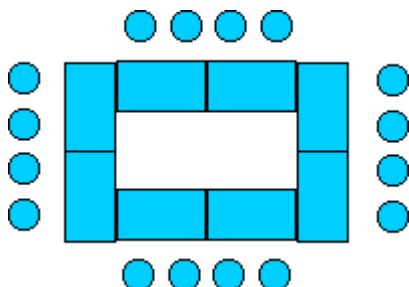
Board Room

This type of layout allows all participants to see each other in the conference and is useful for securing agreement or solving a problem amongst the group. But the group should not consist of more than 20 people.



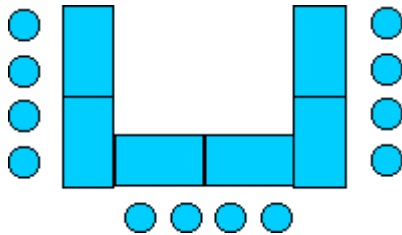
Hollow Square

The participants sit face to face but unlike the board room arrangement, There is more space across from participants.



U-Shaped

This type enables group interaction but the conference is focused around a facilitator at the front of the group.



Banquet Style

A large conference can be arranged in smaller groups seated around round or rectangular tables where group and workshop activities can be performed through the conference. The banquet style also encourages attendees to network with their immediate group at the conference.



Facilities

There are a number of facilities which should be considered for a conference:

- The presenter facilities eg speakers, mics, audio, visual aids, screens, boards, flipcharts etc.
- The attendee facilities eg catering, seating, lighting, break up rooms for workshops, writing materials etc.

Accommodation

If the conference is residential the venue should address the following issues:

- Whether the accommodation will be required close to the conference facilities
- How are the attendees to be roomed eg in pairs, triples,

Planning a Seminar

Like all successful enterprises, planning for a seminar should begin several months in advance by developing a theme. The following questions should be asked when planning a seminar:

- Is this seminar groundbreaking, philosophical, or technically-oriented?
- Who is the target audience?

An engaging keynote speaker is vital. Seek respected, renowned speakers early on, and use their reputation as a marketing tool.

Develop an audience profile, then market. Well-attended seminars are marketed 3-4 weeks in advance. Send e-mails (use BCC field to hide addressees), post flyers, write press releases, and use word-of-mouth. Eliminate direct mail – it normally doesn't work for seminars.

Setting the Date

When selecting a date, consider other professional meetings that may conflict with your chosen date.

Choosing a Site

When choosing a venue, do not select the nearest academic hall. Different seminar styles require different facility requirements. The higher the social calibre of the seminar, (e.g. the more VIP personalities) the more prestigious the venue must be. Additionally, the size of the location is dependent upon the estimated attendance figures.

When considering a hotel meeting site, it is best to evaluate at least 3 sites before making a final decision. The site visit should be arranged with the hotel banquet coordinator and attended by the Seminar Chair and one or more staff member.

The site visit should include a tour of the meeting space and sleeping rooms, discussion of meal and banquet functions and an overview of the Seminar space requirements. It is helpful to draft up a summary of days, events, meal functions and room requirements for the hotel to review during the site visit. It is important to ascertain whether the hotel has sufficient meeting space to accommodate both the participants and the vendors.

Meal and Banquet Considerations

During your site visit, ask for a complimentary lunch to get a sample of the catering menu. Outline for the hotel the number of breaks and meal functions that you are anticipating. You can provide the hotel with an estimate of the number of meals, but allow some flexibility based on registration. You should expect that the hotel will want guaranteed meal counts 72 hours before each meal.

Most hotels will charge you for all of the meals that you guarantee. If you overestimate the number, you may still have to pay for the meals. If you underestimate the number, you should only pay for the number of meals consumed. The general rule is to estimate about 10% below the actual numbers for all meal functions.

Planning Meetings and Conventions

Defining a Vision

The first step in planning a meeting or convention is determining the purpose, message, or impression that the sponsoring organisation wants to communicate. Planners increasingly focus on how meetings affect the goals of their organisations; for example, they may survey prospective attendees to find out what motivates them and how they learn best.

A more recent option for planners is to decide whether the meeting or convention can achieve goals in a virtual format versus the traditional meeting format. Virtual conferences are offered over the Internet where attendees view speakers and exhibits online. After this decision is made, planners then choose speakers, entertainment, and content, and arrange the programme to present the organisation's information in the most effective way.

Preparation for meeting and conventions should begin 6-18 months beforehand. Facilities, audiovisual rental equipment (which may include online conferencing equipment), caterers, tables and chairs, parking permits and accommodations need to be determined well ahead of time.

Choosing a venue

When choosing a site, consider who the prospective attendees are and how they will get to the meeting. Being close to a major airport is important for organisations that have attendees travelling long distances who are pressed for time. Select a site based on its attractiveness to increase the number of attendees.

Once locations for the meeting has been narrowed down, planner issues requests for proposals to all possible meeting sites in which he is interested. These requests state the meeting dates and outline the planner's needs for the meeting or convention, including meeting and exhibit space, lodging, food and beverages, telecommunications, audio-visual requirements, transportation, and any other necessities. The establishments respond with proposals describing what space and services they can supply, and at what price. Meeting and convention planners review these proposals and either make recommendations to the clients or management or choose the site themselves.

Budgeting

There is also a financial management component of the work. Planner negotiates contracts with facilities and suppliers. These contracts, which have become increasingly complex, are often drawn up more than a year in advance of the meeting or convention. Contracts often include clauses requiring the planner to

book a certain number of rooms for meetings in order to qualify for space discounts and imposing penalties if the rooms are not filled. Therefore, it is important that the planner closely estimates how many people will attend the meeting based on previous meeting attendance and current circumstances. The planner must also oversee the finances of meetings and conventions. He must create a detailed budget, forecasting what each aspect of the event will cost.

Once the location is selected, meeting and convention planners arrange support services, coordinate with the facility, prepare the site staff for the meeting, and set up all forms of electronic communication needed for the meeting or convention, such as e-mail, voice mail, video, and online communication.

Depending on the duration of the meeting, transportation and accommodation may be vital concerns. If a venue is selected with a parking lot nearby, where parking permits are required, these permits should be sent to the attendees as soon as possible.

Attendees should be alerted of the meeting 2-3 months beforehand. Formal invitations should be sent by direct mail, while a polite e-mail or phone message will otherwise suffice. Send periodic reminders that prominently display dates, directions, agenda, and other important information.

When attendees arrive, there should be a registration desk with name badges, itineraries and other information presented to them.

Evaluation

An important part of the work is measuring how well the meeting's purpose was achieved. After determining what the objectives are, planners try to measure if objectives were met and if the meeting or conference was a success. The most common way to gauge their success is to have attendees fill out surveys about their experiences at the event. Planners can ask specific questions about what sessions were attended, how well organised the event appeared, how they felt about the overall experience, and ask for suggestions on how to improve the next event

Opening Ceremonies

All opening ceremonies usually involve some sort of entertainment. For a large corporation, that could include some subtle piano music that plays while presentations are made. For sports ceremonies, there could be marching bands and trained dancers. Celebrity singers may also perform. For sporting events, the athletes may march into the venue, much like the Olympic event. Even if the rest of the meeting is all business, the opening day may be fun.

In addition to entertainment, most opening ceremonies have a planned agenda. That agenda could include a guest speaker, the unveiling of a new product or product advertisement (if the convention is for a large corporation) or an announcement including some good news. Even opening ceremonies for the small sporting events have a planned agenda with a mix of entertainment and speakers. The agenda is upbeat and fun. Since it takes a lot of time to choose and book speakers, planning for opening

ceremonies often begins a year before the actual event.

Deciding the venue is easy for some opening ceremonies, but some are more challenging. Sports ceremonies are usually held on the playing field which could be in an outdoor stadium. Sometimes if there are enough participants, the event could be held at a large convention hall near where the games are played. If you are holding the opening ceremony for a convention or annual meeting, you will want to have it in the same place where the rest of the event is being held. Another possibility is to hold it at a fun venue nearby, which ironically can include a stadium or playing field. The possibilities are endless.

You may need to do more as far as preparation and decoration for an opening ceremony for conventions or annual meetings. Opening ceremonies are festive events and the tone of the rest of the meeting may be more solemn. If the conference is being held for a week, it is unlikely that music, food and drinks may not be on the agenda for the entire meeting.

The guest lists may vary for an opening ceremony. Like the Olympics, some people may only attend the opening ceremony, no matter what the event is. Large corporations or associations may welcome the media to this event to get coverage. During the opening ceremony for Little League Baseball, every team and their parents may be there, prompting a need for a bigger venue. The attendance should be considered when planning.

Social Events

Social events can further divided and subdivided into many categories. Main divisions are Leisure Events and Private Events.

There are further sub divisions in each type.

Leisure

Sports Events

Sports events are differentiable in two basic types: spectator and participant events. There are many reasons to plan a spectator sports event. It may be an enjoyable break after a stressful period in business, a celebration for meeting some goal or milestone, or it may be a motivational tool to grant recognition for achievements such as reaching specific quotas or objectives.

Spectator events are often chosen to match a theme or an objective that the organisation wants to promote. Spectator events require advance planning to coordinate all the details. Tickets may need to be purchased well in advance. Transportation to the game could be an informal carpool, chartered bus or limousine, depending on the number attending, cost factors, and preferences.

Participant sporting events are a lot more difficult to coordinate. The first consideration is the event budget, and sources of funds. Will the event be wholly sponsored by one organisation, or will you be

looking for multiple sponsors to share costs? What is the purpose of the event? A fundraising event will have free promotional options that can cut costs.

Other budget considerations include the following: What type of refreshments will be provided? Will sponsors be given some form of recognition, such as certificates, or a display ad “thank you” in the local newspaper? What recognition will be provided to winners? Trophies, medals, and certificates are common forms of recognition. Will you need to rent a location for your exclusive use such as a baseball field, or will your event fit in around the location’s regular business (golf or bowling).

Stadiums are perfect venues to host events with a huge number of participants. A unique and unmatched creative ingenious idea for a venue location is a stadium. With obvious parking and seating capacities nearly unmatched, stadiums are great venues for tremendous events.

Festivals

Festivals are grand, glorious multi-phase events that often take place over several days. Festivals require a great deal of more organisation than an event that takes place over a few hours.

a) Why a Festival?

The first step towards festival planning is defining the objectives for the festival. It is very important to keep these objectives in mind during the planning and execution of the event. There are several basic reasons to plan a festival or event.

b) To Make Money

This could be an event for profit or to generate funds for other public good (another event, refurbish a historic building, a community centre etc.).

c) To Create a Community Event

This helps to increase the quality of life for your community.

d) Economic Impact

Events can have a positive impact on the economy of your community by bringing money into the local economy i.e. attracting tourists.

e) For Education

Communities may get together for conducting an event to emphasise local historic events, or to educate people about natural resources of the area.

Choosing a Theme and Name

Organising a festival usually begins by deciding a festival theme and name of the festival. The festival theme may help direct the planning effort; i.e. the Strawberry Festival takes place during strawberry harvest.

They may also be derived from holidays, local history, ethnic or cultural events, holidays, or the arts. If there are several themes to choose from, consider which theme may be easiest to promote both now and in the future. Also consider which themes lend themselves to a variety of activities. It may also be easier to recruit volunteers or obtain sponsors with a popular theme.

Themes can fall into a wide variety of categories:

- Anything Creative
- Local History
- Ethnic or Cultural
- Agriculture
- Holidays or Seasonal Events
- Arts, Crafts & Hobbies
- Music & The Arts
- Local Industry
- Natural Resources

It does not have to be a really clever name, but something unique that will catch the eye of festival goers. A unique name will go a long way in helping you promote your event. Of course the shorter the name the better it will be.

A festival is usually a community project and often begins by selecting a board representing a cross section of the community. Community leaders may be recruited from area corporations, small businesses, professional organisations, social clubs and civic clubs, as well as local government, school and church leaders.

Choosing a Time for your Festival

For a major event like a festival, make sure that there are no date conflicts with other major events in the area.

Concerts

Concerts are usually public events, and as such, they present a whole different level of challenges in planning and preparation. There are fundamental questions which guide the planning process and help assure an enjoyable event.

Concerts may be hosted by the artist as a promotional or fund-raising effort. Or they may be promoted as a profit venture, or may be a joint effort by the artist and venue. They may even be semi-public, such as a school band concert.

Choosing an appropriate location is key to a concert's success. How large an audience is expected? How much seating and parking will be required? For an outdoor concert, what weather contingencies do you need to plan for? What are auditory, power, and setup requirements? What is the cost of the venue, and what is included in that fee?

The audience profile or genre may suggest additional special needs: that gospel concert may benefit from special assistants to help elderly or disabled attendees; the heavy metal group may require additional security personnel or a liaison with local law enforcement.

The event budget will require attention to detail. Funding may come from an initial capital investment supplemented by ticket sales, sponsor fees, merchandise sales, refreshment sales, or donations. Facility rentals, permits, and insurance are common expenses to expect. Promotional expenses include public relations, advertising (TV, radio, Internet, and print) and may include printing costs for tickets and programmes. Besides being paid for the performance, musicians may expect transportation and lodging be paid, or a guarantee that expenses will be met. Performers may further expect a staging area with cold drinks and refreshments, and a dressing area to prepare for the show.

While most musicians provide their own audio equipment, you can help prepare for technical difficulties by providing non-local musicians with directions to local music stores and electronics retailers in their information packet.

If the concert is being held as a fund-raiser, be sure to take advantage of free publicity options before, during, and after the event. A concert is a complex event requiring coordinated timing and attention to detail. A professional event planner can help assure the concert's success.

Fashion Shows

Fashion shows are fun and a challenge for any event management and the involved event planners. They are also a complex blend of activities, many requiring split-second timing. Most fashion shows last about an hour, depending on a number of factors: the size of the audience, the number of models, the number of outfits, any entertainment or other activities.

Fashion shows can be held in the evening or early afternoon. Evening shows may last several hours and include an interval with entertainment, while afternoon shows may include a lunch.

Planning a Fashion Show

a) When?

Begin planning 6 – 8 weeks before the event. Contact community partners, retail stores, and sponsors early in the planning process.

b) Theming a Fashion Show

Many fashion shows follow a theme such as ‘dramatic’ (black and white), ‘romantic’ (pretty pastels and frilly designs, or ‘retro’ (choose your era).

Pick a theme for your show and consider if you wish to include fashions other than formal wear. Use the theme in your advertising, music, staging, and clothing. Audio/visual needs will include both background music and amplified vocals.

c) Venue and Date

The date and the venue have to be decided upon before proceeding with plans; the venue needs to include a staging area (for clothing racks and final preparations, as well as a private dressing area). If your venue does not have the materials to assemble a catwalk, you may need to arrange to rent something portable or build your own.

d) Assigning Responsibilities

Most fashion shows require a number of key personnel. These include the wardrobe manager/stylist, who makes sure the clothes are kept in good condition. This person may locate models, fit models to clothes, and determine the order in which the clothes are displayed. The hair and makeup artist dramatises the images of the models. A prize and programme manager can coordinate door prizes and prepare the programme for the event. Finally, the promotion manager will organise the promotional aspects of the show.

Break up responsibilities into smaller groups including music, promotion/tickets, clothing, and show co-ordination, sound, hair, stage crew, decorations, setup/teardown/cleanup ...etc. A fundraising show being held to raise awareness of a given issue may include a guest speaker or presentation on the issue.

Personal Events

Weddings

As couples begin thinking about their wedding, they are often confused as to how much to spend, where to obtain specialised services, and how to choose vendors. There are things to plan about everything

from invitation wording to planning their honeymoon. Couples often find they want experienced professional help.

Not long ago, a wedding coordinator was thought of as a luxury, only used by the wealthy. Now a coordinator is essential to the well planned affair. It is no longer "trendy" to engage a coordinator. Being experienced in negotiating contracts with caterers, florists, photographers, and other suppliers, the coordinator saves valuable time and money. The coordinator can take advantage of discounts not available to private parties and avoid costly mistakes, while turning your dreams into reality.

The wedding planner ensures that everything goes exactly as planned right from the initial stage to the closing stage. He not only assists client in making right selection and choosing the perfect wedding vendors and venue but also maintains a balance in what is happening, when it is happening, who is doing it while keeping a strict watch that everything goes within budget.

Wedding Budget

Here is a basic breakdown of main expenses for a wedding:

Reception: 48%-50%

Ceremony: 2%-3%

Attire: 8%-10%

Flowers: 8%-10%

Entertainment/Music: 8%-10%

Photography/Videography: 10%-12%

Stationery: 2%-3%

Wedding Rings: 2%-3%

Parking/Transportation: 2%-3%

Gifts: 2%-3%

Miscellaneous: 8%

To avoid stress, about 5% of the budget should be spare for "just-in-case" fund.

What Wedding Planners do?

A wedding planner usually performs the following duties during the course of conducting a wedding party:

- Finding a venue for the reception and/or ceremony or vow-exchange site;
- Helping with budget analysis and/or preparation;
- Helping client with choice of colours, wedding themes, and/or styles;
- Helping with the choices of dresses;
- implement or coordinate themes and decor;

- setting up the ceremony and reception spaces: providing guest logistics, such as seating, arrangement, selection, refreshments;
- Assisting with speech and vow preparation;
- Planning and preparing the itinerary;
- meeting vendors and deliveries, and handling any no-shows
- solving other last-minute emergencies
- running the rehearsal
- making sure that the wedding party is on time and in the right places
- coordinating the reception timeline
- dealing with wedding crashers and unruly guests
- Finding accommodations for out-of-town guests;
- Planning the honeymoon;
- Making hotel arrangements for after the wedding
- Ensuring that the space is left clean and that the client will get the deposits back
- Collecting personal items wedding gifts and making sure they get back to the client safely.
- Returning rentals and borrowed items.

Special Party and Celebration

Many Event Planners specialise in one or two type of events, especially those who are self-employed. Large organisations can produce a wide variety of high-end events simultaneously.

These occasions can be categorised as celebrations, commemorations, charitable and promotional affairs. There are a wide variety of special purpose events within these classifications, including:

- Graduations
- Birthday parties
- Family reunions
- Class reunions
- Fund raising
- Political rallies
- Corporate meetings
- Gallery openings;
- Birthdays;
- Engagement parties;
- Sweet 16/suave 16;
- Band introductions;
- Music album release launches;
- Movie premieres;

- Award dinners and shows;
- Car shows;
- Fashion shows;
- Cocktail parties;
- Fancy food shows ;
- Fairs;
- Fundraisers;
- Carnivals;
- Housewarmings;
- Wedding showers;
- Baby showers;
- Promotional events.

Special party planners or coordinators have number of duties to perform some of them are similar to those of a wedding planner. Therefore most of the wedding planners work as special party planners as well.

a) The Theme

If the client does not have any idea about a theme for the party, the planner sits with him asks questions about his personality, likes, and dislikes and creates several party themes for him to choose from. Once a theme is selected, the planner organises all the other details to coordinate with that theme for the party.

b) The Budget

To make an appropriate budget for the planned party, the event planner establishes the scope of the event by asking client about his budget. For this he needs to know whether the client intends to plan an extravagant party or something simple.

c) The Date

The date should be picked up carefully, so it does not conflict with family birthdays, anniversaries, school field trips, etc.

d) Party Location

The event planner makes sure whether this party is being held at home, in a rented facility or a public place?

e) Number of Guests

The event planner should have a clear idea about the guest before planning. How many adults and children are expected to attend the party?

f) Age Range(s)

The planner should know about the age ranges of the children attending the party. He will have to plan activities for them accordingly.

g) Menu

When planning the menu the planner makes sure what kinds of foods will be served? How much food will be required?

h) Invitations

How the invitations will be designed and sent?

i) Decorations and Supplies

This includes items like plates, cups, forks, table cloths, decorations, items for 'goodie bags' or favours at the end of the party. This list should also include chairs and tables (either yours or rented, or borrowed).

j) Schedule

Finally, to pull it all together, the planner will have to develop a party 'schedule'

Event Planning Essentials

Flowers

Flowers impart a sense of formality to an event, providing an attractive anchor to the event theme in the décor of reception areas, tabletops and stage backdrops. Flowers may also be incorporated into ladies' restrooms, flank entryways, or grace serving and buffet tables. In addition, serving personnel smartly accessorised with floral boutonnieres incorporates them into the décor to impart a sense of richness and elegance that promotes an impressive and memorable event.

Floral displays can be created in large, floor-standing urns, incorporated into long, sweeping swags, twine around stairway banisters, or curl lazily around supporting columns and posts. Available in silk, greenery can define paths and walkways, establish bowers and arches, or accent table fronts and booth backdrops.

Floral arrangements are best relegated to the services of a knowledgeable and experienced florist, well-versed in making suggestions for floral arrangements that maintain their good looks for the duration of the event. Choose a florist capable of meeting the needs of a large order; many smaller florists may not have the means for obtaining massive numbers of plants, or refrigerating large displays.

Check into the prices of silk flowers as well, and those businesses that provide plants to office buildings, malls and hospitals. Greenery may also be rented, both silk and real, which may be perfectly suited for an outstanding event.

Decoration

Decorations at an event are necessary for setting the mood, framing the emotion and underscoring the importance of the event. While decorating is often the most exciting part of event planning, it is one area where too many cooks can spoil the broth. The décor relies on collaboration among event coordinators to arrive at a common agreement of what the event theme is all about, and then punctuates the idea with décor that is intrinsic to the theme. Decorating can be simple or as extensive as coordinated colours of tablecloths, napkins and the colours of clothing event personnel wear. Decorating with flowers is always a winner, and lends style to banquet table centrepieces and anchors stage backdrops. Ribbon streamers and bows also lend opulence to the affair, particularly when utilised as trimmings on tables, stages, or around entry doors.

Sound

Sound equipment for an event is especially important when guest speakers will be delivering talks to event guests, announcements must be heard over the din of a large crowd, or the event is highlighted by a live band or DJ.

While bands and DJs often bring with them the necessary equipment to ply their trade, very large rooms, outdoor events and events with a variety of activity occurring simultaneously within a number of separate areas often requires the introduction of additional audio speakers dispersed throughout event areas.

Guest speakers will require the help of a sound system to be heard among a large audience, and with the advent of headphone microphones and wireless connection. Still, the sound system cannot deliver audio information or music without the key elements of wiring, electricity, soundboards or CD players to provide the instruments of producing sound, or regulating their tone or volume. The common complaints registered by guests at events are either the insufficiency of adequate sound volume, or the imposing excess of such.

Bands and DJs also require adequate sound equipment to deliver soothing music, danceable beats and entertaining patter to keep audiences engaged, announce selections, or solicit requests. Not only do the rooms within which these entertainers perform need to be acoustically designed to dampen hollow echoing; additional speakers at strategic locations perform to diminish this effect. Monitors are

necessary for guest speakers as well, giving performers the ability to hear their own delivery, thereby adjusting their vocalisations for clarity.

Event Photos

Photographs provide a record of past events for use in future event promotion, and become an archive of attending guests, speakers, or special moments. Photographers may be contracted to capture the event in its entirety, or retained to only cover a specific portion of it.

Photographers are responsible for providing their own equipment for shooting the event, replete with cameras, lenses, filters, necessary lighting and film. Pricing is generally in accordance to a specific number of shots, or by a package offering a diversity of finished photo sizes.

The photographer may also be versed in photograph retouching, capable of air-brushing unwanted backgrounds from event shots for use in printed media, as well as correcting colour, red eyes, or the occasional unflattering photo capture. For large events, the services of a number of photographers may be necessary to cover the myriad goings-on at the event

Catering

Catering is one of the most important ingredients for the planning of some common events. Caterers can be individuals, small businesses, or chefs associated with a hotel or restaurant. Many hotel venues offer in-house catering services, or may suggest a proven and responsible catering service with which they have enjoyed a professional relationship. Caterers typically provide the serving dishes for a buffet, such as chafing dishes, warming trays, serving utensils and beverages, such as tea and coffee.

The caterer must have an idea of the number of guests expected to attend the banquet, and details must be defined as to the types of drinks to be served, the selections of hors d'oeuvres prior to the main meal, and the desserts that follow. In addition, the caterer may provide servers for the event, and needful equipment such as chafing dishes, plates, glasses, and tableware. Necessarily, these details must be carefully considered, that the event take place without experiencing the horror of a banquet marred by the lack of personnel, necessary tools to conduct food service, or worse, running out of food.

Floor Plan

When moving a lot of people through an event, knowledge of the venue floor space is crucial to proper planning.

Location of electrical outlets, essential for lighting, computers, sound equipment and running vendor refrigerators will determine the location of display booths, ticket counters, and food carts. Stages require a lot of room, as do dance floors and areas determined for lecture seating. Product display booths may be joined together by means of backdrop curtain units used to define display spaces, and the widespread use of computers requires access to Internet capabilities.

Live bands require space for the setup of instruments, the placing of speakers, and the positioning of related sound equipment, electrically driven. Furthermore, caterers will require food preparation areas, places to store needful plates, silverware and glassware, and areas for servers to congregate. Display props also take up valuable floor footage, such as signage easels, urns and large floral displays.

Invitations

Invitations are essential parts of many events. For small, personal or closed events, where only a specific number of people are invited to attend, invitations are a must.

Invitations fall within the realm of the commercial printer. Selection of quality papers, distinctive fonts, properly sized envelopes and RSVP cards for return remittance compromise the classic invitation. Just as importantly, the tone of the invitation, the words used to express the invitation and the times and location of the event must be obtained before the invitations are ordered, that printing and processing may be completed in a timely fashion.

Invitations are commonly distributed at least 3 weeks prior to an event, and if more time is necessary, determined by the size and scope of the event, they may be sent to recipients even earlier. Printing likewise takes time, and if it is part of the promotional process for the event, the invitations become one of the earliest details to attend to, once the venue and timeline of the event are established.

For political, religious and business-related gatherings, the invitation may be included in a mailing with a newsletter or other information, such as brochures, or include prompts to encourage a remission of monies for reserving lodging, transportation, or banquet attendance. There may also be options presented for participating in special events related to, but not part of, the main event, such as the dedication of monuments, buildings, or the opening of new businesses.

Event Security

Security is an important consideration at events that centre round visiting celebrities, political candidates and children; Security is also a necessity for providing safe transport of monies gathered through ticket sales, or for providing vendor registers with necessary cash. Security personnel further help deter the opportunities found among crowds for pickpockets, scam artists, and thieves. The security force also observes the incoming and outgoing of equipment, breaks up arguments, and calls in emergency personnel if the need ever presents itself.

Security personnel can be obtained from company ranks or membership rosters. They can also be found among willing volunteers, a security company, or off-duty and retired police officers. The extent of security's responsibilities must be carefully defined so the event may progress with the least amount of disruption, the fewest unfortunate incidences with the greatest invisibility. While most guests will appreciate the presence of security at an event when entering a strange parking garage or finding themselves among people who've had a bit to drink, security serves its purposes best when it is not needed.

Security needs to be adequate to provide observational coverage for the event floor as well as being adequate to handle crowd situations. Whether determining the number of security personnel in accordance to coverage of square feet, coverage by ratio of security personnel to guests, or manning specific stations such as ticket booths or parking garages, the basic requirements remain the same.

Parking

Parking to accommodate guests at an event is an essential part of event preparation. Not only does adequate parking serve to avoid making unhappy guests, it increases event attendance by guests who might otherwise stay away if they must walk a long distance.

If the selected venue does not offer adequate parking to accommodate the anticipated number of guests, consider offering transportation from remote parking facilities to the event, to alleviate congestion. Additionally, instructing vendors, delivery trucks, and other event personnel to park in other designated areas will contribute to more free spaces for guest parking.

The employment of personnel to direct parking may become a necessity, particularly when parking in open fields or lawn areas as commonly occurs with outdoor events. Not only does this serve to fill parking areas more expediently, it prevents the spread of cars into areas that might be damaged by motor vehicles, or that may become mired or stuck in low-lying areas prone to filling with rainwater.

Security is likewise needed for parking areas during evening hours, when guests are returning to their vehicles to drive home after leaving the event.

Further Reading:

- ✓ *Event Management: A Professional and Developmental Approach, (2000) By Greg Damster, Dimitri Tassiopoulos*
- ✓ *Events Management: An International Approach, (2012) By Nicole Ferdinand, Paul Kitchin*
- ✓ *Events Feasibility and Development: From Strategy to Operations, (2011) By William O'Toole*