

Event planning is an art. Someone who doesn't mind thinking about a lot of details has a chance in succeeding in this industry. What makes a top notch event planner is his/her ability to connect the dots, troubleshoot, think fast, negotiate, bring life to imagination and deliver everything with professionalism.

Coordinating an event is not as easy as it seems. Event Planning is a talent that only a few people have and a task that even fewer people really enjoy. Plenty of bright-eyed, young dreamers assume that event planning is fun. They think that "party planning" is all about the glamorous life. What they don't realize is that event planners are slaves to the details that people don't even think about. Planners spend their time thinking of every detail!

The biggest challenge with event planning is the management of details. The details can be daunting but I wanted to give you a complete guide on how to manage your event so you don't have to stress on the 'day of.' I want to prepare you for the battle of making sure that you host a seamless and successful event.

This guide is for anyone who is planning to take on the task of coordinating a big event. Whether the event is a wedding, a grand opening, a launch party or a baby shower, this e-book will help you mentally and physically prepare for the tasks ahead. You will learn the professional aspect of event planning and also consider the marketing and promotional elements for your success. Even if you are planning a personal event, this e-book will help you prepare to think of every single detail.

First, I want to establish how important *note taking* is in the process of event planning. When people or vendors state important details, you need to take notes of the details and the time and date of the conversation. Once you are knee-deep in the planning of your event, it's important that you have thorough notes. Review all the due dates and make sure that every date you agree to gives you enough time to correct any possible mishaps. Even more important than notes, is your *Event Marketing Plan*, especially if you are putting together a business event.

An *Event Marketing Plan* serves as a guideline and reminder of how you want to present your event to your target market so as to avoid steering away from your main purpose. It's easy to get distracted and forget the real purpose of your event. This 10 Step Guide to a Successful Event can help you maximize your event experience and improve your results.

This 10 Step Guide is a basic list of elements you must consider to have a successful event.

#### I. DO YOUR RESEARCH AND DON'T REINVENT THE WHEEL



So you thought of an event that you want to host to help your business thrive but you have no clue where to start. I want to save you time from brainstorming and tell you that almost any event you can think of has already been done. Utilize the internet and see how others have organized an event similar to yours.

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#### II. ATER TO YOUR TARGET MARKET



Knowing your target market is essential to the success of your campaign, promotion and marketing of your event. If you know who you need to reach, then you do not have to waste your time on frivolous gimmicks that cater to unintended audiences.

#### III. CLEARLY DEFINE YOUR GOAL



#### Why are you hosting this event?

This tip comes from a personal experience that I want you to learn from. One of my first big events was a fashion show and I was hired by a non-profit to help them launch their company. Because I was fairly new, I didn't have any system or procedure questions to ask my client that can help clarify goals. So, with great excitement I started working right away and focused on having a big fashion show with impressive models and designers. The event was successful and my client was pleased but deep inside, I realized that I could have implemented a lot of elements during the event to help the non-profit gain supporters and donors.

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#### IV. RECRUIT HELPERS FOR YOUR EVENT





This is the perfect time to ask your (responsible) friends for favors. Make sure all your employees/interns are scheduled to work that day. If all else fails, you can contact a local group/organization or post a craigslist ad for volunteers. You will be surprise how many people are out there looking for events to volunteer at.

Make them feel special for taking the time to help at your event whether you are paying them or not. Send them an official letter asking them to be a part of your event and that you need their help. Make sure to be clear about your request and expectations on that letter so that if they choose to accept the challenge, they wouldn't be surprised with how much work there is involved. Here's a sample letter:



If attendees are required to purchase a ticket for admission to your event, then it will be easier for you to plan exactly what you need. If your event is free, there are ways you can require for your attendees to register. For instance, you can giveaway free gifts for those who are registered online or they can qualify for exclusive promotion. Make sure that you specify ahead of time what perks your VIP ticket holders will be getting versus the General Admission guests. Ultimately, you want to sell a lot of VIP tickets as it will give you a larger profit margin so take the time to make the VIP option very attractive. Offer free swag bags (goodie bags), better seats, express check-in process, red carpet access, backstage access, etc...

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#### VI. OBTAIN SPONSORS, PARTNERS, OR CO-HOSTS

Event Planning Tip #6

Obtain a sponsor, partner or co-host



In my experience, collaborating with other professionals and like-minded people is a surefire way of getting more traffic in the door. Also, depending on the circumstances, I am not against collaborating with people who offer similar products or services. Why? - Because I am confident and comfortable with competition.

In collaborating with other people, regardless if they are a competitor or not, the result usually is that you are able to reach more people when it comes to marketing and promotion. Of course, try and establish some type of partnership agreement where all parties are required to promote the event to their followers.

#### **MAJOR SPONSOR:**

It's everybody's dream to have a big company sponsor their event but how can you do this effectively? You will have to prepare a sponsorship package. The package should be designed effectively by highlighting the benefits for the sponsoring company. The most important factor that companies and corporations look for is CONVERSION! The second most important thing is EXPOSURE. The third is RECOGNITION.

#### **SERVICE TRADE SPONSORS:**

There are companies that lack the budget to sponsor events/activities but can trade a valuable service that you can use. For instance, if you find a graphic designer who is willing to design your flyers and ad images, then that company can technically be your graphic design sponsor. This type of sponsorship normally doesn't require a packet but honoring the sponsors by including their logo on print materials (flyers, banners, backdrops).

#### **GIVEAWAY SPONSORS:**

If you are expecting a lot of attendees, then it would make sense to offer a sponsorship that will allow companies to place promotional products or samples in the goodie "swag" bags. Again, the information regarding your target market and estimated reach will be an important factor in closing a giveaway sponsor. They want to know that you audience matches their customer profile.

The next section will show an example of sponsorship options and benefits, which is the main content of a sponsorship package. A complete sponsorship package should include:

#### VII. PROMOTE YOUR EVENT!



## Event Planning Tip #7

# Promote Your Event Sweeneymae.com

Promote at least two (2) weeks in advance; however, one (1) month of promotion is ideal. There are plenty to be done 30 days before your event and here is checklist for a successful event:

#### \_\_\_\_ 30 Days to go:

- Make sure that the flyers are finished and are posted on all Social Media Channels. There is nothing better than seeing a cohesive campaign. Besides the flyers, you will need to request your graphic artist to design the same flyer in a few different sizes. For instance, with Instagram, a perfect square photo works best!
  - Social Media layouts change often so I don't want to list the sizes because they could change by the time you are reading this book ©. Just Google "Facebook Cover Photo" or "profile photo" sizes.
- Hire a photographer/s for your event. Post an ad on craigslist including the details of the
  event and that you need photographers that can deliver 20-50 photos within three days
  after the event. If you are planning a wedding, your photographer should be hired at least
  90 days before your wedding.

#### \_\_\_29 Days to go:

• Create an Event Page on Facebook and invite as many friends as you can! Here is a Javascript that you can use to automatically invite ALL your friends without having to individually check their names:

javascript:elms=document.getElementsByName("checkableitems[]"); for (i=0;i<elms.length;i++) (if (elms[i].type="checkbox")elms[i].click());

Here is a tutorial on how to use this JavaScript:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XP6kbkabQpo

Note: There is a slight chance that the instructions won't work for you. This depends on your computer and browser set ups. If the YouTube tutorial doesn't work, try and search for a different javascript.

#### \_\_\_28 Days to go:

Make sure to post something relevant on the event page. Post the official flyer for the event
on the event page. Personally message your friends and ask them to share the event for
you. Sending messages is a daunting task and it could take a few hours. Take your time and
make your messages sound personal.

#### VIII. **INVITE THE PRESS!**



# Invite The PRESS

Write a press release and send it out at least 10 days before the event. If you are not familiar with press releases, go ahead and Google a few examples. Press Releases are sent to your media or city contacts. A Press Release reveals all the important details that any journalists might need to cover your story. The media is interested in "juicy" stories and it is important that you think about an "angle" you can use to make your event "newsworthy."

If you are producing a fashion show, you have to ask yourself, why would a reporter/journalist want to cover my event? What kind of story will get their attention? Is it the non-profit approach? Is it that your host is a tv personality? Or are you showcasing high profile designers? What is unique about your event and more importantly, would people be interested in reading about it?

In creating a press release, the main point to remember is that you have to keep it simple and straight forward. If you are going to write your own press release here are a few tips:

- a. Answer the questions: who, what, when, where on your first paragraph then give more details on the next paragraphs.
- b. Do not be long winded and keep it to one page only if possible.
- c. Make sure that the Press contact is found on top of the page.
- d. In smaller fonts at the bottom, provide information about your company and other company's involved.
- e. It has to be "newsworthy" to grab the journalists' attention. Coming up with "newsworthy" angles will and can benefit your event.

Here is an example of a press release:

#### IX. PREPARE A "DAY OF" SCHEDULE FOR VOLUNTEERS

### Event Planning Tip #9

# Prepare a "Day Of" Schedule for Staff and Volunteers

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It's important to list all the duties of all your volunteers or staff on the day of the event. List the specific times that each activity/event needs to happen to make sure that you are on schedule. Schedule a pre-event meeting at least 1 day before your event. This way, the information will stay fresh in memory.

Prepare and delegate for the following tasks:

- 1. Who is in charge of set up and what time should they start decorating?
- 2. Who is in charge of the guest sign in? How will the VIP guests be registered? How will the lines for registration be structured?
- 3. How will the guests know where to register? What signages are needed outside the building? Will balloons help?
- 4. After the guests have registered, how will they know where to go? How many ushers do you need?

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#### X. LABEL ALL YOUR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS



Prepare IDs for all staff including Press, Volunteers, Security, and Performers. Preparing proper credentials will contribute to the overall "look/organization" of your event. The most cost effective way of doing this are stick on name tags but the best way is investing in lanyards and ID holders.

This also provides great customer service for when guests have any questions or concerns, they know exactly who to talk to.

#### **FULL E-BOOK VERSION EXCLUSIVE BONUS TIP:**