

## **Event Planning Basics**

Here are some key areas to focus on when you begin planning a meeting or event:

1. The name of the company, association or department that the meeting is being planned for.
2. What kind of event is it? i.e. national sales meeting, client conference.
3. What is the objective of the meeting?
4. Will you have a theme for the meeting?
5. What will the event consist of i.e. opening/closing keynote speaker, luncheon entertainment, breakout sessions, workshops, cocktail party. Each segment should be separately organized and then incorporated into the overall event.
6. The number of days the event will take place over. Come up with a timeline.
7. Date of the event. Come up with a preferred date and have second and third choices.
8. Commencement date in the AM or PM and the date and time that the meeting will be over.
9. Size of the event. How many attendees are expected ?
10. Check the calendar to make sure that your date is free of conflict with religious holidays, other industry events etc
11. Determine the budget that you are working with.
12. Put together a plan for publicity, promotion and advertising.
13. Determine how many guest rooms and how many meeting rooms will be required.
14. Meals and food/beverages that will be available on-site.
15. Audio visual and sound equipment. What will be required?
16. Entertainment – will entertainment will bought in and be part of your meeting or be provided off-site?
17. Transportation - people/freight.
18. Insurance
19. Estimated overall expense.

## **Event Promotion Checklist**

1. Web promotion. Provide all details about the event on your company or association website. Update the information as it is available.
2. Establish a mailing list.
3. Set-up mailing dates for mailing out conference materials.
4. Will advance notice be sent out and if so, when?
5. Arrange for photographs, prior to the event and during the event. Make event photographs available on website following the event.
6. Pre-printed promotional materials
7. Publicity kits and posters.
8. Advertising on radio, TV, newspaper, magazines, on the internet.

9. Publicity – arrange media publicity on TV, radio, in newspapers, magazines.
10. Have a Press Room available on-site.

**Meeting Planner Tip:**

Provide a brief survey for web registrants to give you instant feedback on whether online registration was user friendly. Good opportunity to implement some of your attendees' suggestions.

**Janie Parrott with NRECA**

**VIP Tips from Meeting Planners:**

Provide your Speakers and VIPs with a Special Break Room equipped with refreshments for their convenience. The room will serve as a break room during the conference and a spot they can mix and mingle with other speakers and VIPs participating in the event.

**Diane with U.S. Department of Transportation/HCDI**

When VIPs requiring security are to be met at the airport, email their photo to the company providing the transportation, or person picking up the VIP. This eliminates the need for the driver to hold up a conspicuous name card. Also, require the driver to provide ID to the VIP.

**Virginia Quintero Rosell with The Conference Source LLC**

**Great Sound is a Key Part of Any Meeting**

When working with an in-house AV company, remember that their equipment is not unlimited. Always do your homework before you leave the office. Research AV companies in the host city and bring at least 2 contact names with you to the event. It is generally assumed that an in-house company has plenty of back stock equipment for last minute requests and this is not always the case. Good outside contractors typically bring extra equipment with them. You as the customer may be able to bring in last minute equipment faster or CHEAPER compared to what the in-house company can provide. Having the 2 company names on hand can save you time and money!

**Megan Kiessling Association Conference Manager, with Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Providers of NYS**