

Meeting Planner's Notebook

To avoid last minute panic — or for that matter panic at any time — here are a few things you absolutely must not be caught without:

- Two-sided tape for affixing messages and notices to whatever they need to be attached to. Also Scotch and masking tape.
- Duct tape, the handyman's best friend, for fixing almost anything, for taping unsightly and potentially hazardous electric wiring and computer cabling to the floor or podium, and other endless uses.
- Stapler, staples and staple remover.
- A small toolkit. Screwdriver with assorted blades. Small box of screws. Scissors and pliers, for cutting and tightening. A utility knife.
- Extra name tags—someone is always a last minute addition, and people, inexplicably, routinely lose their names.
- Markers in various colors and pens/pencils.
- Whiteout.
- Your cellular phone and/or beeper—and phone charger or extra battery. If you don't have a cell phone—rent one. Invaluable for checking reservations, and transportation emergencies.
- Parking vouchers for the venue.
- An easy-to-carry notepad or notebook, with several pens.
- Mini first-aid kit.
- Kleenex.
- Breath Mints. Maalox for nervous or dyspeptic speakers.
- Air-bills for shipping materials to and from the office, if it's out-of-town. Courier slips or cab chits for in-town meetings or events.
- Your laptop computer, fully charged, with charger and phone cord for your modem.
- At least one diskette with backup copies of the agenda, and all the signage etc. for last-minute changes or extra copies at Kinko's.
- An easily accessible printed list of important phone numbers and all contacts for all planned activities, and emergency numbers for computer repair/rental, cab company, etc.
- Rubber bands.
- Note cards to make extra place cards in a pinch. Also for guests who use note cards for last-minute speech changes.
- Cash for tipping.
- Comfortable shoes, an extra jacket, especially in summer, to deal with over-vigorous air-conditioning. Wear something with pockets for quick tipping and easy access to business cards.