

Event Planning

4 Steps in Planning a Successful Event:

Step 1: Research

Step 2: Plan

Step 3: Execute

Step 4: Evaluate

Step 1: Research

1. What?

2. Who?

3. Where?

4. When?

What? – The Purpose

- What is the purpose for the event?
- Why do I want to have the event?
- How am I going to meet the goals of the event?

Who? - The Guests

○ Who is the event for?

○ How many people do you expect?

Where? - The Location

○ Where should this event be held?

○ When do I want this event to happen? What time during the day?

When? – The Date/Time

- Is my event time sensitive?
- What time of day do I want the event?
- What time of year do I want the event?

Helpful tips for researching:

○ START PLANNING EARLY!

○ “The way to do things is to begin.”
– Horace Greenley

○ Be flexible with dates and times when looking for locations! Come up with at least 3 alternate dates and times.

Helpful tips for researching:

- When setting the date/time, be mindful of other events that might be going on that could possibly interfere with your event.

Step 2: Plan

○What?

○Who?

○Where?

○How?

What? - The Budget

- What is my budget for this event?
- What do I expect to be my biggest expenses?
- How am I going to allocate my money?
- How much am I wanting to spend in each area?

***Who?* – The Committee**

- Who is willing to help plan the event?
- What are his/her talents?
- How can we break down the event planning process?
- What areas would my volunteers be the most useful in?

Where? – The Location

- Is it available on my ideal date/time?
- Is it big enough for my anticipated guest count?
- What is the cost?

Where? – The Location

- Can the room be set up how I want/need for it to be?
- Do I have any audio/visual needs? If so, how can the location work with me on that?
- Do I need catering? If so, does the location offer a catering service? Or allow outside vendors? What about set up and/or clean up?

How? – The Advertising

○ How will I attract my target market?

○ What types of advertising should I do?

○ Where should I advertise?

Helpful tips for planning:

- Get 3 price quotes when looking at vendors. This will help you find the best deal.
- Always have a back-up plan. Prepare for the worst.

Helpful tips for planning:

- Keep others involved in the process. They might think of something that you didn't!
- After finding an officer or member to be a committee chair, have the other members choose a committee to help with! Planning an event can be a great team building activity!

Step 3: Execute

- **Who** needs to arrive early?
- **When** will they need to arrive?
- **Where** are they going to be stationed?
- **What** will they be doing during the event?

Helpful tips for Executing:

- PAY ATTENTION TO DETAIL! This is where your committee members will be very useful.
- Make sure you have a group of members willing to help set up and/or clean up the event if necessary.

Step 4: Evaluate

- **Who** helped make the event a success?
- **Where** did you see any issues?
- **What** are some ways to improve the event for next year?
- **How** could you enhance your budget?

Helpful tips for evaluating:

- Make a binder for the event planning process.
- Keep notes as you call vendors. Hang on to business cards, or write down websites and contact persons.

Helpful tips for evaluating:

- After the event, plan a time to debrief with members. Talk about what worked and what didn't. Come up with alternate solutions and ideas to improve the event for next year.
- Look at what ways you could enhance the budget for next time? Too much or too little food? Could the event be held at a cheaper location?

Helpful tips for evaluating:

- How effective was your advertising? Ask guests how they found out about the event.
- Touch base with guests after the event and see what suggestions they have.

Helpful tips for evaluating:

- Write down everything from the debriefing meeting and put it in the binder. Share the binder with other officers or future officers.
- Keep up a good reputation with your vendors. Write thank you notes! Help clean up after yourself even if you don't have to.

Reflection

Have you had a good or bad experience with research, planning, executing, or evaluating that you want to share?

Do you have any tips or advice for others?

Have you had or been to an event that was really good or really bad? What made it that way?

Resources for Event Planning

- <http://osa.uark.edu>
- Fayetteville Resource Guide
- Event Planning Workbook
- Local Event Venues
- Building Reservation Guide
- Publicity Checklist
- Campus Resource Guide
- Campus Bulletin Board Posting Guide