

# Your Guests Will Thank You!

## The Secret of a Successful Event Starts with Good Planning

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**Let's talk** about things you may need to consider when planning your event, large or small. Use this guide to make your event planning easy. Other planners just like you have used this guide to create a successful events and you can too.

**1. Goal of Your Event** First, determine your goals for the event. Answer a few questions and find out what's important for your event.

1. Who is attending your event, how important is their satisfaction? Are you planning a company party? Is the event for clients, shareholders or executives?
2. What activities will take place during your event? Will dinner be served? Will there be speeches? Will you have entertainment?
3. Where is your venue? What does it look like?
4. When is your event happening? What date will work best? What dates should you avoid?
5. Why are you having this event, a retreat, award banquet, holiday party, retirement? What do you want to accomplish by having this event?

**2. Date** When you decide on the date for your event, avoid having your event on the same day as a major event. Check the calendar for other events, such as conferences, major sporting games, holidays, etc... It's useful to have a few dates in mind. Your venue may not be available on your preferred day, so you may have to choose another date.

**Timeline** Make a list of activities you want to have at your event. Estimate the amount of time for each activity. You will then have an idea of the length of your event. Have a flexible timeline to keep your event moving, you want one activity to flow into the next. Timing should be flexible by five or 10 min. between each activity, to allow for the natural flow of the event. If you're having dinner, it's best to let your guests eat prior to any presentations or entertainment. So that your guests are comfortable, able to enjoy the events and not waiting to eat.

**Budget** Your budget determines how extravagant your event can be. You can have a successful event on a modest budget, with careful planning. When you know your budget, make a list of the things you need. Make a list of essential items and a list of things you would like to have, if your budget allows. Estimate your costs remember it's just an estimate.

**To stay within your budget watch out for hidden expenses.**

### 3. Venue

Choose the venue as soon as possible. If you wait you may struggle to find a venue that's available on your date. Many events are held at hotels and banquet halls, but you may also consider theaters, libraries, museums, mansions, casinos, resorts, parks, and convention centers. Some venues offer discounts for certain dates. Ask if they offer any discounts.

**Remember to consider more than just the rental fee when choosing your venue.**

Here are some considerations.

1. Is it accessible to people with wheelchairs or disabilities?
2. Do they have enough chairs, tables and bathrooms?
3. Is the atmosphere appropriate for your event?
4. Is it the right size? To big or to small?
5. Can they provide catering, would you need to hire outside?
6. Can their staff decorate the room or do you need to do it yourself or hire outside help?
7. How far do guests need to travel to the venue?
8. What type of electrical connections do they have?
9. Do they have Internet access?
10. How is the mobile phone reception?
11. Is there adequate parking? Is it free? Do guests have to pay?
12. Is a stage needed for speakers or entertainers? What size is available?

#### Event Expenses Short list

<b>Event Budget:</b> \$ _____
Venue \$ _____
Decorations \$ _____
Door prizes \$ _____
Catering \$ _____
AV \$ _____
Entertainment \$ _____
<b>TOTAL</b> \$ _____

**4. Catering** Many venues have a kitchen and staff available. If not, you need to hire an outside catering company for your event. The food you choose is important. It's one of the main reasons why people love or dislike an event. Chicken is usually a safe choice. Consider some of your guests may be vegetarians. Also be aware of common food allergies, such as wheat, soy, egg, nuts, and corn.

**Choosing Vendors** Your events success depends on the people you hire. Always look for professionals. Always ask for testimonials and the list of past clients.

**5. Entertainment** Live entertainment will add to your event only if you choose the right kind. You do not want an entertainer that swears or tells dirty jokes. A boring or inappropriate entertainer can also ruin your event. You want your guests to enjoy the entertainment. You want clean corporate family friendly entertainment. Make sure you hire only corporate friendly acts. Ask if they have a clean act.

**When choosing entertainers hire only experienced professionals.**

Experienced professional entertainers will have a body of work that you can see in short videos of their act, also they will have video reviews from past clients. You can see videos posted on their websites. If the success of your event is important to you, don't risk working with inexperienced amateurs.

**Some entertainers to consider: Hypnotists, Magicians, Dancers, Bands, Singers, Solo musicians, Comedians, DJ's**

**Professional entertainers have liability insurance.** Some venues require entertainers to provide insurance to perform in their venue. Even if it's not needed ask the entertainer if they can provide it if needed. That will be another clue to let you know the professionals from amateurs. Have a written agreement in place when hiring entertainment. Having it in writing will prevent unexpected surprises at your event.

**AV** Your guests will need to see and hear what is happening during your event. Determine your events AV needs. For some events your entertainment may be able to provide for your AV needs. They may be able to provide a microphone to make announcements or speeches. Some stage lighting. Many venues can provide in-house AV equipment. For events that require complex high-tech equipment you may need to hire an AV company. Call them, tell them what you need and ask for quote. Some companies offer a do-it-yourself option, you can rent the equipment and operate it yourself. For the best results let the AV company provide equipment and technicians to operate the equipment.

**6. Printing** Some things you may need to design and print for your event. For the best results use a professional designer and printer. If your budget does not allow for a printer you or someone on your staff can create them on a computer.

**Before the event** – Brochures, Envelopes, Flyers, Invitations, Posters, Tickets

**At the event** – Banners, Drink tickets, Programs, Gift bags, Nametags, Door prize tickets

