



Event Management

Before you start...

What do you want to do?

What kind of event are you thinking of? How long will it last? How many people do you think will come? Will your event include anything which might add extra complications, like live animals or water sports for instance? Try and describe your event in an appealing way, in 20 words or less, and keep this description the same for all publicity material through websites etc so you get a really strong core message about what your event is going to be.

Why?

Is your event because you want to promote a particular activity (theatre, music, cycling) in your area which does not exist already? Is it because you want to get the community working together on a joint project? Do you want to raise money for something? Be clear about what you're doing it for before you start, and work with the end in mind. If someone else is already doing something similar to your event, would it be better to work together for a bigger and better event rather than two small ones even though this might mean compromise?

Who with?

You might want to work with the whole community, but in reality that will often be just a small number of people. Make sure that your team is open and inclusive (and not viewed as a clique) and that there is a way for people to be involved in a variety of ways. Encourage young people to get involved and value their input; don't dismiss new ideas.

Where?

If you do not own the land or property where your event will take place, make sure that you have booked the space and gained permissions for your activity before you do any publicity or spend any money. Think about access, not just for people in wheelchairs, but for people who cannot stand for long periods, or who are hard of hearing, or visually impaired. Consider public transport routes and times and how these fit with your event, as well as car parking spaces. If your event is outside, think about the terrain – water

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hazards, the type and condition of the ground, overhead power lines etc. If you're in the Yorkshire Dales National Park there may be additional considerations too.

Dates, times

One of the reasons you might be putting on your event at a particular time of the year is to extend the tourist season, or to make the best of the weather. You need to think about who else is doing what at that time, so that you complement each other rather than compete with each other. Talk to other similar events organisers and see if you can do joint marketing and ask for advice – what works, and what doesn't. If your event is happening over two days, what happens to the marquees etc overnight - will having a two day event incur a lot of extra expense for security? Do you need lighting for the evening? Will there be a lot of noise/loud music and if so, think of the neighbours when you're working out a finishing time. Try and ensure that the event can be reached by public transport – this might make a difference to your start and finish times, or consider supplying transport.

What constitutes success?

When you look back at your event, what will make you feel good about it? The number of people who came? The professionalism/quality of the performers? The wide range of ages who attended? The people from your local community and/or visitors who came? The amount of money raised? Work out what will make the event feel a success in your eyes and agree these with your fellow event organisers/planning committee. Bear these success factors in mind throughout your planning meetings.

Making it happen

THE TEAM

An events team needs to have a balance of people with different skills. Most people have a combination of personality traits but these might break down to:

- Someone who has lots of creative ideas – but doesn't really like dealing with details – they may be best being the creative director, coming up with ideas for the events and marketing but not necessarily the person expected to make those ideas come to fruition
- Someone who puts people first and foremost – this team member might be best at recruiting and organising volunteers
- Someone who works best with lists and plans – this person will be good at organising logistics, booking performers, checking that toilets

and equipment has been booked and arrived, carrying out risk assessments, financial planning etc

- Someone who likes leading – this person doesn't mind being unpopular to make the event happen and will drive it forwards, but also needs to listen to the rest of the team.

It's important that a team has a balance of people with a range of qualities and that each approach is valued. **Ask team members to volunteer for roles, to give people the chance to play to their strengths.**

If you find you have too much to do and not enough people to help you, try to expand your team if you can. It's important that people not currently in the team know how to get involved and that the team encourages new blood, otherwise all events fall to a small number of the same people within a community - which is not good for succession planning or for new ideas. New members need to be heard and valued, and if at all possible, implement their suggestions.

The Team must have at least an Event Manager, and an Event Safety Co-ordinator. Write down the organisational structure for your event, naming the individuals who will take responsibility for each aspect of the management of the event.

THE EVENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The event team needs to compile an Event Management Plan for the event.

A comprehensive Event Management Plan makes sure that if the Event Manager is suddenly absent, the event can still go ahead as planned. It therefore needs to be very thorough and detailed.

An Event Management Plan also makes it clear to the owners of the land who is doing what.

You need to include

- The name, date and location(s) of your event
- Your definition of the aims and objectives for your event
- The structure of your event management team
- The names of your Event Manager and Event Safety Co-ordinator
- A list of the component parts of your event
- Paragraphs detailing how each component is to be managed
- Risk Assessments for your event and all associated activities

It is at this stage in your planning that you will need to ensure you have enough knowledge and expertise to manage your event safely and

effectively. If you are concerned about anything, see if you can contact another event organiser locally who may have dealt with this problem before, or speak to the relevant person at the Council.

Evaluation

If you have already worked out why you are holding your event, and what makes it a success, evaluation becomes much easier. Evaluation is **always** worth doing – it helps you to improve for next time, and it shows external organisations – funding bodies and corporate sponsors – that you know your target audience. You can use your evaluation to produce a short report about the event which you can email to everyone who helped make the event happen, and you can use as the basis for the next event you plan, as well as helping you to raise funds in future.

If these are your criteria of success:

- Numbers attending
- Quality of performers
- Wide range of ages
- Local people and visitors who came
- Money raised (tickets sold)

You could capture the numbers attending by how many tickets you have sold, or if it's a free event -someone has a clicker at the entrance gate, or if every person is given a raffle ticket when they come through the door.

The quality of performers is partly worked out by where they have performed before, and by audience feedback via an evaluation form (see the Evaluation guidance sheet on the Craven District Council website).

Wide range of ages – include an age section on your evaluation form if this is important to you with age groups to circle, rather than asking for date of birth.

Local people and visitors who came – again, an evaluation form will hopefully provide you with this information if you ask for postcodes only, or even just the first section of the postcode BD23 or LS11 for instance.

Money raised/tickets sold – you should know how much you raise as part of your budget control, but ticket sales can sometimes get confused if you have family tickets or special deals so make sure you know the number of tickets as well as the revenue raised through ticket sales.

It is worth giving someone the task, right from the beginning of the project, to take care of the evaluation part of the process. Best practice is also to pull

together a concise, illustrated, post-event e-report which can be sent to all those who volunteered, sponsored, supported or funded the event.

Take a look at the Evaluation Form template on the guidance notes, or devise your own.

Doing it all over again

Try and write down what worked, and what didn't, pretty soon after the event. **Don't forget to congratulate yourself and celebrate your successes.** Then, start all over again...