

## **Event Checklist [Generic ] by Cliff Howard**

### ***Invitation stage***

- Prepare a plan and approval process to select proposed guests, and a schedule of when to send out invitations and key milestone dates (including the rsvp process).
- Identify which VIPs are personally invited by the CEO or a senior executive.
- Budget and plan for acknowledging the key donors and supporters at the event. Consider providing guests with a moderate-cost take-home item of recognition / thanks.
- Identify how to acknowledge sponsors on the invitation, banners at the event, and in the pre and post event publicity and on website content. Book photographer for the evening.
- Identify the logistics and benefit of a tailored tour / demonstration on the evening.
- Enable attendees to request special dietary needs prior to event and plan all catering.
- Prepare lanyards for all attendees at least two days prior, and circulate a printed master list for staff showing attendees titles and positions.

### ***Communications***

- Prepare a pre-event action schedule identifying roles, who will action each task, and the due dates. Prepare a 'running-sheet' for the timing of event speeches & meal courses.
- Prepare a Publicity Plan to identify the key media to invite. Follow up / remind them five days prior to identify who is likely to attend, and if they have special information needs.
- Write / edit speeches, a press kit for the night, and nominate a media spokesperson. Provide a Q&A sheet for staff re the recommended responses to issues / queries etc.
- Arrange a media 'door-stop' location at the venue for photographers / interviews with VIPs or the nominated spokespeople. Inform all concerned about time restrictions.
- All staff to be informed of nearest hospital locations and traffic routes.
- Identify the key organisers & decision-makers for the event. Circulate a pocketsize list of key mobile phone numbers for all attending staff and event organisers.

### ***Pre-event actions***

- Identify cleanliness and location of toilets, availability of first-aid kit, and rendezvous points for emergency services or possible ambulance loading points.
- Arrange an area to serve light food for the media, and establish their electricity needs.
- Place signs to restrict guests walking into off-limit areas or danger spots.
- Ensure on-site staff and security staff are pre-booked. Get after-hours phone number of security manager and the maintenance manager (e.g. for possible toilet blockage).
- Ensure adequate access and parking facilities for disabled / wheelchair guests.
- Place adequate parking signage outside the site, and ask maintenance to check lighting.

### ***On the night***

- Test working order of all audio & visual technology. Ensure backups / laptop is available.
- Identify hosting arrangements and provide a separate list of special diet needs for kitchen / catering organisers.
- Prepare a display board at the entrance showing the seating plan — with table numbers aligned against each attendee (listed alphabetically).
- Brief photographers and media on when to arrive and any restrictions and where to work.
- Issue key staff with contingency taxi-chits for guests who may encounter unforeseen problems for transport home.

### ***Post event evaluation***

- Internally meet with all involved staff to acknowledge their valued contributions, and to identify aspects that might have been improved upon. Gather anecdotal news for website.
- Prepare and send a media release, with appropriate photographs. Include a quote from CEO acknowledging the success of the event, and reinforcing key messages.
- Debrief senior management and sponsors on attendee & media feedback.
- Prepare a media outcome review showing publicity achieved and the possible opportunities to leverage the event / goals.