



## Chapter 4 Developing and executing a successful event plan

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Good planning is absolutely pivotal if you want to run a successful charity event. Not only is it important to plan for how you want things to run, you also need to anticipate – and be ready to solve – any potential setbacks that arise throughout the process.

For a good event, you'll need a clear overall strategy plus specific plans for individual areas such as marketing, fundraising, budgeting and volunteer management.

### Areas to Cover in your Planning

When you're developing your overall event plan, you'll want to define clear objectives and tasks for each of the individual areas mentioned above. A simple approach will be to set up a task list or "Gantt Chart" for each committee member. For some smaller committees, depending on the complexity of the event and the resources available, you might have various committee members taking on a number of roles – you should still have a clear and separate plan for each different area of responsibility.

You will want to specify targets and deadlines where applicable. Be sure you integrate your task lists across the different areas – this can be done with a bigger "master plan".

Of course, depending on the type of charity event you're organising, the areas of planning will differ. Not everyone will want a PR/Communications department or an IT/Web team and depending on the amount of work, the specific tasks can be combined into one area of responsibility, for example you may just want one person managing PR and Marketing. Cross over will be more readily identified when you start to write down the specific tasks involved. We'll cover some of these specific areas in more detail in the later chapters but here are some suggestions you can consider when planning for each area of responsibility:

#### Marketing

- ✓ Print materials including invitations, posters, fliers, signage
- ✓ Paid advertisements and distribution (i.e. TV ads/radio campaigns/direct mail/email)
- ✓ Managing community portals (i.e. social media, networking)

#### PR/Communications (combined or working closely with Marketing)

- ✓ Press Releases/Community Service Announcements

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- ✓ Booking Celebrities/high profile MPs (in conjunction with **Fundraising**)
  - ✓ Following up with attendees/guests/MPs
  - ✓ Managing guests list and follow up

### **Fundraising**

- ✓ Soliciting and receiving donations
- ✓ Approaching and securing potential business sponsors
- ✓ Writing grant proposals
- ✓ Managing donor follow up

### **IT/Web**

- ✓ Developing, managing and updating website/donor portal
- ✓ Looking after technical requirements (i.e. computers, email, newsletter distribution)

### **Treasury/Budget**

- ✓ Managing received donations
- ✓ Managing accounts
- ✓ Overseeing overall budgets and costs, making payments etc

### **Volunteers**

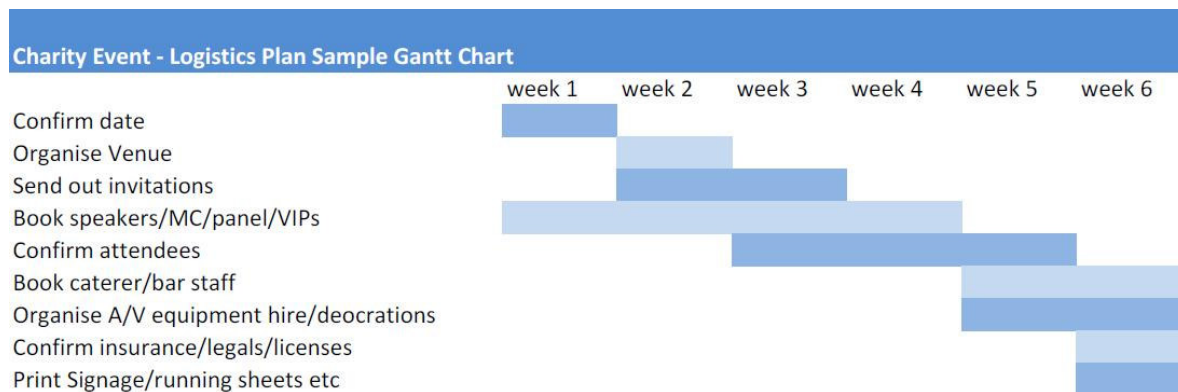
- ✓ Finding volunteers and assigning them to tasks
- ✓ Ensuring volunteers receive adequate training before and during the event

- ✓ Coordinating and maintaining volunteer database
- ✓ Following up with volunteers

### Logistics

- ✓ Organising a venue/location
- ✓ Organising catering/alc/dhol/staff
- ✓ Coordinating rentals, including equipment, furnishings, decorations etc
- ✓ Finding appropriate insurance, licenses and overseeing H&S and other legal matters
- ✓ Developing contingency plans for transport, bad weather etc

**Helpful Hint:** Instead of just a simple task list, using a **Gantt Chart** is a great way to visualise when different tasks will be happening and where you are at any particular stage in your planning or execution process. You can use this for each individual management area and then integrate it into a larger chart that incorporates all the tasks.



### Five Tips for putting together a successful “Master Plan”

Depending on the type of event you’re planning, the tasks you assign will vary. It’s important that your committee is fully across and looking after each area and that you have set deadlines for specific tasks to be accomplished in a timely manner.

## **1. Make a plan to have a plan**

Start by getting your team together and discussing your objectives and the overall aims for the charity event. You'll want to introduce everyone, set up the framework and encourage everyone to support each other throughout the process.

## **2. Set goals for each area**

Work together as a team to set clear and measurable goals for each area, as you would with a business plan. You'll need to specify budgets, deadlines and deliverables for each committee member and have them stick to the plan as much as they can.

## **3. Communicate regularly and effectively**

Make sure your entire team is across all aspects of the plan in some capacity, but ensure they don't get too distracted from their own focus. Set up meetings with clear agendas and make sure they're run in an organised manner. Document the minutes of your meeting so you can recap and refer to them later on.

Your entire committee needs to make an effort to work with each other. If one person is on a completely separate page from everyone else, your entire plan will suffer if everyone doesn't work together to get him or her up to speed.

## **4. Integrate your plans**

Remember that all of your committee members need to function and work together as a single unit. For example, there's no use launching a great marketing campaign and asking for donations if the donation portal hasn't been set up yet. It looks unprofessional and discredits your organisation.

## **5. Support each other**

Ultimately, everyone will need to support one another as much as they can. Depending on the level of expertise and the amount of available resources, committee members will require different levels of support and individuals may have to step up and wear multiple "hats" to help with workload levels.

In the next chapters, we'll look at how to develop individual strategies for specific areas such as fundraising, marketing, logistics and volunteer management.

## **Resources:**

<http://www.knowhownonprofit.org/organisation/operations/projectman>

[http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/events\\_guide/plan.html](http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/events_guide/plan.html)

[http://www.thesmithfamily.com.au/webdata/resources/files/events\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](http://www.thesmithfamily.com.au/webdata/resources/files/events_fact_sheet.pdf)