



Chapter 7 Logistics Planning: Making sure you Account for Everything

Chapter 7 – Logistics Planning: Making sure you Account for Everything

Logistics is about making sure everything is ready on the day. This can be everything from making sure the venue is booked, knowing the running order and how speakers will enter and exit the stage, ensuring there are enough chairs, catering and service, and arranging details such as public liability insurance, parking options and having a contingency plan in case of rain.

Having a successful logistics plan will come from experience and good preparation. It will require forethought, good organisation and excellent communication so that everyone knows exactly what they'll be doing at any particular time. Good logistics and project management ensures that all deadlines are met and the budget properly accounted for. Make sure someone, ideally an experienced Events Manager, is overseeing the “nitty gritty” administrative duties and can chase up on things accordingly.

Specific duties will always depend on the type of event you are running, but below is a checklist of common logistical responsibilities:

- 1. Logistics Budget.** For most events, many of the costs incurred in arranging the event will centre on logistics. From renting sound and lighting equipment, arranging venues, setting up staging, booking catering and so on, you'll notice that it is very easy to spend money in this area. If you have a limited budget, consider organising “contra deals” with vendors and companies. Plan ahead and you will avoid overspending. See our Appendix B for budgeting tools that can help you manage and plan your expenditure.
- 2. Documentation.** What sort of permits or documentation does your charity need to run the event? For example, if it is an outdoor festival, you will definitely need to consult your local council for permits, traffic arrangements, road closures, security and the like. Obtain the correct documentation before getting too ahead of yourself.
- 3. Legal matters.** Are there any legal issues you need to sort out, or avoid? For example, if you intend to broadcast music or a film at your charity, will you run into copyright issues? Consult a legal expert for further advice.
- 4. Venues.** Where will your charity event be held and how much will you spend on the venue? Does the venue have adequate facilities for your charity event (i.e. projection screen, seating arrangements, room capacity etc)? Do venue owners have insurance? This is one of the first things you will need to lock in; otherwise you will set back the rest of the charity event team. For example, the PR and marketing team won't be able to advertise the charity event without definite venue arrangements.
- 5. Provisions.** The Logistics department is responsible for all the provisions that will be necessary to pull off the event. This will include arranging catering (for all your guests and staff), equipment hire (i.e. AV equipment, furnishings, flowers, table cloths), signage for the event, communication tools – even the name tags if they're required! A little attention to detail can go a long way and will add a significant touch to your charity event that will distinguish it from the rest.

6. **Communication.** How will you communicate with event staff, contractors and volunteers on the day (i.e. via radio or walkie talkies)? Do you intend to use a sound system to address the crowd? How much will it cost to hire sound equipment? You may even want to consider hiring a professional event photographer to document the event, especially if you're looking to use these images for marketing purposes in the future.
7. **Running Order:** How is everything going to run on the day? This includes every minute from set up to breakdown. If you have deliveries and pickups going to and from the venue directly, ensure you stagger them appropriately so you won't have issues with loading. Account for contractors, volunteers, cleaners, every personnel who will be in and out throughout the day.
8. **Insurance.** This may include: public liability, property, workers' compensation and professional indemnity liability (particularly if you are hiring contractors). Make sure venues and property owners, volunteers and so on are insured. Seek expert advice on the various types of insurance your charity event will need if you are not sure.

Helpful Hint: Get at least 3 quotes for anything (i.e. rentals, catering, venues etc) so you can better understand your options. Even if a place will do it for free or on contra, you'll want to make sure you're getting the best value for your charity event.

Managing potential risks at your charity event

With any event, minimising both physical and public risk is essential – you don't want anyone getting hurt, but you especially don't want to hurt your cause. A poorly managed event could potentially generate negative publicity that won't do your charity any favours. One of the signs of efficient charity event planning is how well you anticipate potential risks.

To help prepare you for the day, devise a *risk management plan* by considering the following:

- ✓ **Signage** – Will there be adequate signage to direct traffic and manage the crowd during the charity event? For example, toilet, parking, first aid stations, entrances and exits will all need markers and signs.
- ✓ **OH&S** – How will you prevent occupational health and safety complications? Are workers insured, properly trained and licensed to operate certain machinery and equipment?
- ✓ **Weather** – Do you have a contingency plan in the event of adverse weather? This is particularly important when it comes to outdoor charity events but also if you have high profile guests and celebrities attending - it's best if they're not standing in the rain.
- ✓ **Equipment** – What will you do if equipment doesn't arrive, is broken, or if you are experiencing technical difficulties? Do you have trained experts dealing with electrical wiring, sound systems, back-up generators, catering equipment, rides and so on?

- ✓ **Finance** – How will you deal with financial issues such as theft, overspending, and net loss? How will you safely store money? Do you have a structure in place to securely collect donations on the day (ie designated money collectors, secure donations box)? What if ticket sales are low and you need to cancel the event? Do you have a contingency plan?
- ✓ **Transport** – How will participants get to the charity event? Will there be road closures, alternative routes, or sufficient public transport for all event-goers? It is advised that you speak with your local council to see what is needed in terms of transport arrangements, permits, traffic control and parking – especially if this is an outdoor charity event. If you are anticipating a large group of participants or spectators, you may need to contact emergency services like the state fire brigade, police and ambulance service.
- ✓ **Crowd management** – Overcrowded rooms, overheating, getting crushed in a crowd, fires and lack of exits, are all potential risks that could seriously breach health and safety laws – and they can lead to injury, harm or even death if proper precautions are not taken. Are exit signs clear and prominent? How will you communicate to participants during an emergency? Will you cap attendance to control crowd numbers?
- ✓ **Alcohol** – If your charity intends to serve alcohol at the fundraiser event, you will need to obtain a licence to do so. Other issues to think about are: alcohol-related problems, underage drinking, designated drinking and non-drinking areas, responsible service of alcohol, safety and security of charity event participants and so on.
- ✓ **Site Plan** – This includes: structures (i.e. staging, podiums, fences and barriers, food stalls, marquees), facilities (i.e. seats, meeting points, toilets, lost property, first aid facilities, bins and fire extinguishers), pathways, parking, exits and disability access. Will the site be easy to navigate through during an emergency? If you're expecting media, you'll need additional facilities, such as a green room or a viewing platform so cameras will be able to record the stage.
- ✓ **Site staff/volunteers** – Are all site staff or volunteers easily contactable, and adequately trained for emergencies (i.e. first aid, fire, crowd control etc)?
- ✓ **Lost and found** – How will you deal with lost property and theft? In cases of lost children, charity volunteers and staff will need to have a Working With Children Check and police background check prior to the event.
- ✓ **Security** – Security guards are not mandatory, but if you intend to serve alcohol, collect donations on the day, or attract a large crowd (ie for a charity fête, festival, or marathon) then it is advisable to have security monitoring the event. Make sure they are officially accredited and easily contactable on the day.
- ✓ **Incident Reports** – If you've ever needed first aid at an event, you will have noticed that first aid staff have a systemic method of recording any injuries and accidents. In the same way, your charity organisation will need to have a way of recording incidents (from intoxication, theft, first aid, ambulance requests and so on). Staff and volunteers should be briefed on how to handle and report incidents, where to go, and how to follow up.

-
- ✓ **Emergency Response Plan** – What will you do if there is an emergency (ie fire, serious injury and accident etc)? It is highly recommended that the logistics team devise an emergency response plan including: decision-making during a crisis situation; communicating with event-goers, staff and volunteers; planning the evacuation procedure; administering first aid; managing the crowd, and even liaising with the media.
 - ✓ **Complaints** – How will charity event organisers handle noise, traffic, or general complaints? Ideally, you would have had legal consultations to prevent (as much as possible) adverse responses on the day. Consult your PR team, and follow up on complaints swiftly and professionally to negate any bad publicity.

Resources:

<http://www.events.nsw.gov.au/events-tarter-guide/events-tarter-guide>
http://www.marriott.com.au/Multimedia/PDF/check_time.pdf