



## **400 Things You Must Know About Special Event Planning®**

**Society of Government Meeting  
Professionals**


**March 22, 2007**

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## **Summary**


**As simple as your ABCs, this  
is a common sense approach  
to special event planning  
from those who have learned  
it the hard way.**




### **A ... is for Audience**

- Who will be there?
  - Why are they attending?
  - Will anyone need special considerations?
  - Will your guests know each other?
  - Who will take care of introductions?
- 


### **B... is for Big Wigs**

- Are any big wigs coming?
  - Do they bring an entourage?
  - Do they need special considerations?
  - Do they understand their role?
  - Do you know how to properly introduce them?
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### **C ... is for Catering**

- What is your menu & why?
  - Are the prices & quantities appropriate?
  - What about special considerations?
  - What is the catering schedule?
  - What about tables, chairs & supplies?
  - Where does the speaker fit in?
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### **D... is for Displays**

- Will you have a display?
  - Who makes the necessary arrangements?
  - Are you distributing materials?
  - Is set-up a one-person job?
  - Is the location a factor?
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## **E... is for Evaluation**

- How will you evaluate its success?
- Who handles the data collection?
- Are the measurement tools set?
- Are the measurement tools appropriate?
- What do you do with the results?



## **F ... is for Forces of Nature**

- Will outside elements affect this event?
- Do you have a contingency plan?
- How will Plan B be communicated?
- How much time do you need to reorganize?
- What are the financial ramifications of a change?



## **G ... is for Greeting Guests**

- Who will be the first person to greet the guests?
- Do guests know each other?
- Do they know how to mingle?
- Will you prepared for the "traffic beaters"?
- Is mingling important?



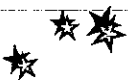
## **H ... is for Hang Time**

- Will there be any in-between time?
- Will guest know where to go?
- Is a change of attire required?
- Is transportation required?
- Are you at risk of losing guests?



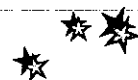
## **I ... is for Invitations**

- Were invitations necessary?
- RSVP or Regrets Only?
- How important is an accurate headcount?
- Is the invitation required to attend the event?
- Did you specify a dress code?



## **J ... is for Jerks (*seriously*)**

- Who invited the hecklers?
- How will you handle complaints?
- Where is the information desk?
- How will you handle escorting the unruly away?



## **K... is for Kids**

- Were the children invited?
- What can they do at the event?
- Will crying babies affect your event?
- Is the menu suited for kids?
- Must you arrange for sitters?
- How can you ask them to leave?



## **L ... is for Location**

- Where will the event be held?
- Is the size and scope of the site appropriate?
- Will Mother Nature influence the event?
- How convenient will loading or unloading be?
- Are amenities nearby?



## **M... is for Media**

- Will the media be there?
- Is this good or bad?
- Who will greet them and escort them?
- Who will be giving interviews?
- What kind of coverage do you desire?



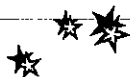
## **N ... is for No-Shows**

- Will the no-shows affect your event?
- How have you confirmed key guests?
- When do you substitute or eliminate?
- How many no shows can you have without jeopardizing the success of the event?
- What is Plan B for lower attendance?



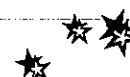
## **O ... is for Out-of-Towners**

- Will you have any out-of-town guests?
- Will translation or communication be an issue?
- Are you picking up their tab?
- Do they need accommodations?
- Have they been briefed on the local climate?



## **P ... is for Presentations**

- Will you need any AV?
- How are the acoustics?
- Who is on the tech crew?
- Have you communicated with your presenters?
- Did you do a sound check?



## Q ... is for Quantity

- Do you have sufficient quantities of everything?
- Do you have extra supplies in your toolbox?
- ✦ Do you HAVE a toolbox?
- What emergency vendors are close by?



## R ... is for Reservations

- Are special reservations needed?
- Will there be any special entertaining involved?
- What about equipment reservations?
- Do you have confirmation numbers?
- Have you communicated?



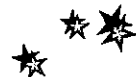
## S... is for Speech

- Will anyone be giving a speech?
- Are the electronics in place?
- Are the speakers prepared?
- Who oversees introductions?
- How do you stop the never-ending speaker?



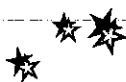
## T ... is for Timeline

- How far in advance did you start planning?
- How many things were left to the last minute?
- Did you research previous events?
- Have you allowed for "sanity time"?



## U...is for Unforeseen Events

- What happens if your speaker doesn't show?
- What happens if the caterer doesn't show?
- How many cell phone numbers do you have?
- Who has your cell phone number?



## V ... is for Volunteers

- Do you need any for your event?
- Why were these individuals chosen?
- Who will train them?
- Will they require supervision?
- How do you let one go?



## **W ... is for Wine & Beer**

- Is alcohol appropriate at this event?
- Is it an open bar or cash bar?
- Where is the bar located?
- When will the bar close?
- Who handles any drunken guests?



## **X ... Marks The Spot**

- Is everything in its proper location?
- Who oversees the set-up arrangements?
- Are the aisles wide enough for traffic?
- Is there enough time for change?



## **Y ... is for Yesterday**

- How many tasks could have been done yesterday?
- How many tasks could have been done a long time ago?
- How many things could have been delegated before today?



## **Z ... is for Zzzzz's**

- Did you get enough sleep last night?
- Will you get any tonight?
- Did you schedule another event back to back?
- Did you allow your staff to have down time?



## **Thank You !**

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