

Event Planning Timeline & Checklist

Six months before the event:

- Plan event goals, objectives, budget
- Form event committee
- Brainstorm honoree, honorary chairman and celebrities
- Establish theme/event and entertainment
- Chose date of event
- Reserve venue and equipment
- Reserve caterer, if separate from venue
- Begin soliciting sponsorship and underwriting
- Establish ticket price, table and patron levels
- Create sales kit with event information & distribute to event committee
- Create stationary
- Begin creating invitations

Five months before the event

- Committee meeting
- Commit special guest appearance and speakers and confirm in writing
- Develop invitation mailing lists
- Begin auction item solicitation
- Develop "save the date" card

Four months before the event

- Continue auction item solicitation
- Request for insurance, contract for facility, etc.
- Design tickets/invitations
- Design program cover
- Select menu
- Create press release
- Begin selling ads for program book
- Continue committee meetings
- Save the date mailing

Three months before the event

- Invitations and tickets to printer
- Continue to solicit program ads and auction items
- Committee meeting
- Follow up on sponsor mailing
- Order promotional/special gift items/awards, etc.
- Ten weeks before the event
- Continue committee meetings
- Table/ticket update
- Confirm centerpieces, catering, rental equipment, etc.
- Create event program
- Book photographer
- Mail invitations
- Continue auction item solicitation and program ads

Eight weeks before the event

- Continue ticket/table sales
- Recruit volunteers
- Continue auction and program book solicitations
- Follow up calls to invitation list

Six weeks before the event

- Continue ticket/table sales
- Begin to confirm auction items
- Begin program book layout

Four weeks before the event

- Continue ticket/table sales
- Continue auction and program book solicitations
- Confirm evening's program
- Begin volunteer training
- If possible, hold walk-through for event volunteers/staff
- Prepare necessary event materials (registration forms, bid sheets, bid boards, signage...)

Two weeks before the event

- Continue ticket/table sales
- Confirm all participants (volunteers, special guests, speakers)
- Print event program

One week before the event

- Press releases
- Create registration list (if tickets will not be presented at door)
- Begin seating assignments, if appropriate
- Confirm facility arrangements
- Confirm head count – be sure to meet any count deadlines from venue or caterer!
- Create script for MC, if appropriate
- Confirm all materials have been or will be delivered in time for event

Day of event

- Final update on registration list
- Finalize seating
- Set up venue (registration, auction, awards, etc..)
- Run through for volunteers
- Run through with MC and auctioneer

Post Event

- Thank you letters (with applicable tax language)
- Follow up on unclaimed auction items
- Pay expenses
- Post event committee meeting to evaluate the event