

TOP TIPS FOR ORGANISING A CONFERENCE

- 1. The Location** – first identify the location and type of venue for your conference or meeting – there are hundreds if not thousands of Hotels and Venues that can host your event.
- 2. The Date** – does it suit everyone? There are certain times when venues offer special discounted rates, so see if this is a good time.
- 3. The Budget** – always set an approximate budget and manage it carefully. You need to know that you have negotiated the best rates available and how long they are good for.
- 4. The Media** – discuss the content of the meeting and how you want to communicate this to the audience – do you want an all singing, dancing presentation or a simple stage or set with basic equipment? Whatever the message, it needs to be professional and impressive.
- 5. The conference Room** – does the conference or banqueting room at the venue suit the type of set or equipment you need for the presentation or dinner (access, power etc)?
- 6. Syndicate Rooms** – do you need them? Are they suitable for your specifications?
- 7. Catering** - decide on the catering you require, according to the timing of agenda and the travelling distance of the delegates. Ensure any special dietary requirements are catered for. Select the correct wines for your dinner and ensure the menus are not repetitive.
- 8. Bedrooms** – are they suitable for your delegates? Delegates from different countries have different preferences. Are there Internet connections? Space for paper work? Tea and coffee making facilities?
- 9. Safety** – the safety and insurance for your delegates and event are imperative.
- 10. Inspection Visit** – always make one if you do not know the venue – ensure you have checked everything while you are there.
- 11. Enhancements** – do you require entertainment, theming or team building? Many people have ‘done that and got the tee-shirt’, so you need something creative and different.
- 12. Print items** – do you need to produce, invitations, menus, badges, signage with the logo and get the right price?
- 13. Travel** – are delegate travel arrangements taken care of – do they require maps, meeting at the point of arrival? Is there enough parking? Or parking nearby at a negotiated cost?

- 14. Paperwork** – once you have selected a venue or supplier, you need to confirm all your requirements in details and ensure that this is communicated to all departments at the venue.
- 15. Venue Personnel** – make sure you deal with the right people, it may be the sales manager, conference manager, reception manager or banqueting manager.
- 16. Plan the Detail** – will you have time to deal with all the planning and time manage your other duties? Will you need extra resources? You can under estimate the amount of work involved once the day of the event has arrived.
- 17. Delegate liaison** – should they contact you with all their questions? Or will you appoint another member of your team?
- 18. Staff** – who will help you at the event? Can they be relied on to register the delegates with one hand and assist with the delivery luggage with another?
- 19. Final account** – keep tabs on all the bills, and on all the items which are being charged on consumption. Don't sign anything off without first checking it carefully.
- 20. Ensure that when you attend the event you enjoy it!**