

chapter thirteen
post event



It's not over yet. The final step in the event management process is one of good business practice and good housekeeping and our advice is to start it as soon as possible after the event.

The evaluation and reporting process, mainly involving de-brief meetings, information gathering and report writing, is an important and useful exercise which:

- ▶ Allows everybody who was involved in the event to feedback their experiences, advice, and recommendations
- ▶ Helps you to realistically assess the event's success based on factual and anecdotal information
- ▶ Provides you with the opportunity to 'sign off' the event (physically and emotionally)
- ▶ Helps you plan the next event

Meetings

You may feel by this stage that you have had enough meetings but it's important to have your say and let everybody else do likewise. The nature, size and structure of the event will have an influence on how many meetings you have but it is likely you will require to meet with:

- ▶ Your organisation's management team and temporary/part-time staff
- ▶ Key external contractors
- ▶ Your client (if you have one)
- ▶ Steering-group and management sub-groups
- ▶ Funders and sponsors of the event

Take note of the key points, observations, advice and recommendations that people offer – positive and negative – to be included in your final de-brief report. At these meetings it is important to be objective and to be able to take constructive criticism along with the praise. Encourage people to speak freely and honestly and do the same yourself.

De-brief Reporting

Ask your own management team members to prepare succinct and constructive de-brief reports detailing their role in the event, their experiences (and that of the people who were in their team) and recommendations for future events. This will help you when it comes to writing the final report.

Like the Business Plan, a de-brief report is a very useful document. It will serve as a single, clear record of the event and its outcomes. You will refer to it time and again when planning future events and so it should include all relevant information such as:

- ▶ General reminder of the type of event, programme, dates, location(s), how many people attended, etc
- ▶ General statement about the success of the event
- ▶ Review of the Business Plan, its objectives and actions – were they achieved?
- ▶ Who was involved in the planning and operations of the event and what their roles were including information on the steering-group and any sub-groups
- ▶ Overview of the programme and ancillary attractions
- ▶ Reminder of production and health and safety aspects
- ▶ Detailed analysis of the effectiveness of marketing and communications including a reminder of the marketing tools employed, media activity, press clippings, audience breakdown, market research, strengths and weaknesses of the campaign, etc
- ▶ Fundraising analysis measured against your initial revenue plan
- ▶ Final budget showing all income and expenditure
- ▶ Recommendations for each area covered by the de-brief report (you can make recommendations at the end of each section or wait until the end of the report)
- ▶ Summary and conclusion

The circulation of the report may or may not be as extensive as other documentation you have prepared for the event. In general, those who have been intrinsic in the event planning process and those with an interest in the future of the event such as your client, funders and key management personnel would receive a copy of the report.

Other than that, before you get around to planning for the next event, you will have many other tasks to perform such as writing thank you letters, making final payments to staff, artists and subcontractors and final invoicing to funders, etc. The post event period can be a busy time but it will be time well spent in the long run.

Planning for the Next Event

By now it's likely plans for the next event are already in their early stages. The de-brief process helps you organise your thoughts on what has just happened and what to do next.

Take time to reflect on everything that has taken place; try to think about the event planning process and the event itself from an objective viewpoint. Go back and look at your original Business Plan. Review and update the plan based on the knowledge you have gained and the actual outcomes.

