



MODULE 4

Part 1: Event organisation and project management



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**Disclaimer:**

These notes are adapted from the University of Cape Town and GetSmarter's course notes for Module 2 of the Events Management elective offered as part of the blended version of the UCT Postgraduate Diploma in Management and Marketing.

Learning Outcomes:

LO1: Outline the event planning process.

LO2: Identify the role players responsible for achieving planning results.

1. Introduction

Organising an event involves three key elements: planning, coordination and project management. While these do overlap in some cases, each have their own specific role within the event.

Planning is the phase of the event management process that determines the specifications, activities, resources and assumptions, and outlines the objectives of the event. During this stage, the event takes shape and is designed. Planning allows for resources to be allocated and actions to be clearly defined in order to achieve a successful event outcome. Coordination involves the day-to-day running of the event. An event manager needs to coordinate appointments, site meetings, supplier meetings and briefings, and all the various aspects relating to an event. The ability to multitask and coordinate efficiently is key to the success of an event manager. All events require a degree of planning and coordination and the amount and complexity needed is relative to the nature and size of the event. For example, a large-scale international sporting event would require a greater degree of planning and coordination than a small breakfast meeting for 20 people.

Module 4 covers the different stakeholders and steps involved in planning and coordinating events, planning and coordination tools that can be used to keep track of the planning process, and project management processes and techniques to guide an event from the idea stage through to completion.

2. Who plans and coordinates an event?

Events can be categorised into multiple different sectors according to aspects such as their size, purpose, geographical orientation and social orientation. Due to the large variety and scope of events, the role players involved in coordinating each event will differ according to the needs of that specific event. Additionally, any individual or group, whether formal or informal, can plan and coordinate an event and customise these plans according to their unique requirements (Wanklin, 2010a:109).



According to Wanklin (2010a:109-110), examples of role players that can take responsibility for planning and coordination aspects include the following:

- Government (national, provincial, or local)
- Governmental organisations and parastatals (for example, tourism boards)
- Local community groups and associations
- Political parties
- Academic institutions (primary, secondary, and tertiary)
- Professional event management teams (e.g. FIFA World Cup and Olympic bid committees)
- Professional event management companies and related organisations (for example, DMCs and PCOs)

Successful event planning and coordination demands an integrated approach – both the organisations responsible for the event and the local authorities that are responsible for the development of the region in which the event will take place need to work together to ensure that their objectives are aligned (Wanklin, 2010a:110). For example, if a professional event company is contracted to organise a prestigious award ceremony that will attract influential international guests, the company will have to liaise with governmental organisations in the community in which the event will be hosted to ensure that the town's infrastructure, sanitation, and general maintenance is up to standard.

The local community should also have the opportunity to participate in constructing the event, even if this is just in a supporting role (Wanklin, 2010a:110). This is especially pertinent if the community benefits from or is negatively affected by the event. This does not mean that the community will necessarily have control over the event, but rather that they will have the opportunity to voice any concerns and ideas, offer to assist, and support the event.

Community involvement and upliftment: Glastonbury Festival

Glastonbury Festival is held annually at Worthy Farm in Pilton, United Kingdom. This large-scale contemporary performing arts event celebrated its 45th year in 2015, and has a strong emphasis on community upliftment and involvement, with many local businesses and the local tourism industry benefitting from the influx of festivalgoers visiting the town each year. The festival also has markets, large camping areas, and even cafés, which provide ample opportunity for local traders and suppliers to participate. Since 2000, Glastonbury Festival has committed itself to contributing over £1 million to local charities and causes each year, and has supported a number of local projects.

A key consideration of any festival is the amount of litter that is left after the festivalgoers pack up and go home. In 2015, an estimated 11 tonnes of clothing and camping equipment



was left behind, and nearly 200 tonnes of organic waste was generated throughout the course of the festival.

3. The steps involved in planning and coordinating an event

It is the event organiser's responsibility to manage the event planning processes. Once the organiser has determined the broad vision of the event (what the event should accomplish), this can be presented to the event planner. For example, a local government may decide to host a youth event for underprivileged teenagers within the community. Once the government (acting as the organiser) has decided what form the event will take and what the end goals of the event are, they can present an idea to the event planner in the form of a planning brief. This planning brief should outline any considerations, issues to be taken into account, and research to be undertaken before the event is carried out (Wanklin, 2010a:111). It should also highlight time frames and details as to how certain tasks should be completed.

Wanklin (2010a:111) outlines the following five steps that the event organiser and planner typically go through when starting the planning process:

1. **Outline the event concept:** This consists of a document that details the vision, purpose, proposed date, scope, and type of event as outlined in the planning brief.
2. **Complete a site analysis and feasibility study:** This assists in identifying possibilities for event venues, conducting site inspections and environmental appraisals, and determining the likely environmental and regional impact of the event. It also helps to assess whether the venue is suitable for the event.
3. **Compile an event framework plan:** This plan outlines all the finer details and objectives of the event, and includes aspects such as detailed site maps, operational elements such as parking and transport, financial arrangements, all risk management procedures, catering, and staffing. Consider how the overall objectives of an event will influence the components included in this framework.
4. **Prepare an event programme:** This programme outlines all the key time frames in sequence.
5. **Review the event plan:** The event plan needs to be reviewed against the reality of the event project status on a continual basis in order to ensure that it remains feasible and flexible when changes are necessary.

The steps above are applicable to most types and sizes of events, from a small event like an office cocktail party to a large-scale conference. Table 1 highlights the typical phases involved in planning an event, and the corresponding actions taken by an organisation during each planning phase.



Table 1: Examples of actions taken in the event planning process. (Adapted from: Wanklin, 2010a:110)

<i>PHASE</i>	<i>ACTION</i>
Vision	Decide to hold an event
Establishment	Set up an interim committee or body
Formalisation	Establish an organisation
Planning process	Plan the event
Financial arrangement	Draw up cost plans and raise funds
Programming activities	Prepare an action programme; determine roles and responsibilities
Implementation	Hold the event
Evaluation	Monitor performance and achievement of vision

3.1 Key questions to ask before planning an event

There are a number of questions to ask before planning an event:

- What are the objectives of the event?
- Is the event feasible?
- Is the event viable?
- Is the event desirable?
- What are the stakeholder expectations?



EVENT PLANNING 101

KEY QUESTIONS AN EVENT MANAGER MUST ASK WHEN PLANNING AN EVENT

OVERVIEW

- What is the objective of the event?
- How many people will be attending?
- What is the target demographic?
- What are the risks associated with the event?

FINANCES

- What are the costs and the anticipated profit margin?
- Is there a cover charge for attendees, and if so, how much?
- What other forms of revenue generation are available?

MANAGEMENT AND LOGISTICS

- What will need to be sourced and brought in?
- Who will the suppliers be?
- Who will the management team be?
- What are the staffing considerations?
- Who will be responsible for each task?

SCHEDULING

- What time of year is the event?
- What time of the day is the event?
- What are the build and breakdown dates and times?

THE VENUE

- Where is the venue/location?
- Is there parking available, and is the venue accessible?
- What comes with the venue, and can it be utilised for the event?
- Is there a theme regarding the décor?
- What greening elements are going to be implemented?
- Are there any restrictions at the venue?
- Are special permissions needed (i.e. liquor license, noise exception, city approval, road closures etc.)?

MARKETING

- How will the event be marketed?
- What media will be targeted?
- Will sponsors be approached?

Figure 1: A checklist of some key questions an event manager needs to ask about the event before embarking on planning and preparation.

Table 2 highlights some of the questions to consider when assessing the objectives, feasibility, viability, desirability, and stakeholder expectations of an event.

Table 2: Important questions to ask before planning an event.

Questions to ask before planning an event	
<p>Event objectives</p> <p><i>Events are staged to attain predetermined objectives. Understanding what the objectives are and delivering on them is crucial. These need to be discussed before any planning takes place.</i></p> <p>Examples of event objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging in a business venture to generate income • Developing public involvement in arts, sports or cultural activities • Fundraising for a project or cause • Introducing a new idea or product to the market • Attracting more visitors to a destination • Focusing attention on a certain project • Creating a sense of community and strengthening goodwill • Promoting political and cultural exchange or ideas • Encouraging participation in an organisation 	
Feasibility	Viability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can it be done? • Will the current plan and vision for the event work? • What needs to be sourced? • Are the time frames realistic? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it financially viable? • Will a profit be generated? • Is it too risky?
Desirability	Stakeholder expectations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it desirable to the target market? • Is it desirable to the event manager? • Is it desirable to sponsors and investors? • Is it unique, and what makes it unique? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the project deliverables? • Who is responsible for delivering each deliverable? • What do the various stakeholders want out of the event and how will their needs be met?

The following interview sheds some light on the steps involved in planning the infrastructure for the J&B Met.

Mandy Mulder interviews Gosia Miller (an event manager at Chattels Event Infrastructure Management) regarding the J&B Met:

Gosia was the event manager representing Chattels at the 2012 J&B Met. The J&B Met is South Africa's premier horse racing event, held at Kenilworth Racecourse in January of each year. Chattels are the infrastructure partners to the event and have been involved in the event for many years.

How many square meters of marquee structures did Chattels erect at the 2012 J&B Met?

"We erected 7,498sqm of marquee and 2,176sqm of bedouin. There were over sixty individual structures."

What responsibilities did your role entail at the event?

- Pre-planning.
- Compiling and costing hospitality packages, including corporate packages, etc.
- Briefing the AutoCad designer regarding layouts
- Sourcing suppliers, getting competitive quotes (ideally you would want to use suppliers that are familiar with the magnitude of the event from working on it in previous years and that you have a good working relationship with)
- Compiling a matrix of each client's specifications (all 18 of them on the in-field), onto 2 pieces of paper
- Building on-site office base
- Briefing the crew and suppliers on an almost hourly basis with the changes that need to be made leading up to the event
- Getting briefs from the sales team regarding progress, clients booked, etc.
- Building schedules for the crew and suppliers
- Arranging sign-off of the event with the structural engineer and the fire chief

How long did the event take to build?

"Eighteen days. We loaded in on 9 January 2012 and the structural engineers signed off the event on 26 January 2012."

What were the biggest challenges you faced?

"We are in a joint venture (JV) with another company, which means that we partnered with another company to plan and execute this event. As a JV, we have the rights to the whole event. Our responsibilities were split between the two companies. Chattels were responsible for managing the build of the event, and the partner company was responsible for selling



packages, whether it be classic pavilion hospitality, multi-user facilities, picnic sites or corporate bedouins.

The biggest challenge was to keep up the lines of communication between the client, the sales person, Chattels event managers and our suppliers, to build in accordance to the ever-changing mind of the client.

Another challenge that we encountered was the fact that there were only three event managers running the event from our side, as opposed to four. One of the event managers had to take off during that time because she was heavily pregnant. “

What are your top tips regarding event infrastructure?

“Having a strong team of “yes” men and women always helps.

Pre-planning is the key. However, you need to bear in mind that it is very rare that an event goes according to plan. You will be required to think on your feet and make changes on the spot in order to make things happen.”

Tell us something interesting that no one would know about the event?

“Out of a team of about twelve people that ran the event from the JV companies, only four have worked on the event previously.

I personally received 3,145 email pertaining to the J&B Met.”

3.2 Event concept

An event concept refers to the type, size, and purpose of an event (in other words, the vision that the event organiser has for the event). The vision must be shared; in other words, there must be buy in from each member within the stakeholder group, in order to make the event a success, and ensuring that there is consensus among role players in each step of the planning phase will assist in reinforcing this shared vision. It is useful to formulate a vision statement (i.e. a statement that outlines the desired event objectives) to serve as a frame of reference for decision-making and to ensure alignment (Wanklin 2010a:111-112).

Smart tip:

Always start your planning process with a concept document or vision statement. These are vital to any planner in order to map out thoughts and goals for the event. They don’t need to cover very specific details such as exact venue and colour schemes of décor, but they need to state the purpose of the event and what you would like to achieve through the event. It requires thinking about the “big picture”. The planning of the finer details follows later. Sometimes, however, the client may have a very clear picture of the event, which makes the concept document a lot more comprehensive.

3.3 Choosing the venue

Research needs to be conducted in order to shortlist a few potential venues. The event planner needs to decide on the type of venue the event requires, including its size and location. It is important to also consider the needs of the various stakeholders when choosing the venue.

For example, the caterers or the emergency services or entertainers may have specific requirements to enable them to do their job, and the venue needs to lend itself to this.

The venue also needs to be functional from an operations and logistical point of view. The nature of the event may mean that access for big trucks to deliver supplies to the venue easily is needed, or parking for thousands of cars could have to be arranged. Issues such as parking, accessibility to public transport, size, existing infrastructure, physical layout, entrances and exits need to be addressed. It is vitally important to keep these issues in mind when selecting a venue.

Every venue also has its own atmosphere, which contributes to the intangible experience of the event (i.e. how people experience it through their senses) and this needs to be considered. Another important factor to consider is location, which is very much dependent on the type of event. Some events require high-profile venues with a good image and easy access for individuals. The visibility of the event is important when planning large-scale public events that rely on ticket sales for financial return. Additional infrastructure such as towers, audio-visual equipment and signage can be used to maximise the opportunity to be noticed.



Video 1: This video showcases the versatility of the Hillcrest Quarry function and event venue in Durbanville, Western Cape, and demonstrates how, with the right planning, a venue can host a large variety of different events.

(Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GHrnG_EuFzw)



The major considerations when choosing a venue are the following:

- Size of the event
- Layout of the site and its suitability to the event
- Compatibility with the theme of the event
- Transport and parking
- Topography (lay of the land, for example, is it flat or are there natural obstacles)
- Proximity to accommodation and amenities
- Supply issues for goods and services
- Venue management
- Poor weather options or infrastructure
- Evacuation, entrance and exit points
- Storage areas
- Audience comfort

Site inspection checklist:

It is important for an event manager to conduct a thorough inspection of the site that they plan to use, and creating a checklist and asking the right questions can ensure that they do not overlook any important aspects while assessing the suitability of the site or venue in question.

3.3.1 Conducting a SWOT analysis

Before deciding on a venue, a feasibility study needs to be carried out. A SWOT analysis is a method that is used to assess the viability of a new business unit, proposal, or product idea by outlining the potential strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the idea in order to determine whether or not it would be successful (Shone & Parry, 2013:72). A SWOT analysis can be applied to events as well as venues in order to determine the favourable and unfavourable internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats) of the proposed event and venue. When applied to a venue, the following factors should be considered:

- **Strengths:** Characteristics of the venue that give it an advantage over others or for the event in general. For example, is the venue big enough? Is it close to public transport? Is it accessible?

- **Weaknesses:** Characteristics that place the venue at a disadvantage relative to others or for the event. For example, is the venue exposed to the elements? Is the venue expensive to hire?
- **Opportunities:** Elements that could be exploited to the advantages of the event. For example, is the venue capable of hosting the event on an annual basis?
- **Threats:** Elements that can cause damage or harm to the event. For example, will the local community oppose the event?

SWOT analysis for Hamilton's Rugby Fields, Green Point, Cape Town as a suitable finishing venue for a sporting race	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good visibility • Proximity to public transport • High profile area (a tourism hot spot area) • Large in size • Flat ground • Centrally located for suppliers and guests • Space for parking a large number of vehicles • Panoramic views of Cape Town (mountain) • In close proximity to other Cape Town attractions, e.g. Cape Town Stadium • Good aesthetics for media coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited access for large trucks • Surface is largely grass – rainfall can result in water logging and difficult build conditions • General congestion in the area due to popularity of the area • Zoning considerations – close to residential area therefore amplified noise needs to be controlled • Limited build up time due too existing function of venue as sports fields – team practices take place daily
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enough space to potentially grow the event • Potential to link up with other events in the area • Potential to install more permanent infrastructure such as power and water for future events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue usage – venue owners may decide not to host events anymore • A change in venue management (ownership), which may influence permissions and agreements granted by previous management • Homeless individuals in the area reside at the venue at times

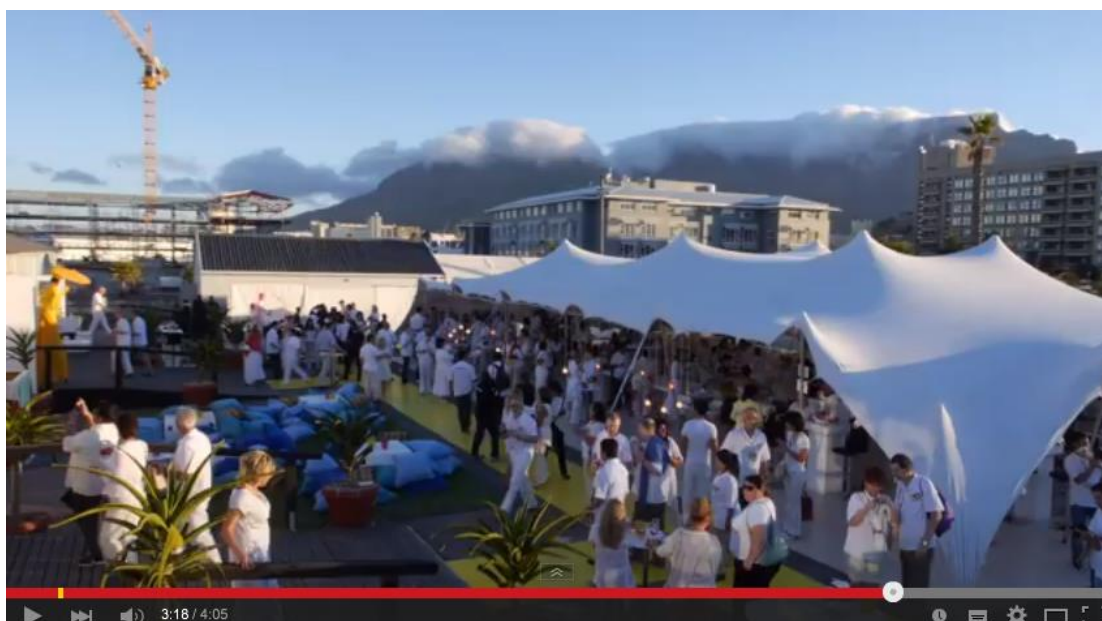
Figure 2: An example of a SWOT analysis for a potential venue.

Asking questions about the venue is often helpful in establishing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Tools such as Google Earth are also useful in providing a picture of the area and surrounding facilities, access routes, and so on.

Contingency plans

It is imperative to have a backup venue, especially if the venue is outside and exposed to weather conditions, which may be out of the event planner's control. Having a back-up plan can be expensive, as organisers will most likely have to pay for the venue even if it is not used, which is why careful planning is so important. Planners need to ensure that they do not waste or spend money on unnecessary things. If there are concerns about weather

being a factor on the day of the event, it is useful to conduct some research and see if there are any available venues that would be willing to take last minute bookings if necessary. The better option is to use temporary infrastructure so that in the likelihood of bad weather, a back-up plan is in place and organisers are not paying extra for it.



Video 2: A showcase of Red Hot Events’s transformation of The LookOut events and functions venue at the V&A Waterfront for a corporate client. (Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GB04O8TVJCw>)

Smart tips:

When planning a winter event in Cape Town at an outdoor venue, always have an indoor venue as a backup plan, as Cape Town winters are known to be wet and windy. Rain and wind are two major sources of concern when planning an event. It is also important to make the call on weather and venue change early enough to allow enough time to set up the new venue and alert guests to the change.

The venue can determine how memorable your event is, so it is worth your time to thoroughly research interesting or unusual venues. Don’t rule out venues that may not be considered traditional event venues, as they often work well. Interesting examples would be a product launch in an art gallery or a cocktail function on a floating barge in the V&A Waterfront.

3.4 Event framework plan

It is important for event managers to set out the strategies and actions by which they intend to achieve their vision for the event. This framework will include what the actions are, who must do them, how they must be done and when they must be done. The plan also ensures that all programmes and actions are linked together in an integrated way so that sections do



not operate exclusively and without reference to the others. For example, the event plan needs to integrate the transport proposal with suitable site access, parking and traffic management plans, and the staffing resources of the traffic department within the local community.

An integrated event plan should also have supporting plans, for example, administration, finance and marketing. The event framework plan also needs to ensure the proposed event has socio-economic spinoffs and creates opportunities for communities that would not have benefited had the event not taken place.

A good way to create an event framework is to use a mind map, which will be demonstrated in Section 5. The event plan can be approached in the same way as a business plan, laying out the ideas in a methodical and logical way, and thrashing out all ideas and areas to be focused on. The event plan will naturally continue to change as progression through each of the planning stages is made. It should be a flexible document that keeps track of what has been achieved, and what still needs to be achieved.

3.5 Planning event spaces

As the old saying goes, “image is everything”, and this could not ring truer for staging events. The layout and setting of an event, including the design, construction, materials, buildings, and vegetation used all shape the context for guests and contribute to the overall experience and ambience. Each setting has its own unique character and atmosphere, which will determine the design and feel of the event. Site layout is crucial; an ingenious event concept, a large marketing budget, and big sponsors cannot make up for a site that is not well laid out or visually pleasing. In the absence of these considerations, patrons will not consider the event to be successful (Wanklin, 2010a:115).

Ideally, a site layout should be designed to maximise potential revenue whilst being practical and creatively constructed. Apart from a creative element, there is also a wealth of scientific and technical expertise that contributes to the construction of different venues, and on larger projects a range of professionals including architects, landscapers, quantity surveyors, engineers, and artists are often involved in venue design and construction (Wanklin, 2010a:115).

3.5.1 Event settings

Due to the diverse nature of different events and activities, no two events will require the exact same setting. According to Getz (1997, cited in Wanklin, 2010a:115), there are six basic types of event settings:

1. **Assemblies:** These include concerts, conferences, conventions and, religious- or education-oriented ceremonies, for example, Gallagher Estate in Johannesburg can be used as an assembly setting.
2. **Processions:** These concern the linear passage of people or vehicles in a hall or stadium, or on the street. For example, Adderley Street is the venue for many procession type events that take place throughout the year in Cape Town.

3. **Circuits or tracks:** At racing events, these involve spectators situated along the route and at strategic points, for example, the start and the finish. Examples include motor racing, MotoGP, foot races, and cycling races. The Comrades Marathon route in Durban is a good example of this type of event.
4. **Public places:** Open spaces such as parks, playgrounds, sports fields, and plazas are commonly used for events, for example, Hyde Park in London.
5. **Exhibitions or fairs:** Usually situated in warehouses on large areas of land that can accommodate stands and a large number of people. Open sports fields or parking areas often have the area space needed to house big outdoor events.
6. **Specialised facilities:** Custom-built or specific facilities and venues required for specialist activities or sporting events. Setting up for these types of events can often involve making use of temporary infrastructure as well, and this infrastructure may be brought to site and built to house an event, or a specific venue may be conceptualised and built more permanently on site. For example, a major tennis tournament could require that indoor tennis courts be built, or a masked ball or themed festival may require that a temporary venue suited to the style and architecture of the era or theme be constructed.

Getz (1997, cited in Wanklin, 2010a:116) also emphasises the importance of certain “fundamental facilities and support services” that have to be strategically positioned in order to manage the event successfully. Some of these basic requirements include the following:

- Vehicular access, parking, and loading or unloading areas
- Emergency vehicle access and parking
- Emergency first-aid facilities
- Administrative offices
- Information, customer care or enquiry centres
- Demarcated entrances and exits, fire escapes, reception areas, and waiting rooms
- Cloakrooms and ablutions
- Breakaway rooms and preparation or rehearsal facilities
- Venue operations centre
- Designated seating for spectators (seating requirements would differ according to the type of event)
- Refreshment and dining facilities
- Catering, kitchen, storage, repair, and maintenance facilities
- Security



- Solid waste storage and management
- Accommodation, ramps and parking for disabled participants and spectators

3.5.2 The event layout plan

Planning event spaces requires one or more layout plans. Plans vary from a simple 2D drawing to a 3D rendering of the venue using software such as AutoCAD. The type of layout produced will depend on the type of event and usually also the budget. Frequently, the layout plan can take the form of a floor plan of the venue room or building, a map or blueprint, or annotated aerial photographs of the venue. The layout plan helps all role players involved in the production and implementation stages of the event to have a clear picture of what they are working towards, and to coordinate their activities in order to produce the best possible results. It is important to keep in mind that the arrangement of elements on the layout plan should be determined by the style and theme of the event, and considerations for a circuit event such as a motor race will be very different to an event such as a fundraiser picnic held in a public space. Regardless of the event setting however, it is important for event managers to focus on achieving the most suitable layout of functional areas so that the event can run smoothly (Wanklin, 2010a:116).

The event venue needs to be convenient and easy to move through; guests should be able to transition smoothly from one area to the next, and planning should aim to minimise congestion (both for vehicles and pedestrians) and endless queues. It is also good to direct the flow of pedestrian traffic in such a way that guests are encouraged to pass smaller exhibits on the way to the main exhibit or event. Human traffic should be spread evenly throughout the event, if possible, so that each exhibitor or item on the programme receives an equal amount of attention (Wanklin, 2010a:115). Each exhibitor or merchandiser needs to gain as much exposure as possible, and careful planning of the layout can ensure this.

As well as being practical, the layout should also be inviting and attractive to guests in order to create a memorable event experience. Ways to do this include using visually appealing signs to mark demarcated entrances, pathways, facilities and focal points, and creating attractive walkways using landscaping methods and structures such as booths and arches (Wanklin 2010a:116). Making use of coloured lighting (especially in and around vegetated areas), water features, and themed decorations will also contribute to the atmosphere. Remember to always consider the type of event before selecting a ground surface. For example, if the event is a formal function and most guests will be wearing high heels or formal dress shoes, a grass surface may not be the best option.

Event managers should remember that a cost-effective way to conceptualise a layout is to make use of the natural environment as opposed to choosing to create a new, artificial environment. For example, guests can be seated near outdoor garden or water features, marquees can be erected to create indoor spaces at outdoor events, and breakout rooms can be linked to the main room using sound systems and digital screens.

3.5.3 Layouts for multi-venue facilities

As the event industry booms, multi-venue facilities such as large conference centres and hotels are becoming increasingly popular, with the effect that multiple events often take place in the same venue simultaneously. This poses a unique set of challenges to event managers, as larger crowds, venue and facilities overlap, and catering considerations have to be taken into account (Wanklin, 2010a:115).

In order to reduce potential conflict and confusion, and therefore enhance the quality of the event experience for the guest, Lenhardt (1998, cited in Wanklin, 2015:117) has identified three essential measures that event managers must take into account when working with a multi-venue facility:

1. **Easy access:** Each group should have access to a separate entrance and registration area.
2. **Adequate signage:** Strategically-placed banners and signs with the name of the event help create a sense of personal space and helps guests to identify with the event.
3. **Contiguous space:** All the areas that will be used should be in close proximity to one another (preferably sharing a wall) to avoid having attendees move from one end of the venue to the other, thereby passing through another group's space.

In addition to keeping these three principles in mind, it is important to ensure that each event is secure and access controlled and, in the case of outdoor events, it is important to make use of temporary fencing, walling, or other barriers that will serve to clearly demarcate the property or event area boundaries. Tickets, name tags or ID bracelets can assist in identifying which guests belong to which event, and CCTV technology is also very useful in managing site security.



Video 3: This Red Hot Events video showcases work they did for an international client to transform the CTICC, a multi-venue facility, into an elegant venue for an awards dinner (Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4DjuGINEL3U>)



The various design and décor elements that need to be taken into account when designing an event venue will be discussed further in Module 6.

Mandy Mulder interviews Andrew Douglas and Liz Andreasen - leading professionals within the event industry in South Africa – to ask them about their tips for working in the event industry:

Andrew Douglas – The Salamander Company (organiser of the Oktober Bierfest)

“Always have formal agreements with service providers that describe roles and deliverables clearly and include penalties for non-performance. Often in the events industry, arrangements are made loosely, and when a service provider fails to deliver, it reflects badly on you. In instances such as these, you need to be able to claim money against the agreement.

Be as detailed as possible in budgets, but also include a generous contingency plan - things have a habit of running away with you in the case of live events.

Ensure that roles amongst your production and operation teams are very clearly defined and that reporting structures are clearly delineated.

Always have a disaster management plan in place.”

Liz Andreasen – Owner of Exclusive Hire, South Africa’s leading event hiring company

“Have a budget in place before you start. Commit to signed contracts with all your suppliers. Make sure you are aware of all deposits, overtime rates and cancellation fees up front.

Choose the venue to suit the theme. If your client wants to get married under a Bedouin tent on top of a mountain, be sure the time of year is right and that the guests will be happy to travel. Also ensure that your suppliers have the infrastructure to make it happen. Get a weather report.

The venue can make or break the function. Be aware of any restrictions it may have. For instance, investigate whether the venue has a liquor license, whether smoking is allowed and what their operating hours are. You don’t want to book a DJ until 2am only to be told on the night that the venue is closing at 12am because of complaining neighbours.

Once the venue has been decided on, it is important to book your hiring early. Don’t leave ordering to the last minute, as stock is often limited and you may run the risk of not being able to deliver the items that your client requested. Ensure that your client knows that damages and breakages are for their account and also make certain that you have a responsible person controlling this aspect of the function, otherwise it can become a costly and unnecessary expense to the client.

Always have a plan B in case of an emergency. Some parts of the country are known for unpredictable weather, so make sure you have blankets and heaters on standby in the case



of cold weather. Make a weather-related call with enough time to implement plan B if you are organising an outdoor event.

Food is integral to creating a lasting impression. Don't be hesitant to try out different catering companies. It is sometimes necessary to request a "tasting" for yourself and the client before finalising the menu. Make sure that you appoint a caterer who comes well recommended and is abreast of the times. Sausage rolls and food on toothpicks are no longer the rage.

The right combination of décor, music and lighting will set the tone and atmosphere. Well-trained service staff is a must for any occasion. "

3.6 Event programme

The event programme is essential to the successful planning and coordination of an event, as it ensures that each part of the process runs according to schedule. The document clearly lays out the tasks or activities that need to be completed and the designated time frames for each task. Certain tasks or activities follow a sequential order and therefore require the previous task to be completed before the next one can be completed, whereas other tasks can overlap.

There are different types of event programmes, and some events may have more than one programme. There will be a build programme or schedule (also known as a bump in schedule) prior to an event, which will include all the tasks or activities required to make the event happen. There may need to be an on-the-day event programme, also called the event running schedule. This document will schedule activities on the actual day of the event, such as performers, speakers or competitions. There may also be a breakdown schedule or programme, which will outline the dismantling or breakdown of the event, including the tidying up (also known as a bump out schedule). In addition to the event programme, it is also important to devise a critical path document, which is a detailed day-to-day account of all activities or suppliers that need to be loaded in.



Festival Production Schedule		
Monday 27th August		
Start At:	Production:	Finish by:
08:00	Coordinators briefing, welcome volunteers, coffee	08:30
08:30	Site checks of festival park	09:00
09:00	Mark out parking, arena, market and tent sites	11:00
11:00	Hold meeting with emergency services, council reps	12:00
12:00	Lunch delivered by Annie's Bakery on terrace	13:00
13:00	Coordinators to assist afternoon deliveries of tents, utensils and portacabins etc.	17:00
17:00	Handover to night security and complete any outstanding set ups	17:30

Festival Production Schedule		
Tuesday 28th August		
08:00	Coordinators briefing, coffee	08:30
08:30	Coordinate arrivals of supplies, check arriving teams, direct to correct areas	12:00
12:00	Lunch on terrace delivered by Annie's Bakery	13:00
13:00	Organise volunteers to set up arena, market, catering and entrance tents	16:00
16:00	Check completion of set up, arrival of supplies, chase outstanding items	17:00
17:00	Volunteers tea on terrace	18:00
17:00	Issue volunteers with t-shirts, site maps, answer any questions	18:00
18:00	Test all services, list items not working for attention on Wednesday morning	19:00
19:00	Orchestra rehearsal	22:00
22:00	Handover to security night staff	22:15

Festival Production Schedule		
<i>Wednesday 29th August - FESTIVAL DAY</i>		
08:00	Coordinators briefing	08:30
08:30	Attend to outstanding problems, volunteers to their posts, check signs	09:30
09:30	Check festival market	10:00
10:00	Check band is ready	10:10
10:10	Welcome mayor, provide coffee in entrance tent	10:25
10:25	Go with mayor to do opening speech and tape cutting	10:45
10:45	Festival opens, bands play light music and market opens	10:45
12:00	Volunteers and band lunch (rotation) in catering tent	13:00
14:00	Afternoon concert by band	16:00
16:00	Parade by youth organisations	17:00
17:00	Various music soloists and groups performing in catering tent	19:00
19:00	Guests arrive for main evening concert	19:30
19:30	Main evening concert in arena, seats and picnic places.	22:00
19:30	Festival market closes down	20:00
20:00	Volunteers dinner supplied by catering tent	21:00
21:00	Catering tent closes after concert intermission	21:10
22:30	Coordinator hands over to night security	22:45

Festival Production Schedule		
<i>Thursday 30th August</i>		
08:00	Coordinators briefing	08:30
08:30	Suppliers arrive to remove utilities, tents etc.	13:00
12:00	Volunteers lunch	13:00
13:00	Volunteers litter pick up, site cleaners and site clearance	15:00
15:00	Handover to park keeper, site repairs and lawn restoration begins	17:00

Figure 3: An example of a schedule for a small festival, which makes use of volunteers.



When designing build schedules and breakdown schedules, it is very important to schedule the correct amount of time for each individual task. It is a good idea to get these time frames from the people doing the task, such as suppliers. Always factor in unforeseen delays and have a degree of flexibility within your schedule. Often what looks feasible on paper may not be feasible in real terms. For the build schedule, always make sure you have allocated enough time at the end to allow for any changes or fixes that may be needed. Planning tasks right up to the event start time is not advisable, as it leaves no room for error. Events that involve entertainers need to have rehearsals scheduled to iron out any problems.

Smart tip:

It is important to develop schedules logically and always bear the venue in mind; some tasks will take longer in different venues. Unrealistic schedules lead to disappointment and potential disasters (such as a lack of readiness). Always remember the event cannot wait; it will have set times and dates, which means that deviating from the schedule is just not an option.

Once the schedule has been developed, make sure that the relevant people have the schedule so that they know what is expected of them and are aware of the knock-on effects that their task time frame may have on the rest of the schedule.

The event programme for the day of the event should always create a favourable image for the event; it should be creative and attractive to potential guests. Often, event programmes are publicised in the lead up to the event to help drive attendance. The programme can be enhanced by the use of emotional stimulation, great spectacles, entertainment, commercial merchandising and sideshows.

The sequence of activities during an event should be arranged in such a way as to keep the guests entertained throughout the event, and to create a desire to attend the event again in future (Wanklin, 2010a:118). This is especially pertinent to exhibitions and festivals, as their long-term sustainability and profitability depends on their ability to attract regular attendees over a longer period of time, rather than just having a once-off, sell-out show.

This can be achieved by having main attractions interspersed with support activities (such as opening acts, alternative stages for lesser-known performers, or arts and craft markets) to keep the guests entertained on a regular basis.

Remember that extensive delays between activities can lead to impatient and frustrated guests (Wanklin, 2010a:118). Equally important to keep in mind, however, is that crowds can only sustain high levels of excitement for a certain period of time, and therefore, provision needs to be made for rest and recuperation periods, food and bathroom breaks, and other acts and activities. Variation is key, as a carefully thought out and varied programme helps to prevent monotony. Be careful, however, not to over-schedule an event, as often people like to have time to just socialise and take everything in.



Lastly, the length of time over which an event can be held is usually determined by the nature of the event. For example, sporting events are shorter (a few hours) and exhibitions are longer (a few days).

Smart tip:

When appropriate, it is effective to start and end an event with a “bang”. In other words, use an attention-grabbing element at the start to excite people and create good first impressions, and then an impressive element at the end to create a memorable experience before they leave.

4. Conclusion

Successful events depend on careful and meticulous planning and coordination as well as sound project management skills. In an environment characterised by increased competition and options for consumers, as well as a strong global drive to cut back on costs, event managers need to ensure that their events are delivered on time and within budget and live up to, or even exceed, the expectations of the client or event owner in order to stay ahead of the competition.

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