

Title:

Do You Have The Right People To Organize Your Event

Word Count:

851

Summary:

Jenny Jones would never have considered she had any skill when it comes to running seminars. She was just quietly and competently doing her job when she was asked to organize an event to help promote the services that her company provides. Fortunately for her, she recognized instantly that she did not have all of the necessary skills herself and, by borrowing some tips from her recruitment experience, amongst other things, she saved herself from a great deal of stress and put...

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Article Body:

Jenny Jones would never have considered she had any skill when it comes to running seminars. She was just quietly and competently doing her job when she was asked to organize an event to help promote the services that her company provides. Fortunately for her, she recognized instantly that she did not have all of the necessary skills herself and, by borrowing some tips from her recruitment experience, amongst other things, she saved herself from a great deal of stress and put together a team that delivered the goods, and more.

Almost before doing anything else, she recognized that, as the event organizer she should draw up a list of the numbers and types of people she needed in order to deliver the seminar. Against each job, she noted the competencies that are important for success in that role and any other traits that she felt would enhance the potential for crowning glory.

You'll note that Jenny did not produce a list of names. That can be an easy trap to fall into, especially if yours is a large organization. Instead of deciding what you need for success, you will be working out who not to offend by leaving them off the list. The formal process of defining people specifications, which is what Jenny was doing, actually gives you a viable and mostly acceptable reason for using only the most appropriate people.

If yours is a small organization, like the one Jenny worked in, and you don't

have the luxury of choice, specifying the people may actually highlight the need for outside help rather than muddling along with the skills that you have inside the business.

Here are a few examples of people specifications:

Presenter : Good communicator, good impact and influence, technically knowledgeable, acceptable to director level delegates, good attention to detail

Course Administrator : Confident, excellent customer focus, good planning and organizing, good influencer, good initiative

Booking Administrator : Good information gatherer, good organizer, excellent customer focus, good initiative

Supplier Co-ordinator : Good planning and organizing, good influencing, good directiveness, good team worker

Jenny chose what she believed to be the five most important characteristics in each job and checked with a few of her management colleagues whose opinion she respected to ensure that she hadn't missed anything critical. She explained what she expected the people to do and was open-minded to the feedback that she got.

Selecting and briefing the event team

If yours is a large organization, you may want to advertise formally to ensure that you get the best people on board. Many will see this type of project as an opportunity to pick up new skills and experience and will be willing to compete for a place on the team.

The tougher your selection process is, the easier it is for rejected candidates to accept your decision. If you base your selection on a five minute chat in the company restaurant, you may be accused of nepotism and worst of all you may not end up with the best people to help you.

Always insist on evidence of your candidate's skills and competencies. As a rule of thumb, the more recently they have done something similar, the better the chance that they will be able to do the same for you without climbing the learning curve again. If you have the time, it may be useful to set them a task that will demonstrate to you that they can fulfill the role. When you are faced with twenty people all claiming they are the best, this is a great way to compare their actual capabilities.

If, like Jenny, you are unable to fill key roles from inside the organization,

there are many consultancies and service organizations only too willing to help out for a fee. They are capable of doing everything from managing the entire event right down to administering your bookings or providing project co-ordination services. Some online booking organization can also manage telephone bookings on a 24 hour basis, will manage the payment process and can conduct post-event evaluation on your behalf.

Arrange a time when you can get your team together to talk through the purpose of the event. Please DO NOT just hand them a copy of the purpose document and expect them to understand everything that you know about it. They will all have very pertinent questions to ask from their very different perspectives and they should all be keen to make sure that they understand what is expected from them.

Brief job descriptions would not be out of place here as they will define boundaries of responsibility and accountability and will avoid unpleasant finger pointing if anything should go badly wrong at a later stage. Have them write their own job descriptions under the headings of:

- * Scope
- * Key Responsibilities
- * Measures of Success

Not only will this give you a good idea of their understanding, it provides you with a motivational tool to recognize their excellence throughout the project.

Jenny Jones used this approach; put together a highly skilled team to deliver her company seminar and added a new skill to her CV - Event Organization.