

The Event-Ability Quiz

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How well does your special event plan stack up? Try this simple self-scoring quiz as an effective way to estimate the likely success of your event.

Organizational Experience

POINTS

10 points for each fundraising special event your group has run in the last 5 years. _____

10 points for each time your group has run the same event you're considering. _____

Deduct 9 points for each of the previous events above if there are no detailed records evaluating the event and showing how to do it better. _____

Deduct 10 points if none of the current staff who will be involved with the event were on staff during the previous events. _____

Add 15 points if a staff person has had major involvement in running an event very similar to this for another organization. _____

Volunteer Team

2 points for each volunteer who will take an active part in running the special event. _____

5 points for every volunteer who has experience as a **leader** in previous special events, for your group or any other nonprofit. _____

1 point for every 10 hours of volunteer time you can realistically rely on. _____

2 points for every volunteer who will personally sell 10 tickets or more. _____

100 points if you create job descriptions for each lead volunteer to specify what is required re: number of hours of work, the length of commitment and qualifications. Also specify the support training you'll offer and the benefits of the job. _____

25 points for each new volunteer you recruit specifically because she or he has ability to do the job, **not** because you were desperate for *any* warm body to help. _____

Add 2 points for each new volunteer recruited specifically to help on the event who you expect will still be active with your organization afterwards. _____

Deduct 5 points for each current volunteer who will not do any further work with your organization without resting 6 months or more after the event. _____

250 points for a system ensuring that all the people involved are doing their jobs on schedule and before a crisis hits. _____

100 points if you have a plan to reward and recognize the volunteers. _____

Invited Guests and Supporters

Count only those to be contacted in person, by phone, e/mail, NOT via mass media

1 point for every person you'll invite who attended your group's last special fundraising event, provided the event was considered a social success. _____

1 point for every 25 people you'll invite who haven't attended a previous event, but have given your group money. _____

1 point for every 50 people you'll invite who participate in or are spectators at non-fundraising public events your group holds, such as sports events, art shows, seminars, health clinics, etc, or use your facilities, or who are clients. _____

1 point for every 75 people you'll invite who haven't had contact with your group. _____

50 points if the people you'll invite, or their families, are personally affected by the issues your group deals with. _____

Public Profile

1 point for every time your organization was mentioned positively in your community's media in the last year. _____

1/2 point for every time the issues you are addressing were mentioned, but the cause was not. _____

2 points for every time the media will mention your organization in a positive way as a result of the event. (No points without a realistic media plan to make this happen.) _____

Costs and Income

1 point for every \$100 in income you realistically expect. _____

Deduct 1 point for every \$100 the event will cost to run. _____

Add 1 point for every \$50 of in-kind donations of goods and services (not counting volunteers) you will receive to offset the costs of the event. _____

Deduct 50 points if the group has to borrow the front money needed for running the event, or won't have enough for the programs and projects if the event loses money. _____

Add 100 points if the plan includes income from an auction or a fundraising collection so donors can decide for themselves how much to give. _____

Add 100 points if you raise more than \$50 per volunteer hour worked. _____

Type of Event

Deduct 50 points for every time another group has run a similar event in your community in the last year. _____

Deduct 100 points if this is a new event idea and you have never heard of anyone running one like it before. _____

Add 25 points if the people attending the event will better understand your organization's cause afterwards. _____

Add 2 points for each name and address you expect to add to your mailing list as a result of this event. (Points awarded only if you initiate a fundraising appeal within maximum 6 months.) _____

Add 2 points for each potential new volunteer recruited at the event. _____

Add 50 points if the event can be repeated at least once/year for the next few years. _____

Add 50 points if a celebrity is part of the attraction at the event. _____

Add 50 points if you have given the invited guests an "invisible command" to attend, by honoring (or roasting) someone who is important to their financial or personal future, such as a local business leader or politician. (The guest of honor must agree to attend.) _____

Add 50 points if what happens at the event is directly related to the work your organization does. _____

Add 50 points if the event enhances your organization's image. _____

Deduct 100 points if the event could possibly damage your organization's image. _____

Add 75 points if more than 50% of the people who attend will want to attend another event your organization runs. _____

Add 10 points each time you use one of the *nine ways a printed program can increase your effectiveness*:

- Thanking donors and volunteers
- Educational material included
- Donation request included, with reply envelope
- Printing donated
- Asking for new volunteers
- Offering to contact people who want more information
- Asking for anonymous comments to evaluate the event
- Selling the program
- Selling ads in the program

Planning

10 points for every month of advance planning time you have allowed, maximum 18 months unless you are planning to raise \$100,000 net income from a single event.

100 points if you have a schedule that shows how much time each task will take, and deadlines for each.

An additional 100 points if it is possible to get all the tasks done before the event, despite the inevitable delays, without working midnight shifts. No points allowed if anyone involved shouts, cries, gets an ulcer or burns out.

Deduct 100 points if the lead staff person is expected to do most of the work in setting up the event.

Deduct 100 points if you are planning an outdoor event and do not have a contingency plan for inclement weather.

Deduct 50 points if you don't have volunteer follow-up crews included in your plan to clean up, send thank-you letters, or handle donations and other details.

Add 100 points if you have a co-sponsoring organization or company that will reduce your workload, contribute financially or increase your chances of success.

Add 15 points if someone in your group has checked federal, state and municipal regulations that might affect the event, and made all necessary arrangements.

Add 25 points if you have checked to make sure there are no competing events planned during your event that could keep away your audience.

Add 25 points for each time you contacted other groups that have run events like this and they gave you information on how to do it right - maximum 150 points.

Add 100 points if you have consulted professional fundraisers on how best to run the event, or reviewed materials on events through a public library and/or professional association.

Add 200 points if you will create a workable how-to manual, making the event easier to run next time.

YOUR TOTAL SCORED POINTS

If your score is...

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| <i>Less than zero</i> | Cancel the event immediately before you lose a fortune. Go back to the drawing board and correct your problems. |
| <i>0 – 249</i> | See ' <i>Less than zero</i> ', but don't be as hard on yourself. |
| <i>250 – 999</i> | You might be able to succeed if you make some changes, and are really lucky. |
| <i>1,000 - 1,999</i> | Your prospects look reasonable, but look after your shortcomings right away. |
| <i>2,000 - 2,999</i> | Looks very promising, but there's still room for improvement. |
| <i>3,000 - 3,999</i> | Well planned - looks like it should be a winner. But don't take any chances – review all the details. |
| <i>4,000 or more</i> | Either you've got a great plan, or you're kidding yourself. Re-evaluate some of your answers to make sure they are realistic. |