

10

step plan

How to hold a dinner or ball

1. Set your goals

Set yourself a clear goal of what you want to achieve from the event. Be specific, I want to raise \$4,000 from ticket sales, \$2,000 from a raffle, \$5,000 from silent auctions and \$1,000 from donations. This will help you put your plan and budget together.

2. Plan, plan, plan

Prepare a checklist. Think about all the jobs you will need to do in lead up to the event and during. What venue will the dinner be held at? What date and time? How will you attract people to your event? How will you sell tickets? What are the prizes for the raffle? How will you run a silent auction? How will you get the prizes to the venue? Do you need to hire equipment? Who is the MC? Who is setting up the venue for the event? Do you need to consider any contingency plans – what could go wrong?

Include all the things you need: refreshments, equipment, transport, prizes. This will help you remember what you have / haven't already done.

3. Delegate

Write a running sheet. Break down your plan into steps of what needs to be done. If you have a group of people helping you, assign them jobs. Always think about what people are good at when allocating tasks. Be clear on the timetable for each job, some jobs can't wait. Always allow more time than you think. Don't do it all yourself!

4. Will this event raise money

Go through your plan and determine a budget. List all of the costs and subtract total costs away from your fundraising target. What's left – is this the amount you want to raise. Rethink your plan if necessary. Your total fundraising should be at least double the amount you are spending otherwise it may not be worthwhile.

5. Plan your advertising

Think about how you plan to let people know about your dinner. Can you place flyers at the venue to advertise to regular customers? Get your friends to spread the word. Place posters in venues or on community noticeboards in the area? Can you advertise in the local newspaper or radio station? Can you advertise at your work place? Will any of this advertising cost money? Contact your local service group as ask if they can help you spread the word.

6. Get support – donations and sponsors

How will you get prizes donated to you? Ask the manager of the venue if they will donate a prize,

you are going to be bringing customers to their venue. If a potential sponsor can't give you a prize, can make a cash donation instead? Will a printer reduce their cost? It all helps to cut costs.

7. What are some of the things I need to consider

Raffle: What prizes are being raffled? When is the raffle drawn during the event.

Silent auction: Is this being announced during the event or at the end?

Music: Will you have a band? Will music play in the background in-between the bands sets. Confirm that the venue permits live music.

Dancing: If you want dancing, confirm the venue has a dance floor.

Master of Ceremonies: You will need a person who keeps the night going. This person will also announce raffle prizes, general announcements and introduce guest speakers.

Parking: Does the venue have enough parking? You can always encourage people to car pool or taxi.

Dress code: Communicate the dress code clearly. Smart casual is often interpreted as denim; however the venue may have a no denim policy.

8. Equipment

Your venue should include music facilities, microphones, tables and seating, as well as food as drink. If you hire a band, are they bringing all the equipment they require?

9. Keep it legal

Investigate if you need any special permissions or licences. Do you require public liability insurance? Will people be making donations – do you need tax deductible receipts. Are people buying items from you – this requires a different type of receipt. You also need your 'authority to fundraise' from us. If in doubt, contact us.

10. Bank & thank

Funds raised must be banked with MS Australia within 1 month of the event. Keep records of all the money spent and received. Return any receipt books you have requested. Thank everyone who helped and thank all your sponsors.