

HOW TO...

**DELIVER A SUCCESSFUL
CORPORATE EVENT**

...WITHOUT OVERWHELMING PLANNERS!



CONTENT

Delivering a successful event.....	3
1. Define your event's purpose.....	5
2. Decide what success looks like.....	6
3. Make your event part of a wider campaign or strategy	9
4. Have a bulletproof, documented plan	11
5. Give yourself time	13
6. Rehearse & then rehearse again.....	13
7. Share the load.....	15
8. Call in the experts.....	15
Need further assistance?.....	16



DELIVERING A SUCCESSFUL EVENT.

There's no two ways about it – every corporate event takes work. But do you know what separates a successful event from one that fails? It's nearly always stress.

Stress doesn't need to be a prerequisite of hard work. You can put serious amounts of effort into creating an event and – although it may be tiring, yes – it doesn't need to be a painstaking endeavour that makes you doubt your choice of career.

Unsuccessful events are often defined by their difficulties. From miscalculations that devour your budget to oversights that damage guest experience, a failed event is usually one that just didn't seem worth the effort. It's a lot of sleepless nights for a very slim payoff.

Successful events, however, are usually born out of great planning, a solid strategy and more than a dash of creativity, too.

It takes time and effort, but your command and trust of the process will allow you to deliver something you're truly proud of. Often, this is the reward that every event planner needs in order to keep showing up to the office every day. It makes all that hard work worthwhile.

So, how do you **remove stress** from a challenging project and deliver a successful corporate event?

There's no magic spell, but there are certainly some clever tricks...





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1 DEFINE YOUR EVENT'S PURPOSE.

Before any of the hard work begins, you need to agree on your event's purpose – and make sure this information is shared with every member of the production team.

Your event's purpose is bigger than its 'hype'. You wouldn't throw a birthday party without having any idea about what the recipient liked – the whole point is to make them happy, by understanding the things they enjoy. Similarly, a corporate event shouldn't just be defined by being an 'awards ceremony' or 'training day'.

Sure, that's what you're doing. But it isn't *why*.

To find your event's purpose, think long and hard about what you want people to think, feel and do on the day. This should form the basis for what you deliver.

Be sure to define and understand the personas of who would be attending your event, and precisely what your event needs to offer them.

By understanding those requirements and keeping them at the heart of everything you do, every aspect of delivery will remain tightly focused on a shared goal.



2 DECIDE WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE.

To make an event a success, you need to know exactly what 'success' is – and often, it means very different things to different people.

For some, it's getting attendees through the door – for others, it's educating them to adopt new skills while they're there. So, to keep your whole team united, agree on a set of goals and find a way to accurately measure if you have achieved them.

Not sure how to accurately quantify your shared idea of success? Here's some ideas...



a) Live Polls.

Usually conducted via an app, live polls are often even more effective than post-event surveys, especially when you're trying to get a grip on attendee engagement. You can deploy them right in the moment, when the event is live - as opposed to when your delegates have gone home, and emails are a little too easy to ignore.

b) Sales Numbers & Attendance.

If this is a key metric for your event, be sure to set a target for both registrations and attendance. This will keep you accountable for not only pushing tickets but nurturing your leads until they become a physical guest.

If you've run a series of events, keep track of your returning attendees, too. It's a good sign that you're consistently giving delegates what they need.

c) Website Visits.

When delegates head to your website to find out more about you, read your content and (hopefully) send enquiries, this is another tangible win for your event. It's particularly pertinent if you're running an event with external guests, such as an awards show or exhibition.

If a member of your business is monitoring website data on Google Analytics (and if you have a marketing team, they almost certainly will be), ask them to add an annotation with the date of your event. If traffic suddenly surges from this point, you'll be able to attribute your event to longer-term business impact.

d) Sales Leads & New Opportunities.

If your event is centred around networking, a product or brand awareness, quantifying new interest is likely to be important to you.

Decide whether you are focusing on the quantity, quality or value of new leads and define how to calculate this. For new leads, it's often relatively simple to count and document, but quality and value can be more challenging.

If you don't already have a method in place to do this, consider creating a points-based system (such as 5 points for a lead that offers their email address, 10 for if they ask for a brochure and 15 if they request a product demo). You can then set a fixed goal for how many points you'd like each event to achieve in this area.

e) Social Media Monitoring.

Has interaction gone up? Do you have more followers? Have you been tagged in posts from the day? Even in the case of internal activities, these can all be indicative of a compelling event where attendees felt engaged with your brand.

To make the process a little easier, consider creating an event hashtag and promote it in the run-up to your event. You can use this hashtag to easily find all the chatter around your event – and it'll lead followers to that content, too.

f) Post-Event Surveys.

Surveys with a rating system will allow you to gauge your performance, from the eye of your all-important event guests. It's also a good opportunity to gather feedback and create a learning opportunity within. But remember, only ask them questions they are qualified to answer – don't ask "was the speaker good" but instead perhaps "do you understand more after hearing this presentation".



g) Return On Investment (ROI).

Not everyone will have the tools in place to calculate ROI – but for those that do, it's often one of the most vital metrics to prove that your event is successful and worth future investment.

The simplest method to calculate ROI is the equation of event revenue over spend; but of course, true revenue can be hard to quantify when it comes from a range of different sources, such as future website leads and an increased social media following.

As a basic example, you could consider an awards show with paying guests. When you compare ticket revenue to overall spend, you can ascertain your ROI.

You could also choose to create a cost attribution to every type of goal, or keep it simple with ticket sales vs. event cost. No matter which path you choose, make sure that expectations over ROI (and the method of how this will be calculated) is agreed with key stakeholders, well in advance.



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③ MAKE YOUR EVENT PART OF A WIDER CAMPAIGN OR STRATEGY.

Most events are not a stand-alone activity. They exist alongside a wider set of actions to achieve a mutual business objective, such as selling a product or evolving your brand.

You should consider your event to be part of a living ecosystem – and you need to understand how your event could impact other activities that exist around it. For example, when planning an awards show - you'll need marketing to help you find attendees, sales support to take care of brewing interest and customer service to look after subsequent enquiries.

Do stakeholders understand why your event is taking place, the opportunities it could bring and the type of questions that it could create? Are they ready to support this plan, nurture the opportunities and understand how it will add momentum to their own projects?

For internal objectives - such as promoting a new way of working - the event could kick off months or even years of activity. You'll need a team to follow up and ensure the actions are being implemented, with continuous monitoring to make sure the plan stays on track.

If in doubt, create a roadmap which details the actions required over a given timeframe, to ensure your long-term goals are met.





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4 HAVE A BULLETPROOF, DOCUMENTED PLAN.

The key here is 'documented' – your plan can't just be in your head or notebook. It needs a clearly defined structure that you can share within your organisation, preventing mistakes from miscommunication or misunderstanding.

Yes, your plan will almost certainly change over time – but when you have structure, those changes can happen as part of an evolutionary process, not sudden knee-jerking because you weren't sure where to turn.

Create a clear brief, make it accessible to the whole team and be sure to have it in place before any of the real 'work' happens.

Remember, giving other contributors visibility will increase autonomy by allowing them to self-serve. It should reduce your workload by stopping a constant onslaught of questions and reassurances.

With this in mind, be sure to equip your brief with all of your event's essential information, such as **dates, budget, theme, location and agenda** ... and anything else which will underpin the planning process.

When sharing creative ideas, be sure to include a mood board and inspiration pieces too, so nothing is lost to interpretation (after all – there are many shades of purple, but probably only one that will match your brochure hand-outs).



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5 GIVE YOURSELF TIME.

... and allow yourself more than you think you'll need. Just trust us on that one.

When it comes to planning and developing an event, nothing is more obvious than one that is rushed or ill-conceived. Even if you start out with good intentions, even small delays can have a domino effect - so make sure you have all the breathing space you need to take your time over the details, correct any mistakes (that you may not even spot if you're rushed) and insist that any hard deadlines are achievable for both yourself and the whole team.

To add emphasis to this point (especially when communicating with stakeholders outside of your department), include realistic timescales in your initial plan and – if necessary – have them signed off by all parties.

6 REHEARSE... & THEN REHEARSE AGAIN.

The number of people who can deliver a compelling and engaging presentation with no preparation is very, very low.

You may think your ultra-confident sales director is just the right person to compel an audience, and maybe you're right – but don't assume they can jot down a few notes and then serve up a TED talk.

Even if you're an industry expert who knows their topic inside out, delivering this information to a large audience – for a specific duration – is very different to holding a meeting. It's a unique challenge that requires specific presentation skills in order to succeed.

Take the time to rehearse. Insist on it, feed back on it and keep going until it's right.





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7 *SHARE THE LOAD.*

Delegating is often tough when you love what you do.

If the event feels like 'your baby', it can be hard to let go and allow other team members to take control... but for the sake of success, you do need to accept that having a trusted team is the best way to ensure that everything goes to plan.

Have a team responsible for delivering your event and allocate clear roles and responsibilities. To keep everyone accountable, you should incorporate this into your initial plan.

As part of the delegation process, you might notice a skills gap, with no obvious candidate for a certain job. In this scenario, it's important to bring on a third-party expert – so be sure to start delegation early and identify where these roles may need to be sourced or tendered.

8 *CALL IN THE EXPERTS.*

Events agencies have a wealth of ideas and experience that you can utilise. At the design stage, this knowledge could be the golden ticket to elevate your event.

They'll give you inspiration, practical advice and so much more.

They know the common pitfalls for event planners and can help you to avoid them. So, even if you do happen to find yourself stuck (and in a bit of a panic), they will help you to mitigate the issue – often saving time, money and stress in the process.

Ultimately, an agency can help you to bring your amazing ideas life – including all of the essential infrastructure and planning to ensure that the event is an indisputable success.

NEED FURTHER ASSISTANCE?

**AT UKSV, WE BELIEVE THAT ALL EVENTS SHOULD BE CAPTIVATING,
AND IT IS OUR MISSION TO MAKE YOUR EVENTS TRULY UNFORGETTABLE.**

We are:

- An award-winning events agency
- Specialists in live, virtual and hybrid events
- Experts in every stage of events management, from conception to delivery
- Well-established, with over 150 years collective industry experience.

Why not get in touch so we can have a chat about your requirements?

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