

Top advice for planning a successful party or event

Team at HERS Event Planning and Consulting offers tips and tricks of the trade

by: Jayne Heekin, co-founder HERS Event Planning & Consulting

There are many times in life when a great celebration is the best way to honor someone special, to raise money for a worthy cause or to celebrate a milestone or new relationship. From weddings to birthdays to fundraisers, there are several common elements that go into planning a successful event that makes the guests feel special and the event feel effortless. By following a few guidelines, planning the event can be more fun and rewarding.

The first step many people take is choosing the theme, décor and guest list - not the most effective place to begin. One of the best ways to start is to look at the event budget. Sitting down and determining how much money can be spent is a useful tool in finalizing the guest list. After looking at the budget, a personal decision can be made by the host to determine if he or she wants an intimate affair with lobster and champagne or a large, jovial party with chicken breast and Amstel Light. After the budget is set, determining the proper number of guests and the type of invitations will be much easier.

The next important factor is the overall

theme or message. The good theme allows the host to express personal style and emotion conveyed to the guests, sets the tone and can ultimately lead to a particular décor scheme. Often, too, the planning process is much easier because the invitations, decorations, food and music will all be connected. A theme can make or break an event. It is crucial to decide on a theme that is welcoming for all guests and will not offend or intimidate anyone in attendance. It may be helpful to consult with a professional on the theme before making the final decision to be sure it will be a success.

Sending invitations is the next step, ensuring the amount of people in attendance and the invitations will be in sync with the event's budget and theme. One of the most important things to consider is the date, which reflects the type of event being held and can affect its mood. Because every event has a different meaning, the time of year it takes place is a critical part of the planning process.

Weddings can take place at any time, but it is important to keep in mind family commitments and financial constraints which would greatly affect the role your family would play in the event. On the other hand, weddings are often more expensive during peak seasons like spring and fall, which result in higher prices from the vendors. The increased prices may affect the event's overall budget and should be taken into consideration.

For other types of events, like anniversaries or birthdays, having the party as close to the date as possible is the obvious choice. If a more professional event is being planned, perhaps focused on a company's new product or marketing plan, it should be planned around the product's development timelines.

Finalizing the date could be as easy as falling in love with a particular venue and waiting until it becomes available. It is important to look at the total impact of the event and how it will affect the guests and mood while still being happy with your decision.

Another tip is if you chose to hire an event planner to help with your party, it

is important to feel a trusted connection because they will be helping with every aspect of the planning and execution process. If there is a lack of trust between the host and event planner, it will be difficult to feel assured the vision will be carried out. The point in hiring an event planner is to make the planning and execution of the event more relaxing and enjoyable for you.

The last important tip is to allow a suitable amount of time to properly plan the event. Because every event is different, the planning timeline varies. Weddings, for example, are different from one another depending on the size and time of year they take place. Weddings taking place in the off season can be planned rather quickly, depending on vendor availability. On the other hand, weddings held in more popular times of the year can take at least nine months to plan.

For other types of events, like private parties, the amount of planning time is greatly decreased. Making quick phone calls to your favorite caterers and florists is a good place to start, keeping in mind they will need at least a week to order and prepare the food and arrange the flowers. When planning more specific events, like fundraisers, it is best to start preparing at least a year in advance. This will give enough time to get the message out in publications and allow sponsorships more time to develop their goals.

Regardless of the event, it is important to pay attention to details which create a wonderful experience for the guests and give one a personal feeling of satisfaction with the planning process. By putting in the right amount of energy and time, any event can be a successful one.

HERS Event Planning & Consulting, located in Hyde Park, was founded in 2006 by co-owners Jayne Heekin, Lindsay Reynolds and Andrea Schmidt. Offering a range of services from consultation appointments to full-scale event planning and execution, HERS customizes their services to offer clients a completely unique event planning experience. For more information, visit www.hersevents.com or call 321-HERS.

UNABLE TO ATTEND AN UPCOMING EVENT?

Donate your tickets to
MostValuableKids.org



Give disadvantaged youth in the community the rare opportunity to experience a live athletic or cultural event.

Most Valuable Kids will distribute your unused tickets to an approved non-profit partner agency that serves underprivileged kids in Greater Cincinnati.

The tickets will be picked up and dropped off by Jones the Florist and a tax-deductible receipt will be e-mailed to you.

Log on to www.mostvaluablekids.org and become a donor.

donating dreams...

www.MostValuableKids.org



Get Inside Cincinnati's Finest Homes at

www.perrinmarch.com

(513) 379-2253 direct



WEST SHELL

Owned And Operated By NRT LLC. © 13