



Tip Sheet - Plan great events

Events come in all shapes and sizes: from community meetings to festivals. But whatever the size, success comes from planning. Inadequate preparation can cause event failure.

Clarify the outcomes. What will the event achieve?

Every event has work to do. By writing down your objectives, you will plan better. Desired outcomes could include things like:

- New contacts for the update database (you'd always want this).
- New people feel positive about engaging in our group and commit to the next meeting.
- A group forms and sets a meeting date. Someone nominates to convene it.
- People are informed of the threat for the first time. They leave feeling that it's worth fighting.
- Raise funds for your campaign (you'd nearly always want this).
- We get a new demographic involved. Our event gets them along, and inspires them.
- Power-holders get a message that large numbers don't want the gasfield and/or coal mine.
- The event attracts and involves important new allies.

Design your event to achieve your objectives

Now you can design your event to fit your objectives and your target group. Stay true to that. Consider all options – while some events need to be stand-alone, sometimes hitching a ride on someone else's event is a good option. Types of events might include: pop-up picnics; presentation of a petition; movie screenings; stalls at agriculture shows; rallies. In designing your event, think about the time and cost to stage, market and publicise it. When choosing the date and time, consider:

- Marketing the event with flyers, phone around ('phone banking')
- Volunteer 'buy in' and capacity to support
- The availability of speakers or key personnel
- Timing for local press to attend
- Other events impeding such as parliamentary sitting dates, Public holidays and School Holidays

Create a timeline in google docs so several of you can work on it online. Your timeline becomes a living document, and everyone can see where you are up to.

Date	Task	Who is doing it	Notes
Aug 1	Confirm speaker	Mel	12/4/17 Mary Malone confirmed
Aug 3	Book venue	Bob	etc
Aug 6	First draft flyer	Mel, Sam, Elly	
	Draft event run sheet (or meeting plan)	Mel	
Aug 10	Final flyer and run sheet	Mel	
Aug 12	Post event on LTG website	Bob	
	Facebook event	Bob	
Aug 19	Flyer printed	Mel	
	Draft media release	Mel	
Aug 25	Deadline - Australia post delivery	Mel	
	Phone up session at Bob's. Call our connections. Will they come? Bring friend? Make list of contacts	Everyone	
Aug 26	Hand out flyers at train station	Sam and Elly	
	ETC, ETC		

Evaluate

Work up some ways to evaluate the success of your event e.g. funds raised, contacts for your group and LTG database; number of people phoned, mainstream or social media hits.

EVENT PLANNING CHECKLIST

BEFORE THE EVENT	Plan event agenda	<p>Identify your event objectives Develop a timeline working back from the event date Detail activities Make run sheet (or meeting plan) for the day Identify key roles Select an MC and speakers. Confirm their attendance. Develop a contingency plan (e.g. what to do if it rains) Consider catering for special needs Note costs including stall application or hall hire, catering, transport, accommodation</p>
	Research venue	<p>Inspect venues based on their capacity, location and your budget Check if permits are required Is the venue accessible? Parking, public transport etc. Does venue have audiovisual equipment? Book to allow set-up and packing up time For stalls at major festivals – applications may be at least six months in advance</p>
	Budget	<p>Prepare a budget and monitor your spending Plan to get income from merchandise and donations etc. Prepare final costs and expected cost and gain approval to proceed Seek sponsorship for the event</p>
	Sponsorship and Fundraising	<p>Fundraising and sponsorship can be built into event planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Merchandise sales ▪ Donation Tins ▪ Make it easy for people to offer financial assistance ▪ On the day, have someone assigned to the fundraising goal. It gets lost easily.
	Promotion	<p>Develop a communication plan with clear, concise messaging.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop an event Identity ▪ Design signs, posters, memes ▪ Promote on website, Facebook and other social media. Encourage sharing ▪ Distribute invitations, flyers, posters, e-newsletter etc to target groups ▪ Prepare a media release or editorial with photos for local media ▪ Have Flickr site ready for select photos on day (or similar photo sharing) ▪ Promote event in your local newspaper, cafés etc. ▪ Use free community radio and TV announcements and community newsletters ▪ Forward a media release to relevant media outlets ▪ Call in on talkback radio ▪ Directly phone your networks and key target groups ▪ Email blast to target group from your data base (but be aware emails aren't enough on their own)
	Participant registration	<p>It's good to know how many people are attending. To set up your registrations, you can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build an online event registration form ▪ Host online registration on your website ▪ Email invitation to your database with link to 'register here' button
	Administration	<p>Attention to detail is important:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confirm venue catering numbers, AV equipment and room set-up ▪ Confirm and brief suppliers, contractors, venue and service providers ▪ Confirm the running sheet ▪ Establish a mailing list and database of attendees ▪ Have a system for good money management on the day

THE EVENT	Brief your team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distribute running sheet and contact list with names and mobile numbers of relevant parties ▪ Set-up venue, seating, registration, event collateral and AV equipment ▪ Explain emergency procedures and general house-keeping ▪ Get select photos up fast on Flickr or other site – send links to journalists ▪ Send some good images to LTG so we can promote on twitter/FB ▪ Post photos via social media
AFTER EVENT	Recognition Evaluation Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Celebrate and thank crew and volunteers ▪ Action Learning loop. What did we learn? What went well? What could we do differently next time? Evaluation and debrief with stakeholders ▪ Close off final budget ▪ Send a thank-you to speakers, sponsors, volunteers ▪ If in an organisation: submit a brief report with outcomes and evaluations

Experiment with phone up sessions (phone banking)

Emails tend to sail by unnoticed. A far better way to engage people is person-to-person. We can use phone banking sessions to get people to events - they can be fun. Organise for a bunch of you to meet in a shared central location. Create a call list of all the people you want to target. Some tips:

- Do the phone banking session early enough to get the event in people's diaries
- Work up a catchy script that you all can follow
- Have a fun way of celebrating every time someone gets a commitment– whoop up some energy
- Have a second call up – asking how people are getting there
- Collate feedback
- Provide free phone facilities for people who don't have unlimited phone plans, skype credit is a good way to make cheap calls, or get a cheap mobile with a pre-paid unlimited credit plan.
- Provide resources such as feedback and tracking templates