

Planning an evening event

Please note:

This checklist assumes that you are planning an evening event to which a select group of participants has been invited and for which no participant fees will be charged.

Step 1:

The goals of an event point the way to success

- Why is the evening event being held? What is the occasion?
 - Is it an anniversary?
 - An evening event following a higher-level event (e.g. a conference or a trade fair)?
 - An event meant to maintain customer loyalty or acquire new customers?
 - An event expressing appreciation and/or thanks to employees?
 - A reward to celebrate a cooperatively achieved goal (e.g. the conclusion of a project or the introduction of a product)?
 - A tribute, e.g. to long-serving employees?
 - An award presentation?
 - etc.

- Who will be attending the evening event?
 - (Former) employees with/without partners, with/without children?
 - Business partners with/without partners, with/without children?
 - (Potential) customers with/without partners, with/without children?
 - The people from a specific department?
 - A group of executives?
 - A project group?
 - etc.

- About how many people will be attending?

- What dates would be ideal?
 - Please note: If the evening event follows a higher-level event (e.g. a conference, team-building session, trade fair etc.), the date of the evening event is of course determined by the date of the main event.
 - Alternatively, is this an independent event with a specific purpose? In this case, you must decide on the most suitable date for this evening event.
 - On which days would you have the largest possible number of participants? It's essential to take vacation periods and holidays into account!

- What would be the best starting time, and how long should the evening event last?
 - The best starting time and the event's optimal length will depend on its content and structure as well as the external circumstances (e.g. the time when the previous event ends).
 - Open-ended or with a fixed ending time?

- Where should the evening event be held?
 - Where will the main event (e.g. the trade fair) take place?
 - When selecting the venue, must you consider where the guests will be coming from?
 - Should the event be held at the headquarters of the host company or institution?
 - etc.

- What location should you choose?
 - Type of location (hotel, event location, the company's own premises, a tent etc.)?
 - Requirements for the location (premium or basic, number of stars etc.)?
 - Does the type of location (urban, seaside, historical, futuristic etc.) match the theme/motto of the evening?
 - Available facilities — are they suitable for the number of participants and the event's structure, timetable and requirements (e.g. is it a casual get-together or a gala)?
 - Are additional spaces needed for supporting programmes (e.g. children's programmes or exhibitions)?
 - In certain cases, will additional tents be needed?

- Must overnight accommodation be available?
 - If the meeting is held at an event location, you may need to reserve hotel accommodation nearby.
 - Will upgrades for VIPs be needed?

- Will transfers or shuttles be needed for groups or individual participants?
 - From the airport or train station and back?
 - From the hotel/back to the hotel?

- What will be the tone of the evening event?
 - Will there be an integrated official ceremony?
 - Is it a party?
 - A festive gala?
 - A get-together with networking opportunities?
 - Casual or formal?

- Which structure would be ideal?
 - The event should have a well-structured and discernible flow, and the guests should always be informed about the timeframe in advance (unless there is a surprise programme).

- What would be the ideal programme for achieving the aims of the evening event and conjuring up emotions and lasting memories for the target group?
 - A programme in line with a certain motto?
 - A formal reward programme or an award presentation on the stage?
 - A show programme?
 - Speakers?
 - A central stage programme or a decentralized programme among the guests?
 - Activities in various rooms (party area, lounge, special activities etc.)?
 - Music: dinner, party, DJ, band, a certain theme (Irish, Brazilian, classical etc.)?
 - Presenter?
 - A children's programme?

- What kind of catering should be chosen?
 - Reception?
 - Buffet?
 - Menu?
 - Premium quality?
 - What kind of drinks?
 - Motto?

- How should the participant management and the overall communication, from the invitations to the feedback questionnaire, be organized?
 - Does a motto/key visual/central theme already exist, or must it still be developed?
 - Should a corporate design be taken into account?
 - Which aspects should be analogue, which should be digital?
 - Would an event website and/or an event app with information about the event be desirable?

- What is the available budget?

- Will the event be planned and organized in-house or with support from an agency?

- Would partner companies like to participate in the evening event? (E.g. as a sponsor)?

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Masthead:

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