



How to Plan a Conference/Retreat/Event

Holding a conference, retreat, or other event can be one of the most fun and rewarding time in your single adult ministry. However, in order to guarantee success there must be some planning. Your goals, the size of your ministry, and your event's location will affect what you do and what happens as a result. We've prepared this guide to help you through the process of planning your next event.

Because there is no way we can possibly address every situation in this article, if you are planning a conference/event with and you need some additional help, please call 919.434.3611 or email Kris@TheSinglesNetwork.org.

Get Your Priorities Straight

Before you get started, it's beneficial to think about why you're planning this event. There are some great reasons to host an event—and some wrong reasons to host an event.

Reasons you *should* have a conference/event:

- To grow and disciple your existing single adult ministry
- To grow and disciple your existing single adult ministry leadership team
- To outreach into the community

Reasons you *should not* have a conference/event:

- We are supposed to because it's expected
- It's a great way for singles of the opposite sex to meet
- Because we are a large enough singles ministry, we should put one on
- We have had a singles ministry for a while now so we need to have an event
- Because the church down the street has one

Plan for Success

Once you've determined that you're doing this for the right reasons, it's time to get started. Here are some helpful ideas to help you plan for success.

Define Your Purpose

Pray and ask God to help you clarify the purpose of your event.

Get Some Experience

Consider being a co-lead or co-sponsor for an existing event so you can get experience prior to planning your own.

Network with Others

Call people who have led a conference or event, go online, read books and articles. The idea is: gather as much information you can so you can make good decisions about your event.

It's great to involve other churches/ministries in your event. Whether you want help planning and leading or you're including them as a part of your target audience, spreading the word to other Christian groups is always a good idea.

Identify Your Goals

Establish a mission as statement and write out your goals for your event. Be prepared to evaluate your progress along the way to see how well you're reaching your goals.

Identify Your Audience

Pick a life stage (or age range) that you believe God wants you to focus on. Spend your time and energy figuring out how to reach that particular group of people.

Name Your Event

Name your event with an understanding of your purpose and goals.

Establish a Budget

If this is your first conference, you may want to keep it small (100 people or less). And realize that with 100 people, a local band, some donated food, advertisement, donated door prizes, and a speaker, you could easily spend \$2000-\$3000. If you can't get food donated, providing lunch for 100 people is likely to cost around \$600-\$750.

If you have an annual budget for all your ministry's operating expenses, you'll need to decide as early as possible what to set aside for your conference.

Some single adult ministries have a separate budget (or can even ask for a separate budget) for their conferences. To help figure out how much to ask for, establish the basics of your event (like your mission, your target audience, and so on); going through that exercise will help define your budget needs.

Ask what other churches have spent on conferences. Ask them where they spend the most money. If they could do it over again, where would they have cut costs? Some churches with huge budgets are satisfied with only 100 attendees while others can put on a

conference for 500 people on less than \$1000 with lots of donations and some creative thinking.

Let's say you put on an event for 100 people. This event is a Saturday-only conference. Let's take a look at what you might expect to spend.

\$100	Breakfast of danishes, coffee, and paper products
at least \$600	Lunch
\$100	Snacks
\$0 - \$2000	Speaker (Cost can vary due to the speaker's experience, popularity, and availability. Well known speakers can cost up to \$10,000.)
\$0 - \$1000	Band (Cost can vary due to the speaker's experience, popularity, and availability. Well known bands can cost more than \$10,000.)
\$300	Materials, registration, nametags
\$100 - \$300	Decorations
\$100 - \$2000	Advertising (Costs can vary depending on whether you use TV and radio or just flyers and word of mouth.)
Free	Facility can be free if it's held in a church or other donated space.
Free	Door prizes can be free if they're donated.

A few other tips and caveats:

- There are always hidden expenses; plan to give yourself a little bit of a buffer.
- Be careful to keep track of everything.
- Have one person in charge of all the funds.
- Only allow authorized team members spend money.
- Encourage team members to get as much as they can get donated.
- When reimbursing team members, require receipts for everything.

Obtain Pastoral/Church Support

This means more than just a nod of enthusiasm. You want tangible support such as:

- A budget to help meet expenses
- Sincere and practical encouragement
- Prayer support
- A willingness to let you make announcements from the pulpit
- Advertisement on church grounds, in the bulletin, facebook, website, etc.

Develop a Leadership Team

For every 100 attendees, you'll need at least 10 team members to help you, so plan accordingly. We'll say more about choosing your team wisely in just a moment. For now, suffice it to say that the people you surround yourself with can make or break your event.

Create a Timetable

The more time you have to plan an event, the better. In most cases, you'll need to start at least six to nine months in advance, as many speakers, bands, and facilities book up six or more months in advance.

Put together a timetable of what you need to accomplish each month. Then write out a week by week timetable of what you need to get done and when. Remember that some things can be done weeks ahead of time (like getting door prizes). The design of your advertisements and, as was just mentioned, the booking of speakers/bands also can be done ahead of time.

Next, put together a team and begin meeting on a regular basis. In the beginning, you may only need to meet monthly and only with certain parts of your team. (Email can be used to keep the rest of the team informed.)

Once you've decided on a date for your event, send out a "Save the Date" email/postcard/facebook/twitter notice to your database of potential attendees.

Develop a Leadership Team

The saying goes, "You're only as good as your people." When you consider the teamwork involved in pulling off your event, it's easy to understand why the team you choose is so important. Here are some tips to help you assemble the best possible team.

- Pray and ask God for who should be on your team.
- Seek a co-leader to whom you can delegate important tasks and who will be a support for you as you lead your team.
- Assemble your team from the target audience you are trying to reach. If your team is made up of 50-somethings and you're trying to reach 20-somethings, you will have problems identifying with your audience.
- Be open to team-members of different maturity levels. The planning of your event could be a great training opportunity for helping team members grow, no matter where they are in their walks with God.
- Value your team-members' time. Assign team members to various responsibilities, being sensitive to their level of commitment. For example, single parents and those who may have other obligations should not be assigned a role that requires a large time commitment. Keep in mind that some people on your team won't be needed until the very end (for example, video/audio), so they don't need to attend many of the early meetings. Similarly, you may hold topic-specific meetings for sub-teams (for example, registration team or marketing team).
- Pray with and for your team.
- Keep the lines of communication open. It's important that you communicate with your team not only in meetings, but by phone and email as well.
- Consider incorporating a short devotional time to your meetings so that they can be multi-purposed.

- Make resources available. Do all you can to ensure that your team-members have access to all the resources they'll need to perform their tasks?
- Be diligent to follow up with each member of your team as they complete each task.
- Encourage your team, love them, and thank them.
- Delegate, delegate, delegate. Don't be afraid to ask for help.
- On the day of the event, make sure that each leader has a name tag that identifies them as a member of the leadership team. Give a different nametag to other volunteers and to all the event's attendees.

Pastoral Support is Key

Stay in touch with your pastor throughout the planning process. Occasionally email updates explaining what you are doing and sharing specific prayer requests. Ask your pastor to talk about the event to the church to help promote it. On the day of the event, encourage your senior pastor to visit. Ask him to open in prayer event to show his involvement and support. You might even think of involving married folks to help in areas such a food, greeting, prayer, etc.

Organize Your Event

Decide on a Date

People often ask when they should hold a conference or event. The answer depends on whether your goal is "outreach" or "inreach."

- Outreach - Unless you are promoting a special concert or a beach or mountain event, summer is a difficult time to gather the unchurched. For greatest turnout, plan for a fall and spring event.
- Inreach - Summer is a great time for inreach events, particularly if held at a vacation-like venue (such as the beach or mountains).

When considering a two-day or weekend event, remember that folks will arrive late on a Friday night, may have traveled along distance and be tired. As for when to wrap things up on Sunday, remember that people may have to drive a good distance to get home. If your event ends on Saturday afternoon, plan an event on Saturday night for people who want to continue meeting with each other. For example, you could have a get-together at a restaurant, attend a movie, or host a game night.

Secure a Location

When you're ready to secure a location for your event, here are some key issues to keep in mind.

If your event is going to be held at your church, your biggest expenses will be food, marketing, speaker(s), and music (band). Of course without great food, great marketing, knowledgeable speaker(s) and awesome music, overall attendance and involvement will suffer.

If you're planning your event for a location other than your church, your biggest expense will be securing the venue. Getting away to a new and exciting venue is great for building relationships, providing more intense training, and creating opportunities for trying new things. Keep in mind that additional planning, excellent organization, and more responsibility will be required.

Whether you meet on- or off-site, here are some tips and helpful ideas to help your location be the best it can be.

- Be ready to help make decisions of what the facilities can and can't do. For example, you need to know about technical limitations such as sound/power point, to table/chair availability, traffic issues, lighting, props, when you can set up, when you need to be cleaned up and out, etc.
- Plan your parking strategy including assistance in bad weather.
- Round tables are the best to encourage conversation and note taking. Also, if you end up having less folks than planned, spread your tables out and use less chairs around each table.
- Check with your speaker ahead of time on the placement of the podium, what type of mic they may want to use, will they need to show a video or power point and whatever other needs they might have.
- Gyms may be great places for playing basketball but they are horrible for concerts and conferences as the acoustics make it difficult to hear.
- Background music should be playing between sessions.
- Decorations are critical to the overall feel and experience of your event. Consider all aspects of this when planning. Center arrangements on tables make great door prizes.
- Be aware of the location of additional equipment, chairs, tables, etc.
- When setting up exhibitors, be sure to have extra power cords.
- Consider what has to be done to clean-up for the event. If an event finishes too late on a Saturday night, it will make it hard to get ready for Sunday morning.
- Ask people at the event to help with clean-up.

Define—and Stick to—Your Budget

People often ask, "Should I charge a fee for my event?" You should always charge for your event. Why? Because it creates a sense of value for event attendees. And it reinforces to people that investing in their growth in Christ is worthwhile. Remember, you can always offer scholarships and discounts to those who need additional help.

Provide discounts for those who register early and for senior adults, students, and children. Keep in mind that if the discount isn't attractive enough, it won't be motivating enough to get people to register early.

Decide ahead of time where you can save money. For example, using your churches praise band, using local speakers, finding someone within the church who can do your marketing materials, having the church provide a meal vs. buying food are all great ways to save money.

Registration and Orientation

Early Registration

Did you know that you will increase your registration by as much as 80% or more just by offering online registration? If your marketing plan doesn't include an online presence with the ability for event attendees to register online, you should definitely consider adding that capability.

You will need to work out a system on how to count registrations online and by mail, organize them for the day of (this can be done by last name including who has paid and who hasn't), whether you need to ask for the entire amount prior to the day or have them register and pay the day of. Note: If your church does not have a way to do online registration, you may consider use EventBrite or other online tool.

Registration on the Day of the Event

Set up your registration area in an easy-to-find area. It should be out front, not inside the area of the event. Assign a point-person who will be available at all times during your event to handle late registrations, questions, first aid, and other unexpected issues that crop up.

Here are some additional tips:

- If you have a large event, you must have a system that will let people register on the day of the event without having to wait in line too long. For example, break last names into small lines.
- Be sure to have adequate cash to make change.
- Decide whether you are able to take debit/credit cards for the day of as well as checks. Have a sign that says to whom they checks are made to. Note: The "Square" resource used on Smart phones is a great, quick, easy way to take credit and debit cards.
- Make one person in charge of handling all money.

Welcome Packets

Upon arrival at the event, each attendee should receive a welcome packet. You need to decide what should be included in this packet and how it should be packaged/presented. Here are some ideas to consider:

- A folder, large envelope, or notebook. Folders and large envelopes are less expensive.
- Include a name tag, pen, any give-a-ways, any coupons, and information about area church or ministry brochures.
- Include a schedule of the day, list of speakers, bio of speakers and bands, list of topics to be covered.
- Include an area map as well as one of the event's location (hotel, church, etc.).
- Always list hotels, area attractions, things to do for those who are visiting from outside areas. Check with the local Chamber of Commerce to get free brochures.

Name Tags

Name tags need to be done ahead of time. You can pre-print with the logo for the conference. If you have time, printing each attendees name adds an extra bonus. Print the first name very large, with their last name small. You may add their church/city name. (In the event you offer pre-registered break out sessions, you can also put that information on the nametag.)

Keep in mind that peel-and-stick name tags only work for one day, so you will need to give them out each day of your event. For a multi-day event, plastic holders are best. At the end of your event, ask for the holders back to be used for another event. Have each name tag attached to a packet to help save time.

Greeters

Greeters should be friendly, have a great smile, and be informative. Greeters will help in everything from holding doors open to helping with registration to assisting speakers/band. Tell your greeters to:

- Wear a name tag (it should clearly identify them as a greeter).
- Arrive early and stay late.
- Stay informed on all aspects of the event.
- Be as helpful and friendly as possible.

Market Your Event

Remember that overall look of all marketing materials needs to be consistent. Your logo, signage, web page including facebook, brochures, T-shirts, and decorations must be graphically attractive and consistent.

This is such a critical area that often gets forgotten. Marketing is neglected because of lack of skill, lack of resources, lack of finances, or all of the above. It's true that the number one way to get people to a conference is by inviting them on-by-one. However, marketing to them in multiple ways has been proven to be effective as well as establishing the overall feel of the event.

Logo

Your logo must be clean and easy to read. No more than two colors for cost effectiveness when printing. Stay away from logos with photos in them, logos that are too long or tall, or that use dated graphics or fonts. You must also consider your audience. A logo too edgy will not appeal to an older group and vice versa.

Website

When putting your event on the web, consider the design, accessibility of the links, ease of use, and graphical appeal. If you are trying to reach an audience under 40, then your website needs to reflect that. If your links don't work, there is missing information, there aren't any pictures, attendance will suffer.

As stated earlier, registration will increase by as much as 80% or more when you offer online registration. Make sure your website will allow people to register quickly and easily.

That said, get your website up as soon as you can—even if you don't have all the information yet.

And don't forget about email. Early on, send out a save-the-date ad for your event. And start to develop a database of email addresses to promote the event. Having a database is a great way to follow-up your event, promote other events and invite people to church.

Brochure

Your brochure needs to include the event logo and a picture on the front of who the target audience is. The content needs to be simple and to the point. Point to the website for more information. Other items to include:

- An opening paragraph with the intent of the event
- Details on where, when, who is the sponsor, the schedule, list of speakers/band (and perhaps their bios), cost, discounts, contact information.
- Photographs, which are great because they give the audience an idea of what to expect.
- A tear-off registration form they can mail in; however, make sure you can also take registrations online. The registration needs to include their email address printed clearly, how many children and ages (if you are offering child-care), address, phone and church name. You may also obtain information on whether they are staff or in lay leadership in a church for networking purposes.

Bulletin Inserts, Flyers & Posters

Another great way to get the word out is to provide inserts for your church's bulletin and flyers for its hallways. You may also provide these for other churches to help promote your event. Keep the minimal amount of information so that it doesn't get too busy. Be sure to have your website/contact information large.

Postcards

It's a good idea to mail out a save-the-date postcard with instructions to go to the website for details. Then later, a reminder postcard. You can also email a save-the-date jpg of the front side of your postcard. This jpg could be clickable back to your website.

T-Shirts

Some events print T-shirts for the leadership team and other volunteers. You may also think about selling them to help raise additional support or donations for a worthy cause. Keep in mind that you want the T-shirts to be attractive enough to be worn outside of the event.

Signs

Outdoor signage to promote an upcoming event, directional signs on the day of the event, and signs for the bathrooms are critical. One of the best ways to advertise is by putting a banner/sign out front weeks prior to the event.

Use bright colors, high-contrast, and keep it simple; something like:

Singles Conference, August 10th, www.First Church.org

Having a banner at your event helps to tie everything together. To save cost you may opt to blow up your logo on a board and paint the design. You may also use PowerPoint to project your image on a screen.

Advertising Your Event

Ads in local papers, online websites (such as K-Love and Christian Happenings, TheSinglesNetwork.org), flyers/brochures to tack up at coffee houses, word of mouth, announcements at other churches, and sharing your event with similar associations are all great ways to promote your event.

You want to equip your team and church with what they need to help get the word out. If this is your first event, you might want to keep your costs down by only doing word of mouth advertising. Be aware that placing ads can get very expensive. Make sure you budget for this ahead of time.

If you are not charging for your event, you can usually get a free Public Service Announcement on radio/TV. However, if you are charging you may have some limitations. Some stations have local community shows that might allow you to be a guest. Also ask local media outlets to come to your event as a way to promote community awareness and for future events. Note: Be sure to go to our website to see a free list of 50 Ways to Advertise.

Decorations

The decorations for your event should be consistent with your overall theme and the look of your marketing materials. For example, if your theme includes a tropical or ocean theme, then your marketing materials and decorations should tie into that theme. Don't forget to be creative with your theme by having extras like:

- Table top items
- Packet contents
- Banners
- Giveaways and door prizes
- Pens

Note: Oriental Trading and Group.com offer great give-a-way items for your event. Balloons scattered around the room will quickly make a room feel decorative while keep the cost down low.

Door Prizes

Door prizes can be anything from gift certificates to local restaurants and gift shops to books and tapes. Ask your speaker/band to donate an item. And be sure to let folks know who donated the item. You may opt to include their names in the packet of information. Remember, it's very important to support and publicly thank our door prize donors. Go the extra mile: send a personal thank you to all donors after the event.

Piecing the Puzzle Together

All your planning and preparation is getting ready to pay off. Whether you're holding a conference, a retreat, a workshop, or some other type of event, your event is going to be a great success! Some of the topics in this section may not apply to your particular event; feel free to take the topics that apply to you as you piece together your one-of-a-kind event.

Alter Call

Whether or not to have an alter call is a personal decision. Having an alter call may be something normal in your church; however, if you are working with other churches who might not have alter calls, it could be uncomfortable for them. When establishing your mission and goals, keep this in mind. You may offer an invitation and state that counselors will be standing by (all counselors should have an identifying name tag).

Alternatives to a traditional alter call are:

- Decision cards on the tables or in attendee packets.
- Prayer request/suggestion box.

Audio/Visual

Because some facilities may have an audio/visual person on staff, you may opt to tap that person's expertise. It might be a good idea to assign an assistant to that person (not only will they be a help to the primary a/v person, but they'll receive some valuable training that you could use for future events). Here are some additional things to consider:

- Will you want your event video- or audio-taped?
- Will you need PowerPoint? Keep in mind that not every tech person knows how to run PowerPoint. You may have to bring someone in to do this.
- Will your speaker prefer a headset or lapel mic? As a rule, stationary mic offers less flexibility and ease of use.
- What about your band? What kind of mics do they need?

Don't forget to check all sound, video, and lighting prior to the event's start time. And remember, because of the nature of technical equipment, it's important that you have

access to backup equipment in the case of a problem.

Breaks

Allow plenty of time for breaks. Remember, conferences typically attract more women than men—and women typically need longer bathroom breaks! Be sure to allow for plenty of time. You might even opt to change some of your male restrooms to female for your event.

Childcare

If you decide to offer childcare, understand that some states require the care workers to be licensed. Decide the ages you'll accept (how young/how old) and if you will charge for their care. You will need to think about keeping children occupied for the duration of the event. Meals and snacks should be provided. You may opt to have children join parents for lunch.

Remember, also, that single parent families have the most inflexible use of their time and money. Keep this in mind as you plan.

Disabilities

Some events should include a sign language interpreter. You may also need to arrange accommodations for individuals who are in wheel chairs or have visual impairments.

Emcee

You may opt to have an emcee for your event. Good candidates to consider: your singles pastor, a single adult, a comedian, or a band leader. This person will help to keep the mood lifted and energized. They could announce door prize winners, conduct prayer, make announcements, and introduce speakers. Note: Remember the value of having icebreakers/warm up exercises. See a handout on some great ones at www.TheSinglesNetwork.org and click on the store.

Exhibits

Decide ahead of time if you will allow exhibits at your event and be clear about the purpose of each exhibit. For example, some companies/ministries promote or sell items that have nothing to do with single adult ministry such as insurance, gym memberships, cell phones, etc.

Are you going to charge exhibitors? If the exhibits create additional value for event attendees, it's appropriate for exhibitors to pay for exposure. If an exhibitor is also attending the event, will you give them a discount on event registration fees?

Take into consideration that if an exhibitor brings helpers who are not planning to attend the conference, you'll need to have enough food to accommodate them. Get a headcount in advance and decide whether you'll charge these people for meals.

To facilitate your exhibitors, you should:

- Offer layout options for exhibitors to choose from on your website or in an exhibitors' packet; communicate the height or space limitations they will have.
- Provide electricity, a table and skirt, and chairs.
- Allowing them to play music and video, display their signage, hand out food, drinks, candy, and other give-a-ways.
- Include set-up and break down time for exhibitors.

First Aid

Have a first aid kit(s) available and make sure all members of your team know where they're located. For larger events, you may opt to have a nurse on hand.

Follow-Up

Encourage your attendees to go through their handouts later to help remember the conference/event.

- Consider a going away gift to help them remember the conference,
- Have a plan in action to follow-up with visitors/attendees
- Evaluations are critical to an event. Include one in their packet (or give out at the end).

Food

This area is a very critical, so you should take time to really plan it out. The quality of the food you provide can make or break your event—if meals are lousy, cold, old, or dry, attendees may not remember much else about your event.

Here are some tips, advice, and “lessons learned” to help manage this important area of your event.

- Consider box lunches, which are easier to deal with than hot food.
- Always provide snacks and other refreshments on the tables. This doesn't have to be elaborate; a bowl of candies is sufficient.
- Be sensitive to people who have dietary restrictions.
- Be aware of anyone who might need assistance.
- Consider having food lines that people can walk down both sides.
- If space is limited or you need to use the buffet area immediately after the meal has been served, consider asking attendees to eat in another location or even outside. Many churches and hotels have courtyards, lobbies, or unused meeting spaces that could be used for this purpose.
- Always allow your speaker/band members to go first when eating. They may need some additional time to prepare for the next part of the conference/event.
- Be aware that where you eat there will be clean up. If your event is a multiple day event, you will need a team to set up and clean up so that it doesn't disturb the rest of the conference/event.
- Always provide a meal on location as it will keep your attendees there and provide opportunities for relationships.
- Consider having a leaders table. This gives the visiting leaders a chance to network and interact directly with the speaker.

- Don't be shy about asking for food donations or discounts. Always ask.

Ice Breakers

Icebreakers, skits, and warm-up exercises are all great ways to get your audience energized and connected. Again, be sure to stay consistent with your overall theme. Be creative and have fun.

Prayer

We've already talked about having a prayer team as part of your event's preparation. Here, we're talking about the visibility and purpose of prayer at the event itself.

It's important to keep your event focused on God. Prayer is one great way to do this. Here are some ways to incorporate prayer into your event:

- You could have prayer request boxes located throughout your event site. Make sure to let people know they are checked at every break and that people will be praying for them.
- Assign a prayer partner for each speaker and band member.
- Have this same team praying during your event, covering each aspect of the day in prayer.
- You may organize a group of counselors for the actual day of the event.
- You may work with the follow-up team for prayer for those who attended including those who accepted Christ or would like to do so.
- Ask local churches to be in prayer for your event.

Small Group Discussion

It's always a good idea to allow for small group discussion at your event. Why? Because single adults want to talk with and meet other people. Part of why they've chosen to attend your event is to meet people. You can facilitate this by encouraging folks to sit with people they don't know. You might even have a plan ahead of time that would mix up your audience for special break-out sessions. To help these sessions run smoothly, train some small group leaders to facilitate conversation and help keep the discussion on topic.

Speaker/Band

When you're choosing a speaker or a band, make sure he/she will connect with your audience. If you hire a married speaker, it's critical that they know how to relate to single adults. If you hire a band that is too edgy, they might not relate to your audience and vice versa.

Be sure to communicate what you want and/or expect. For example, if you would like your speaker to accept questions or to stay after to sign books, be sure you ask for these things. Know ahead of time if your speaker/band charges a fee. Agree on a figure in advance. If you book a speaker/band, stand behind your verbal agreement even if you

have not received a written agreement yet. Insist on paying a deposit so that both you and the speaker/band are protected.

Take care of your speaker/band. Here are some ways to make sure you accommodate them adequately.

- Have water for them when they are getting ready to speak/sing. Ask if there are any other special needs.
- Provide a hotel (not someone's home) for your speaker/band. Also, make sure they have access to transportation to and from the event.
- Ask ahead of time if your speaker/band needs a product table and assign someone to operate it for them.
- Assign a prayer partner. This prayer partner could call or email your speaker/band during the planning process.
- Assign a personal assistant. This assistant can do whatever that is needed and be available throughout the event to the speaker/band. Sometimes speakers/bands need a person to help in crowd control or a monopolizing fan.
- Be aware that your speaker/band may need some down-time between speaker/playing. Have a room that they can go. Provide refreshments, couches, computer with internet, etc.

A few words about logistics. Perform sound checks early to adjust volume. Arrange the type of mic, podium, stage props, and materials, your speaker/band needs. Be sure to ask permission from your speaker/band if you plan to record them audibly and visually.

Checklists for Before, During, and After Your Event

One Day Prior – Checklist

Tomorrow's the big day. And you've got a lot of work to do before then. Here are some important things to be sure you get done today.

- ✓ Make sure registration packets/folders are done and ready to give out
- ✓ Set up and decorate facility
- ✓ Place all signage (including directional signs for parking and entrance)
- ✓ Make a final call to your food vendors to confirm when food will be delivered
- ✓ Perform mike/sound check (may include band/speaker)
- ✓ Make a final call to speakers/bands (they may be arriving early; if so, arrange to meet with them if needed)
- ✓ Pray over your event

Morning of Your Event – Checklist

Before the first attendee walks up to the registration/check-in table, these are things you need to be sure to take care of.

- ✓ Take care of last minute decorations/signs (such as helium-filled balloons)
- ✓ Perform final mike/sound check

- ✓ Schedule a time for prayer about one hour prior to event's start time; ask your band, speaker, and team of volunteers to join you
- ✓ Allow time for band warm up about one hour prior
- ✓ Make sure greeters/ushers are in place at least 30 minutes prior
- ✓ Allow speaker warm up about 30 minutes prior
- ✓ Set up refreshments about 30 minutes prior
- ✓ Play a CD of music in the background
- ✓ Open all doors about 30 minutes prior to event's start time

During Your Event – Checklist

Throughout the event, you and your team of volunteers need to take care of these things.

- ✓ Assign greeters everywhere to help people find their way
- ✓ Keep reducing people at your registration area until just one person is manning the table
- ✓ Clean up as you go
- ✓ Empty trash as you go (including bathroom trashcans)
- ✓ Keep refreshments up to date
- ✓ Keep water available to your speakers/bands
- ✓ Keep music playing during breaks
- ✓ Be as flexible as needed

After Your Event – Checklist

Before attendees begin filing out, make a point to do the following things.

- ✓ Close in prayer
- ✓ Thank and acknowledge your team in front of everyone
- ✓ Thank everyone for coming by saying it to people as they leave
- ✓ Ask all attendees to fill out evaluations
- ✓ Start to break down (you may have a different team for this as most of your team will be very tired; you may also opt to do some now and some later)
- ✓ Connect with your band/speaker as they leave; make sure they have their checks and help them get to the airport, hotel, etc.
- ✓ Set up a follow-up time with your team to go over evaluations

To bring Kris to your city or help with your event, call her at 919.434.3611.

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