

# Strategic Questions to Answer Before Planning an Event (and to revisit each year of an existing event)

## What is the purpose of the event?

- Fame (promotion)
- Fortune (revenue)
- Friends (members/donors)
- Fun (celebratory)

More importantly, do your directors and key stakeholders know the purpose?

## Who to Ask?

- Identify ALL the key stakeholders, who all is involved?
- What are their roles and expectations?
- Who is really making the decisions?

Understand, develop and manage partnerships with all stakeholders.

## How to be a good partner?

- Help shape the vision, then deliver the experience
- Understand the realities of balancing vision, expectations and budgets
- Confirm you have a collective understanding of success
- Incorporate all team members in overall vision – keep everyone informed

## What to Ask?

- What are you trying to achieve?
- What is the overall organizational strategy? Does an event fit/make sense?
- What is the experience you want your guests to have?
- If something is donated or in-kind, does it make sense with your plan?
- What is the action you want their guests to take?
- Who are you trying to reach? Who needs to be in the room?
- What is the message?
- How will success be defined?
- What is the post-event strategy?

## How does it fit into annual giving strategies and major gift prospect development?

- Does the return on investment make sense for the amount of staff resources used?
- Is there a stewardship plan beyond the event?
- Does the event detract from pure donation dollars? Do guests assume their event \$\$\$ is their annual gift? And if so, is it enough?
- If the event goes away, have you done enough to keep the donors and volunteers associated to the organization beyond the event?

## Remember - For Every Event:

- Ask the questions
- Listen to the responses
- Ask more questions
- Define success
- Shape the vision (based on defined strategies)
- Deliver the RIGHT experience
- Measure the Success

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