You've been selected to plan an event. Whether it's your school’s homecoming week, prom, a graduation breakfast or a Family Fun night - you have work to do. Every event is different, but here are some quick tips to get you started.

**How and when do I start planning my event?**

**1. What is the purpose of the Event?**  Get a clear understanding of the purpose of your event. Make sure you know what the goals and objectives of the event are, and that your school leadership team agrees.

**2. Who will attend?** Who are you inviting to your event? How many people do you expect will attend the event? (If this is a repeat event, meet with the previous coordinator, to get past event details.) Are you sending out invitations? Will you print flyers and posters? Do you have a publicity team to promote your event? Will you send out save the date cards?

**3. Will tickets be sold in advance?** Will there be an RSVP process? Will it be a ticketed event? What will the cost of the tickets be? Will tickets be sold at the door?

**4. What is your budget?** Set your event budget. This should be a top priority. How much can you OR how much are you willing to spend? How is the event being funded? Do you have to raise funds? Make sure that your school leadership team approves of the budget. Please follow your organization’s guidelines for handling funds.

**5. When and where is the event?** Select your date and location. If you need to plan a site visit, will you need to take your principal or other committee members along with you?

When you are considering the location you will want to keep in mind the following:

1. **Room capacity**. Is it too large or too small? Do you need more than one room or space? Remember that if you're having a luncheon for 100 people you need to consider serving space, table space, maybe space for your honored guests or a Silent Auction.
2. **Technology**. Will you need any audiovisual equipment? Microphones? Are you using on-line resources? Do you know the passwords to log into Wi-Fi?
3. **Facility Needs.** Do you need a stage or a runway for a fashion show?
4. **Lighting.** Subtle lighting is nice for meal and social functions, but if you are planning an all day workshop, you will want to make sure that there is adequate lighting in the room.
5. **Parking.** Is there adequate parking? Will they have to pay for parking? How far will they have to walk from the parking area to the event? Do you need a shuttle?
6. **Utilities.**  If you are planning a large carnival, you need to consider what equipment will be in use that needs electricity or propane. For example if you have food booths, you need to know what each booth needs, fryers, refrigerators, etc.
7. **Phone hook-ups.** Will you need phone access during the event?
8. **Permits.** Will youneed permits or licenses for your event? If you are using an off campus sight, do they have the required permits?

**6. Who will staff the event?** Who will work this event? Will students be working the event? Will you have parent volunteers? Make sure that you train your staff; customer service goes a long way. Make sure you schedule breaks for your staff. Assign a few people to be floaters and help to put out any unexpected needs. Tell them what to wear the day of the event.

**7. Backward Planning.** You should begin by working backward from your selected date(s), set up a project timeline with specific tasks that must be accomplished by specific dates. If you are breaking up tasks make sure each person/groups knows what is expected of them. What each task timeline and budget is, when you expect status updates on the tasks.

a) When to make your first announcement of the event. Who will make this announcement, what format will this be in, phone call, bulletin, school newsletter, etc.

b) Prepare and print promotional materials (brochures, invitations, tickets, programs etc.)

c) Select caterer/menu

d) Select entertainment / guest speaker and confirm

e) Select decorations/florist/balloons

f) Determine audio-visual needs

g) Review and sign necessary contracts

h) Finalize your agenda/program

i) Confirm attendees

j) Prepare name badges and seating charts if necessary. Have two lists one by table number and one alphabetical.

k) Prepare any necessary signage

l) Set up on site

m) Re-confirm details

n) Enjoy the event

**8. Vendors.** Determine what vendors you will need to work with, get multiple bids for products and services. These could include, but are certainly not limited to:

a) Caterers

b) Entertainers

c) Florists

d) Photographers

e) Printers

f) Registration Assistants

g) Audio-Visual suppliers

**9. When the Event is over.**  Thank all of your workers for their help in making your event a success. Prepare a financial statement for your school leadership team. Once the event is over complete an event evaluation, with suggestions on how to improve the event.

***Most importantly, be flexible. Realize from the start that not everything will go as planned. But in most cases, you will be the only one to realize something did not go as planned. There always comes a time when you can no longer control what happens. You've done all the planning, made all the preparations. The event will happen, one way or another. Do not stress, sit back and enjoy all of your hard work.***