

MONDAY  
MEETING  
W/ KATIE  
@ 7AM

TUESDAY / 02

WEDNESDAY / 03

9:00 - 9:30  
LUNCH  
SANDRA

12:00 - 1:00  
LUNCH  
MEETING

DON'T FORGET  
CALL SARA

THURSDAY / 04

8:00  
MEETING  
EMILY

12PM - 2:PM  
LUNCH W/  
ALLY @  
NOSH

11:00 CA  
FRANCIS

3:00 - 5:00  
DRINKS W/  
SARAH +  
RACHAEL

6:00 - 8:00  
DRINKS W/  
ALEXA @  
CHARIBAR

# THE ULTIMATE EVENT PLANNER KIT

EVERYTHING YOU NEED, IN ONE PLACE

EAGLE'S FLIGHT  
CORPORATE EVENTS  
*Beyond Fun!*

# Contents

---

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>01 Before the Event</b>	<b>4</b>
Budget	6
Theme the Event	11
Partners and Vendors	13
Agenda	16
Generate Excitement with Event Marketing	19
Social Media Tips	21
Logistics	24
<b>02 During the Event</b>	<b>28</b>
Staffing	30
Accessibility	31
Contingency and Emergency Plans	32
<b>03 After the Event</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>04 Summary</b>	<b>38</b>

# Introduction

---

The true reward of throwing a successful event? The positive feedback and buzz it generates within the organization. But a successful event requires strategic planning and a keen attention to detail. With more than 18 million events and meetings organized in the U.S. every year, the events industry contributes more than [\\$115 billion](#) annually to the economy—that is more than air transit, the film or music industries, and spectator sports. With so many stakeholders and so many moving pieces, it's easy to feel like you don't know where to start.

This kit is the answer to your event planning needs. It will walk you through the event from start to finish to make sure you have realistic and measurable goals, fun programming, and memorable activities, and that even the smallest logistical details don't fall through the cracks.

**“This kit is the answer to your event planning needs.”**



# 01

---

## BEFORE THE EVENT

Even the most experienced event planners can feel overwhelmed in the planning stages of an event. From concept and budget to vendor communications and marketing, knowing the right questions to ask will make all of the moving parts more manageable. Which is why it's important to host a kick-off meeting that involves all your stakeholders and gives everyone a chance to get on the same page in terms of event goals and objectives. Based on the decisions made in that meeting, you will be able to go forward and make decisions with confidence.

Depending on the size, location, and agenda of the event, event planners can spend anywhere from five weeks to more than two years planning an event. You should also consider that popular event venues [book fast \(even years in advance!\)](#). It's amazing what a [month-by-month schedule](#) can do to relieve stress and anxiety for even the most seasoned event planners.

### **Don't drop a single ball**

A comprehensive corporate event planning checklist will help you juggle all of the people, places, and things so nothing falls through the cracks.

[Get the Template](#)



# Budget

---

The bottom line will always be at the top of the list for event planning. The best approach is to focus on achieving the event's outcome from a [budget](#) perspective by ensuring the experience is fun and engaging for attendees and measurable for the organization. Manage your budget by considering how everything impacts your event's goals. When you prioritize things such as impactful sessions and activities that will significantly help you achieve your goals, you'll be better able to allocate things such as entertainment and amenities, which are more flexible spends.



Although it might be nice to have high-tech features such as interactive display walls or kiosks, these might be things you add to a “wish list” if the budget allows after the must-have items are locked in place. Once you’ve built a budget framework, you should be able to easily scale it up or down depending on your event size and needs.

### Three Things Even The Pros Do

1. Use spreadsheets to track everything that costs money.
2. Reach out to vendors for accurate quotes.
3. Craft a realistic budget by adding in a 15 percent buffer for the unexpected.



**“Manage your budget by considering how everything impacts your event’s goals.”**

## Budget Considerations

From maximizing what your venue has to offer to making sure you've budgeted for skyrocketing Wi-Fi prices, asking the right questions will be essential to your success. So, what are the right questions? Below, you'll find some to get you started.



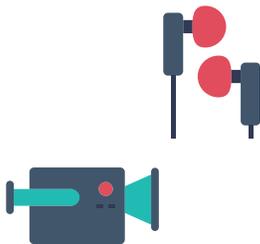
### Travel

Do you need a hotel block for attendees? Transportation for event organizers or presenters? Do you need to organize a car service such as Lyft or Uber for your event attendees?



### Food and Drinks

How many vendors do you need? Are there any dietary considerations you need to account for? Are there costs for bartending? Do you need a liquor license?



### A/V

What is absolutely necessary and what would be “nice to have”? What hidden costs are associated with A/V rentals? If your event is happening in multiple rooms, what A/V equipment is needed in each?



## The Venue

Does the venue offer accommodations for your attendees? What's included in the venue rental—tables and chairs, stage, etc.? What do the public spaces look like and what can you do with them? Are there any hidden costs for damages or other unforeseen circumstances?

### Cater to your budget:

If you're worried about how much food and drink you'll need for your event, plan with accuracy using a [catering calculator](#).



## Marketing

What kind of marketing do you need to do before and during the event? What will be needed for event follow-up?



## Wi-Fi

How much will it cost to set up reliable Wi-Fi throughout the venue? Do all rooms and public spaces need Wi-Fi for the event? How much will it cost to have technical support on site for the event?

### Know what to expect

Wi-Fi costs for events have skyrocketed in recent years, but event attendees expect to have internet access—and they expect it to be fast and reliable. It's important to know what to expect so you don't come in over budget.



## Video Production and Photography

How much will it cost to hire an on-demand team to capture candid photos and events on the day of the event? How much will it cost to have a stationary crew recording sessions or speakers?

# Theme the Event

---

When you effectively theme your event, participants are far more likely to be drawn into the experience you've created for them and the activities planned. How do you do this? By creating an engaging storyline that unfolds throughout the event. When the theme is evident in every aspect of the experience, everyone will feel fully immersed and engaged. Here are some ways to effectively theme your event:

- Tie the theme into all pre-conference communications.
- Encourage attendees—especially the C-suite and other members of leadership—to dress according to the theme.
- Ensure that the decor and dining options reflect the theme, if possible.
- Weave the theme throughout all event sessions or activities and collateral, from signage to attendee name tags.
- Tie the theme into the event follow-up to reinforce key takeaways and action items.



## Get creative for maximum impact

Let's say the goal of your event is fostering teamwork and communication across the company, and you've decided to use science as your theme and plan to incorporate the genius of Rube Goldberg throughout the event. The Rube Goldberg machine accomplishes a simple task through the use of a lengthy chain reaction or domino effect, which can be a conversation-starting analogy for how many feel about the workplace. You could use a Rube Goldberg contraption to serve up coffee or cocktails, use it as your main entertainment ending with a grand display in the closing ceremonies, or turn the device into a team-building challenge with incentives for successful machines. Regardless of your goals or theme, the key is to get them set in stone and then bring them to life in whatever creative ways you can imagine!

[Check Out These Ideas for Iconic Meeting Themes](#)

# Partners and Vendors

---

Having the right partners and vendors is crucial. It's well known that event attendees remember the food, the venue, the decorations, and the entertainment the most, so those elements will inevitably shape their feedback and memory of the event. Dianne Devitt, a creative consultant, event producer, speaker, and author, writes that "when you have a true meeting design that incorporates a complete sensory experience, then you actually create lasting impact and memories." According to Devitt, people remember only 15% of what they hear, but when all the senses are engaged, it increases to an impressive 85% recall. Our brains are wired to catalog emotional moments, so secure the right vendors to ensure every component of your event is memorable.

**“According to Devitt, people remember only 15% of what they hear, but when all the senses are engaged, it increases to an impressive 85% recall.”**

## Tips For Picking the Right Event Partners



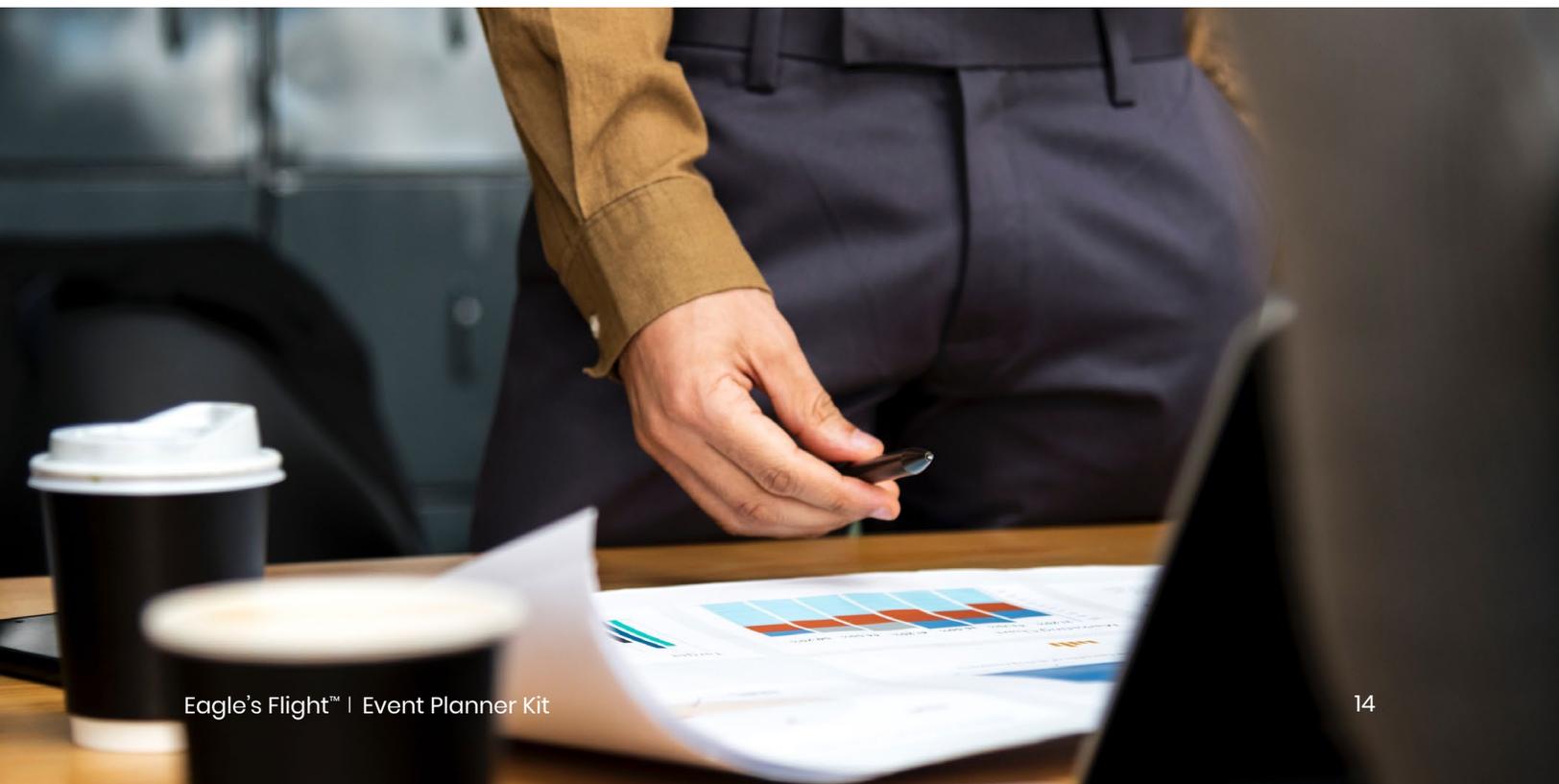
### Choose complementary partners.

Successful event planners surround themselves with partners who have the skills and talents to deliver on budget and on time. Ask for references or examples of their past work to ensure they will be able to achieve your vision.



### Pick partners that see what you see.

Choosing partners that understand and embrace your vision, goals, and objectives will keep everyone on the same page for a successful event.





### Get aligned.

If you opt for a partner who fits the budget but with whom you don't see eye-to-eye with, it could have severe consequences. As often as possible, choose a partner you can easily work with throughout the process.



### Craft a detailed pitch.

Be as specific as possible about what you need and expect from the partner, and keep it documented. This will ensure that everyone has a clear understanding of the event and will help you avoid unwanted surprises.

At the end of the day, it's important to cultivate strong partnerships. Establishing strong lines of communication and being clear about goals and expectations will create a strong working relationship and help ensure that your event partners are eager and willing to work with you for future events.

# Agenda

---

Once you have the budget under control and have secured the best vendors for your needs, it's time to tackle the agenda. This is the part of event planning that is a bit of a balancing act; you must build an agenda that not only achieves your goals, but is highly engaging and relevant for your attendees.

While it might seem crazy, an agenda that comprises back-to-back speakers isn't all that engaging for attendees and feels outdated. An event is a chance for attendees to get away from their day-to-day lives, which is why so many people will be looking forward to an event that is fun, exciting, and different from what they're used to back at work.

So, how can you make this a reality? To achieve your objectives and keep everyone tuned in, look into incorporating hands-on, experiential activities into your agenda. Unlike traditional presentations or lectures, experiential activities can lead to retention rates as high as 90%. Moreover, experiential activities fit the needs of a wide spectrum of participants, regardless of cultural background, generational differences, or seniority in the organization. These fun, practical sessions mimic real-world challenges, so your attendees learn by doing—not just listening, reading, or watching.

Here are some questions to ask yourself as you begin to plan your agenda:

- What are the goals and desired outcomes for the event?
- How can the activities or sessions support the event's goals?
- What's been a hit in the past? What's flopped in the past that should not be planned again?
- What are other people using in their event agendas? Are there any trends to capitalize on?
- Who is my audience? Everything from learning styles, generations, culture, jobs and roles, and so on can influence your agenda.

- What are the key takeaways for event attendees?
- How will you measure the success of each session or activity, as well as the event as a whole?

### **Experiences are having a moment**

When you make your event an undeniable experience, people are far more likely to retain what you've presented, have favorable memories, and look forward to attending another event in the future.

[Check out three reasons why experiences are in right now.](#)



**“While it might seem crazy, an agenda that comprises back-to-back speakers isn’t all that engaging for attendees and feels outdated.”**

# Generate Excitement with Event Marketing

---

Leading up to the event, it will be important to focus on planting seeds for participants. Let them in on how attending will impact them and be worthwhile time away from the office. And for leaders? Outline outcomes and expectations of the event and show how your goals are measurable. At a time when [75% of employers](#) rank stress as their top health and productivity concern and [61% percent of employees](#) report being burned out, this is a prime opportunity to inform your attendees about what's in it for them. Without giving too much away, you can get them excited with hints about what you have planned, what they'll learn, what's new, and so on. Whether we recognize it or not, a big part of event planning is securing buy-in from your attendees so they will come to the event with an open mind, prepared for whatever you have in store.

Marketing your event is the best way to get buy-in. Here are several things to do if you want your event marketing to generate excitement.

## Marketing Checklist

- ✓ Establish a timeline for building excitement leading up to the event.
- ✓ Make a plan for weaving the theme into all communications and decor.
- ✓ Create and share event hashtags for use on social media and any internal company networks before and during the event.
- ✓ Set up all communications to offer a realistic peek at what attendees can expect during the event.
- ✓ Build anticipation through teasers—but don't give away all of the surprises!

### **Sell it!**

With a long list of competing priorities and only so much time in the day, you need your attendees to [feel like this is THE event](#) and not one to miss. Thoughtful event marketing can only support all the work you have put in to making it great for attendees!



# Social Media Tips

---

Using corporate social media accounts to post about your internal event and encouraging your vendors, sponsors, and employees to do the same is a powerful marketing tool. Not only does it build brand awareness, but it is also a great tool for building culture and recruitment. How? When the public sees pictures, video, and posts about a great event, it sends all kinds of positive signals: the company cares about their employees, they know how to have a great time together, and so on.

**60%**

Number of smartphone users who are using their devices at social gatherings and events (source: [Event MB](#)).



Here are some pro tips for integrating a successful social media plan for your event:

- Decide on an event hashtag for use on Instagram, Twitter, and any other company-approved social networks and internal networks.
- When posting about the event on corporate social channels such as LinkedIn and Facebook, be sure to tag or mention any speakers, sponsors, or vendors. (Note: Make sure you have permission to highlight any speakers, vendors, or sponsors prior to posting.)
- Assign a dedicated person to manage social media during the event.
- Post photos, live video, and video stories to channels during the event and encourage attendees to do the same for the chance to be reposted.
- After the event, poll attendees and share images of the event to get quick feedback and continue the momentum.
- Share recap videos and pictures with the marketing team to post via social media as a window into corporate engagement and employee satisfaction.

### **The bonus of going social**

Post pictures, videos, and even quotes from participants throughout the event from corporate accounts and encourage participants to post, too. This [promotes transparency](#) and gives people an honest look at what the organization is about.

### **Think it through**

While the benefits of social media are amazing, always decide if it suits the event you are planning. If the event is dealing with more serious matters—say internal company changes—it might be best to limit social media. Our recommendation: always weigh the pros and cons and get a second opinion from fellow stakeholders if necessary.

# Logistics

---

Next up? The most cumbersome part of planning any event—big or small—is nailing down the nitty gritty: logistics. This is where a checklist will be your best friend. At this stage of the game, all the pieces of your event are in motion and it will all be about the little details, which can pile up quickly. Make sure to track everything so you know what it is outstanding.

## There's an app for that

Having an app for your event allows participants to easily navigate all of the proceedings with an event calendar, map, social sharing options, and more. App-powered events generate 42% more social media impressions, as well as [real statistics](#) that allow you to see how attendees are engaging with event content. Keep in mind that apps can become a significant budget and time consideration, so always plan accordingly.

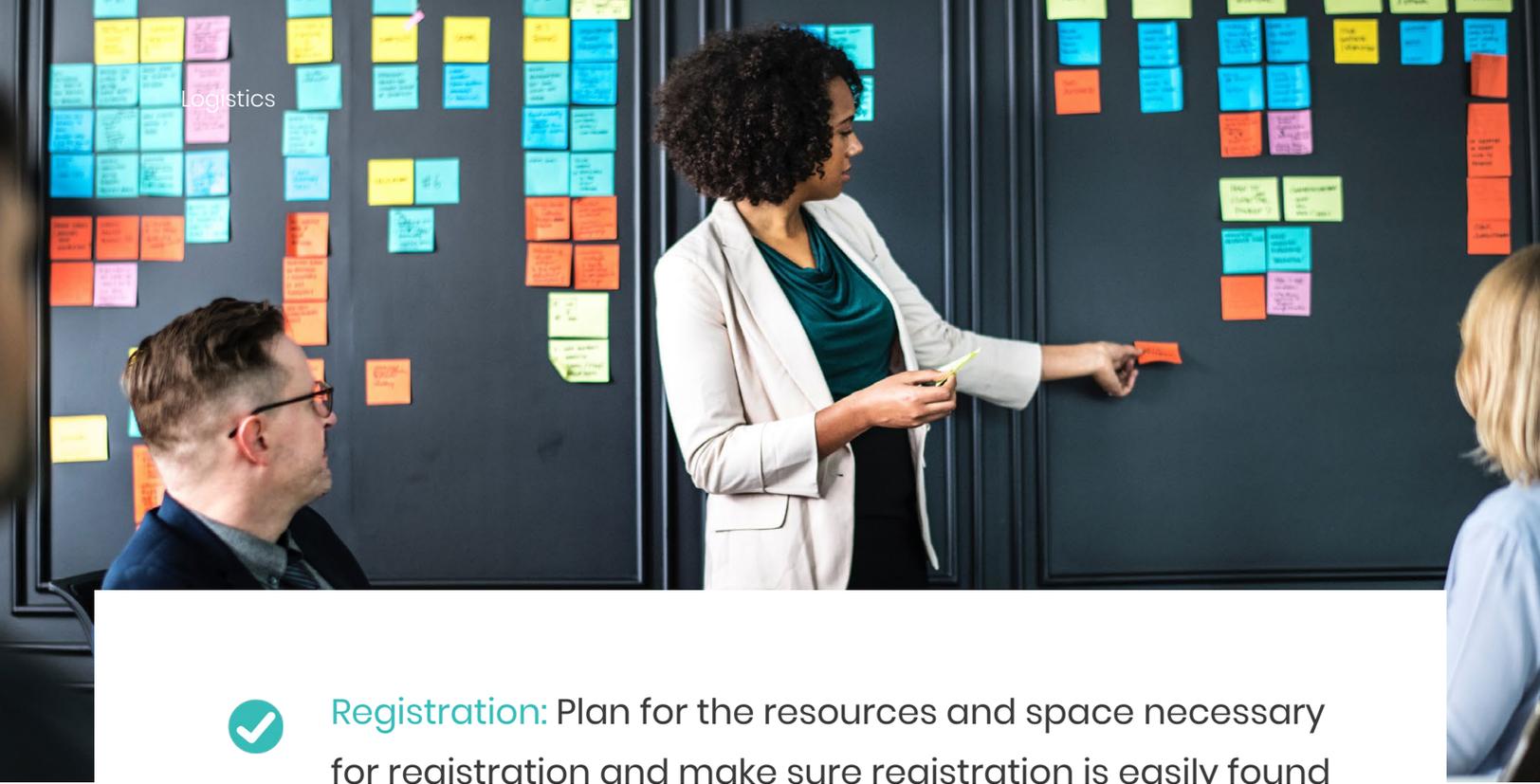


Check out this high-level logistics checklist we've put together below to get you started!

## Logistics Checklist

- ✔ **Technology:** Make sure all tech stakeholders have what they need so that day-of activities run smoothly across A/V, any live social media feeds, Wi-Fi, and event apps.
- ✔ **Vendors:** Make sure you've booked necessary food and beverage vendors and organized all the required licenses and space needs.
- ✔ **Programs/sessions:** Double-check that you have the appropriate amount of space for all programs and sessions and be sure A/V is properly set up.
- ✔ **Entertainment/music:** Ensure you have scheduled any necessary entertainment and that you have the space needed for any special performances.

**“At this stage of the game, all the pieces of your event are in motion and it will all be about the little details, which can pile up quickly.”**



- ✔ **Registration:** Plan for the resources and space necessary for registration and make sure registration is easily found and accessible for attendees.
- ✔ **Travel/accommodations:** Make sure any flights and accommodations for event staff, speakers, attendees, and others have been booked.
- ✔ **Marketing:** Hire the necessary video and photography personnel and have a dedicated social media staffer or team for the duration of the event.
- ✔ **Security:** Ensure an [event security team](#) has been booked, or, if using the venue's security, make sure they are comfortable working with your event staff and that they understand the organization's needs.

## **Know your speakers' needs**

Wrangling speakers and presenters can be one of the hardest tasks for event planners. These uniquely qualified individuals often have many needs that must be met before and during the event. Whether a presenter needs clarification on their commitments to post on social media after the event or they want to ensure they have the right A/V equipment, make sure you have everything squared away early. Also, make sure you didn't miss any hidden fees in their contract for social posting, autographs, or Q&A sessions.

For internal presenters, help ensure their speeches are written and that they have the skills to deliver an impactful message. You might consider offering public speaking training to the C-suite and other interested speakers. Locking in your presenters' needs a few weeks prior to the event will ensure there won't be any surprises.

**Here Are Four Criteria to Consider When Hiring Event Speakers**



02

---

DURING THE EVENT

After months of planning, everything is about to happen in the blink of an eye. Although all that work will culminate in a day that is there and gone, the results and impact of the event will live on long after the doors close (at least, that's the plan!). Which is why ensuring the day of goes as smoothly as possible is essential. It's not out of the ordinary for event planners to be pulled in every direction during the event, with everything needing attention at that moment. So, let's make that a bit less of a surprise by outlining a few things you will need to get in order to ensure the day of your event runs as smoothly as you have planned for it to.

**“Although all that work will culminate in a day that is there and gone, the results and impact of the event will live on long after the doors close.”**

# Staffing

---

First off, ensure you've hired enough staff to cover every job and role. The last thing you want is to be short-staffed. Second, ensure you have everyone in the right role, from a designated social person to post and engage with people online, to people helping with parking and finding the event, to hands and bodies who will help take everything down at the end of the day. Having a list or a board of everyone's roles will help make sure everyone knows where they need to be and when.

## **You don't have to do it all alone**

While you don't have to do it all alone, you are responsible for ensuring the people you put in certain roles can do the job well. These are people your attendees are interacting with throughout their time at the event, which means they can sway the attendee from a great experience to a terrible one!



# Accessibility

---

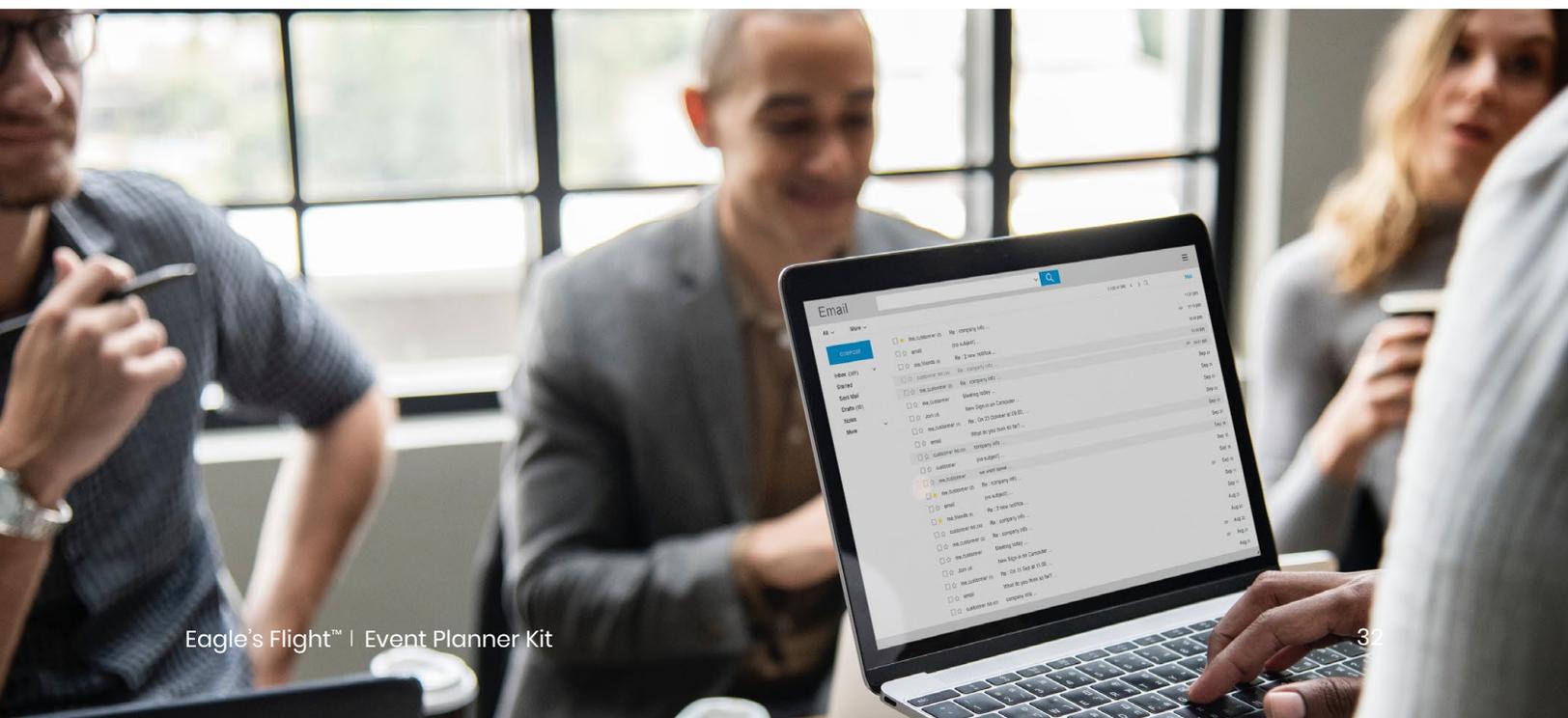
Whether someone can't find a breakout room, needs to know how to get to the venue, or is curious what time lunch is served, having someone at the ready to answer questions will allow participants to enjoy the event and not stress about missing something or getting lost. You can also do this with help that does not require a person! Here are just a few ideas of ways you can make your event completely accessible for every attendee:

- Post signs along the route into the venue.
- Have an agenda for the day in a common space so people aren't repeatedly asking you or other staff.
- If you're using an app, have a messaging feature that allows people to send a designated person questions from anywhere.
- If you're using online registration, have someone there to help troubleshoot. Even the best technology can result in a hiccup here and there, and this is not where you want to negatively impact the attendee experience.
- Always have snacks, coffee, and water in a common space available for attendees who might need a quick bite to pick up their energy before lunch. This is an easy way to make the entire event experience better for everyone.

# Contingency and Emergency Plans

---

No one wants to think of something going wrong, but things happen every day at even the most meticulously planned events. Once everything is planned and you're feeling confident, always ask yourself what could go wrong. This might seem like catastrophizing before the event is even live, but asking this big question allows you to create contingency plans for every possible scenario. Having a plan in place means that if a speaker doesn't show up or a vendor has an emergency and can't supply lunch, you'll have backup options to make sure your participants have no clue what is going on behind the scenes—they'll just see a successful, engaging event.



Furthermore, a best practice is to brief your team on these plans so if anything does happen, they can quickly spring into action. Here are just a few situations that you may want to seriously consider planning for:

- Inclement weather or significant weather event
- Traffic or travel delays
- Vendor does not show up or does not come through
- Event technology does not work as planned (and as tested!)

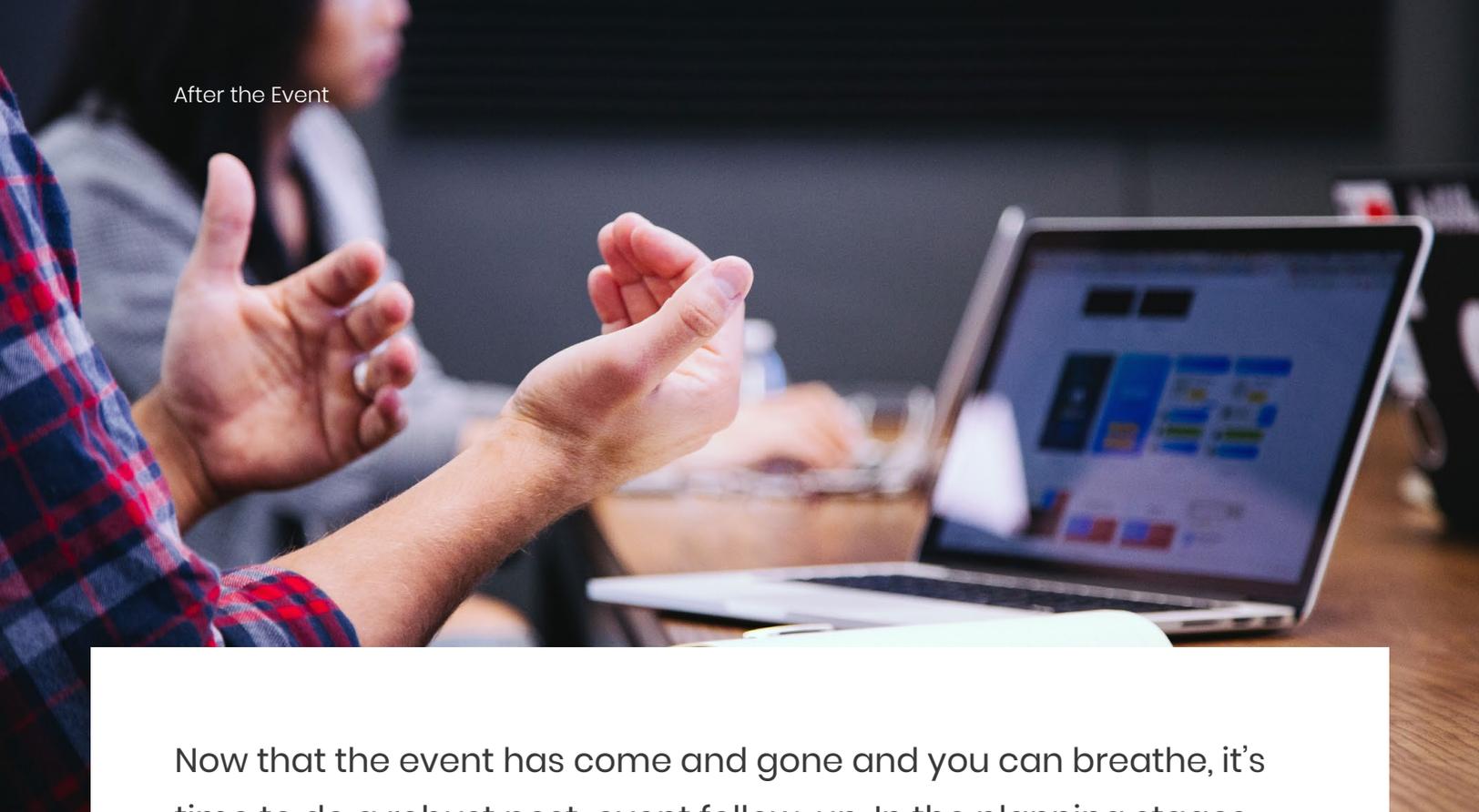
**“Once everything is planned and you’re feeling confident, always ask yourself what could go wrong?”**



03

---

AFTER THE EVENT



Now that the event has come and gone and you can breathe, it's time to do a robust post-event follow-up. In the planning stages, you should have created a plan for measuring success, both for the individual sessions and programs and for the event as a whole. Now it's time to send out surveys and poll attendees to see if you met—or exceeded—your attendees' and stakeholders' expectations and achieved your goal.

In addition to making sure participants enjoyed the event, it's vital to ensure that they successfully retained the right information from the event. Have they taken what they learned back to the office? Are they applying the skills they obtained to create a better, more productive work environment?

There are plenty of powerful ways to assess and reinforce retention, including:

- Follow-up videos from leadership
- Key learning cards
- Surveys and quizzes
- Swag branded with the event message
- Mini experiential learning sessions at the office

### **Drive post-event ROI and impact**

It's important to the event's success that your role as an event planner goes beyond the day of the event! By planning ways to maximize the impact the event had through gamification, event advocates, and more, you'll only increase your success.

[Check out 3 Ways to Drive Post-Event ROI and Impact For the Full Story](#)



Even if participants absorbed everything they needed to from the event, it's important to hear what they thought about the whole thing. Did they like the venue? What did they think of the theme? What would they change? Testimonials are a powerful way to gauge what people thought of the event—not to mention they offer a measure of success. Testimonials are also great for use on promotional materials for future events and for the corporate website. After the event, posting images, video summaries, and a big “thank you” is a great way to urge participants to provide feedback and share their own content and experiences.

Also, make sure to network with new and returning vendors and sponsors on social media and via email to keep the relationship alive for future event needs. It's also a great time to thank them and get feedback about whether they thought the event and partnership worked—or didn't.

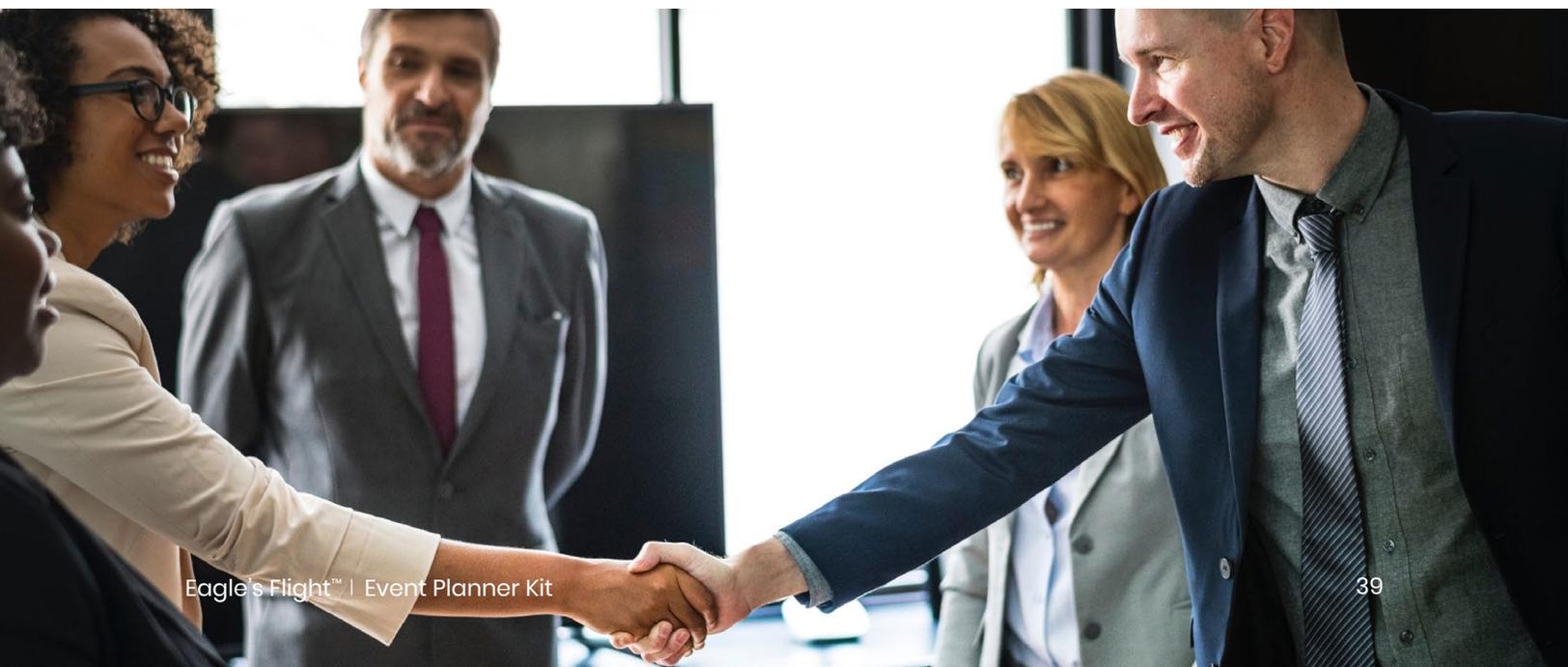
**“Even if participants absorbed everything they needed to from the event, it's important to hear what they thought about the whole thing.”**



# 04 --- SUMMARY

Events are challenging, time-consuming, fun, and engaging for even the most seasoned event planners! The key is to take the necessary time to meticulously plan everything before the event happens, as it happens, and afterwards as well. As the event planner, you are responsible for bringing the message to life and making the goal or objective a reality. If all goes according to your plan, attendees should walk away engaged, informed, and thrilled to have spent their time with you. It's doable; you just need to plan.

Which is why we created this kit full of resources, ideas, and checklists! We hope it has given you plenty to think about and consider for your next event. With the right planning in place, your event goals will align with your budget and your agenda to ensure participants have a fun time, but also walk away with the practical skills to succeed in the workplace. If you have any questions or need support planning your next event, let us know! We're always up for a challenge.



EAGLE'S FLIGHT™  
**CORPORATE EVENTS**  
*Beyond Fun!*

Leverage our decades of  
experience in delivering  
conference programs to  
make your corporate event  
unforgettable!

CONNECT WITH THE EAGLE'S FLIGHT TEAM



[www.eaglesflight.com/corporate-events](http://www.eaglesflight.com/corporate-events)

1-519-767-1747

**Toll-Free North America:** 1-800-567-8079 • **International:** +1-519-767-1747 • [www.eaglesflight.com](http://www.eaglesflight.com)  
**Asia Pacific:** +65-6805-0668 • **Europe:** +44-0-175-353-3010 • **South America:** +55-11-3050-2210