



Leadership Handouts

Program Development Series

Activities Resource Center
Department of Campus Activities
University of Houston

Program Planning

STEP ONE:

Needs Assessment – The process for finding out what programs are wanted, needed, or useful.

There are several ways to assess the needs and interest of the audiences.

1. Listen to what people around you are talking about.
2. Survey the students.
3. Put suggestion boxes up in the UC, residence halls, or at your events.

STEP TWO:

Idea Formulation – Pulling together everyone's thoughts on what program would fit the needs expressed in step one.

One way to formulate ideas is through BRAINSTORMING. See the ARC Handout *Brainstorming* for more information and instructions.

After you have a list of ideas, begin expanding from them and evaluate them as possible program ideas. Some ideas will need to be eliminated when you consider these factors:

1. time involved.
2. money involved.
3. supplies needed.
4. scheduling conflicts.
5. lack of resources of facilities.

STEP THREE:

Planning the Program – What needs to be done and who is going to do it.

1. Give ownership to the person who had the idea to increase motivation.
2. Go through the Activities Funding Board (AFB) for funding. This process will become a good checklist for areas that need to be thought about before implementing a program.
3. Give equal importance to each part of the program.
4. Set up subcommittees, with specific responsibilities and timelines.
5. Use the program checklists and backward calendars (see the relevant ARC handout).
6. Be aware of other on-campus activities to prevent conflicts in scheduling.
7. Utilize campus resources as program presenters.
8. Check all arrangements the day prior to and after the program.
9. Give specific directions when delegating responsibility.

STEP FOUR:

Marketing – Develop good publicity and promotional techniques to ensure a successful program.

Suggestions to keep in mind when publicizing events are:

1. Identify who will be interested in your program.
Target your audience! Different aspects may attract different groups for co-sponsorship – not just for \$\$ but for a larger audience pull.
2. Identify what your program's main selling points are.
What makes your program unique – “why should I come?”
3. Plan the timing, means, and locations of your promotion.
Promote two weeks before the event. Promotion should build – just like excitement does.
4. When promoting, you should use a YOU approach – put ball in their court.
Establish an identity for the program. Truth in advertising – don't mislead.



5. Effective points to remember:
Concentrate on one feature, not three or four
Maintain consistency in advertising to give a clear message
Take all advertising down after the event
KISS – Keep it short and simple

STEP FIVE:

Program Implementation

1. Prepare the set-up for the program early.
2. Inspect your equipment, supplies, etc. early – have backups prepared.
3. Be prepared to introduce the program and presenters.
4. Strive to impose a clear-cut opening and closing of the program.
5. Be ready to “go with the flow” as the need arises.
6. If audience turn-out isn't what the committee expected, don't give-up during or after the program.
Evaluate after the program is over.

STEP SIX:

Evaluation – This is one of the most important aspects of the program. Complete evaluations will help you and those to come in future planning.

1. Encourage honest feedback from participants.
2. Look for positive experiences gained by all.
3. Always fill out a program evaluation form immediately.
4. Discuss your evaluation with your advisor/organization.

STEP SEVEN:

Have fun. Programming is a great way to get the most from your education so enjoy it!