



Hosting your Event on a Budget

Steps for Life - 2017



Agenda – Next 60 Minutes

- Welcome and Introductions
- What Works! – Sharing Peer-to-Peer
- Top 10 Tips – Hosting your Event on a Budget
- Things to Remember
- Wrap-up





Question #1:

- We aren't always sure of our total event costs. How can we track them more closely?





Question #1 - Discussion Notes:

- Dermott (Durham): Important to build a diverse team for your committee. We start early Sept-Oct, with everyone having a specific role, including a student to help with social media. Our goal is to be as close to “0” with regards to expenses. We use excel tracking sheets to document progress and the many moving details.
- Mark (Sarnia): We try to get a plan in place early, using an excel sheet tracker from day 1. We have typically been under \$1000 in expenses. You can never start too early. Leverage your team to see where your asks can go for materials in-kind and they do get recognition on walk day.





Question #1 - Discussion Notes

- Who's the keeper of the budget? (Lorna asks): Lisa (Calgary) noted that herself and the co-chair monitor the budget, with committee having input. We do start early too. We determine what we “need” for the event. We ask for the in-kind.
- Carmen (Grand Prairie): Notes that the Chair manages the budget, however everyone has input.
- Kevin (Threads of Life): In Atlantic Canada, the majority of the Chairs take care of the budget.
- Donna (Winnipeg): We only purchase what we didn't get donated.





Question #2:

- We had a company willing to donate but they let us know they can't support us any longer. What can we do?





Question #2 - Discussion Notes:

- Dermott (Durham): It is an annual challenge to maintain those donations. Acknowledgement at the walk is always helpful. Important to always be networking – continued conversations. At the end of the event, personalized letters and cards go out to our sponsors and in-kind supporters. This year we sent out a New Years message to our previous partners and team captains to stay connected.
- Mark (Sarnia): Important to have touch points throughout the year. We take a picture of the support banner and send the picture with our post walk thank you. Occasionally, supporters have stepped back, we have discussed other ways they can be a part of the event, to keep them involved in some shape or form.



Question #2 - Discussion Notes:

- Kevin (Threads of Life): We have had committees loose sponsors, and when searching for a replacement vendor, sometimes mentioning a previous vendor (competitor) sometimes sparks there interest.
- Dermott (Durham): We have one person looking to different sponsors, it's a group effort, but one lead. Important to start early, as their budget process starts early, even with in-kind.





Question #3:

- It's really time consuming trying to get products donated, and we don't have enough volunteers to dedicate time. What can we do?





Question #3 - Discussion Notes:

- Dermott (Durham): You have your main planning committee, but they also have to do their networking as well. We make ours a family event, lots of workshops, and activities, various sectors covered in just your participants and their teams/families – conversations happen even here that could lead to more in-kind relationships for your future events. We have built this over the last 6 years – it's an ongoing process.
- Mark (Sarnia): It comes down to networking, no real easy way to do it. We have a small group; we rely on emails, posters, conversation, events we attend, to share with our own networks, all starting early. Get the news out there, and spark interest and support that way.



Question #3 - Discussion Notes:

- Lisa (Calgary): Asked Mark to share his template one-page flyer they circulate. Lorna will send to anyone who would like it – just email request.
- Dermott (Durham): Sometimes when a company sees a company that's a rival or similar field being recognized, they might want to get on board too.
- Kevin (Threads of Life): Sometimes committees are reluctant to ask for help, to ask others with specific skills, especially ones that may lend to asking the community for in-kind gifts – but should look to asking someone you know that may be good at this.





Question #4:

- We haven't been successful in getting products and services donated. How can we keep expenses down on the items we need to buy?





Question #4 - Discussion Notes:

- Dermott (Durham): Success has been largely because of the individuals we have on the committee and their roles. It comes down to planning. Planning what you need. There are many free options available in the community – just need to research. We keep event logistics to need only basis, i.e., providing food that is donated, or a type that serves many for less. Look for people who could build these relationships in your community to help ask for the in-kind and invite them to be part of the committee.
- Has anyone asked for reduced rates? (Lorna asked). Mark (Sarnia) noted that one of his committee members works with the city so we get a reduced rate for the park permit, and used his connections to use the Junior A Sting Box for silent auction – utilizing the connections is important and beyond your committee.



Question #4 - Discussion Notes:

- Mark Continued – Silent auction items could be donated = generate more support and contributions.
- Sharon (TO) – We get discounts for chairs and tables, we ask as soon as we approach them – from the get go.
- Kevin (Threads of Life) – St. John's required a permit for use of the park - \$500 dollars – we explained what Threads of Life did, and the city had the committee pay upfront, but on event day the city donated the same amount back to the event. Maybe there's other ways for the city to help offset the cost, i.e., promotion, awareness.
- Dermott (Durham): It does get easier as time goes by, relationships are built; plus don't forget about the political representation, and their involvement – it's a built process over years.



Top 10 Tips – Hosting your Event on a Budget

- Budget ahead.
- Work with your RDC.
- Brainstorm together.
- Look to new connections.
- Consider gift cards.
- Find a deal.
- Continue to assess.
- Talk to past supporters.
- Get a better rate.
- Monitor your efforts.



Any Questions?

Contact your RDC:

- Lorna (Central Canada)
- Kevin (Atlantic Canada)
- Lynn (Western Canada)

Visit www.stepsforlife.ca



All proceeds go to provide family support services to families of workplace tragedy.

