

# Steps for a Successful Event!

*We look forward to having your group with us at Madonna Center! To make your job as coordinator a little easier, we are pleased to offer a list of steps to help you hold a great event at the Madonna Center. Answer the questions on the following pages and use the information to help make this list as useful as possible. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to let us know!*

*(check off)                      (write dates in)                      (use for target dates)*

DONE!	Target Date	(Time Frame)	What
		ASAP	Tour the Madonna Retreat & Conference Center and meet our staff.
		ASAP	Check with Madonna Center staff to see when the facilities are available—including conference space, overnight accommodations including rooms with bath.
		ASAP	Review, sign, and return contract to Madonna Center with deposit by the date it is due.
		ASAP	Get a Certificate of Insurance to the Madonna Center.
		ASAP	Contact caterer about anticipated dates, menu & prices (Professional Catering: 505-831-8164)
		c. 3 months before	**Visualize what you want to accomplish by hosting this event.
		c. 6-10 weeks before	Make a list of things in the order they will happen—Voila!—you have a rough schedule for your event! Then just add the when and the where.
		1 month before	Finalize menu and meal times with caterer.
		1 month before	Finalize travel arrangements of presenters/VIP's. Consider any local transportation needs related to event. Are there any early arrivals or late stays need?
		1 month before	Visualize each point in the schedule. (What is the room setup like? What is the presenter using? How are the people interacting?)
		2 weeks before	Get event Schedule to Madonna Center.
		2 weeks before	Room arrangements and audio-visual needs to Madonna Center & Professional Catering (if applicable).
		2-weeks before	Confirm number of meals and mealtimes with caterer. Inform Madonna Center of changes.
		2 week before	Participant list to Madonna Center along with roommate assignments and special needs.
		1 week before	Go through each point of the event schedule again. Is anything missing?
		Day of	Check in with MRCC staff; relay any changes in schedule or guest list. Arrange for staff to give welcome talk; review registration details.
		Day after	Book the Madonna Center for next year; then do something you enjoy! Reward yourself for all your work and dedication. Congratulations!

The following questions are drawn from our experience of helping people prepare for an event with us. Visualization (imagining, talking through, walking through the steps of, etc.) of the event is frequently used in this preparation aid. Not everyone prefers this method of preparation, however; feel free to substitute whatever method you are comfortable with. Feel free to also let these questions call to mind anything unique to your particular event; these questions are only a starting place for your creativity.

What is the purpose of this event? What goals do you wish to meet through hosting this event?

What do you love about the purpose of this event, and why are you involved with it?

What skills, passions, or talents do you bring to this event? Where do you need help?

Who should attend this event?

What should happen at this event? What should not happen at this event?

How are you going to get the word out about this event?

How many people will come? A good guess of actual attendance would be \_\_\_\_\_.

What is the minimum number of people you are willing to host this event for?

What is the largest group of people you can host?

How many people will likely want to stay overnight?

Visualize your event at the Madonna Center:

Where will the facilitator/speaker make the presentation? Can everyone hear the person who is speaking?

Will you want tables in your meeting space or just chairs? Who will set up?

Will you need additional rooms for break-out sessions or discussion groups?

What will the meeting room look like (arrangement, lighting, decorations, etc.)?

What needs to be done about handouts, literature, decorations, etc.?

Can you delegate someone to help with this?

Visualize the event in general: When will the event start?

How much time will you need for set up? Who can help you with this?

When is the earliest you will need access to the facilities?

Will the facilitator/speaker need local travel arrangements?

What do you need to bring? Is there someone else you can designate to help bring supplies?

What kind of meals should be provided? Where will the meals be served?

If certain meals will not be provided, do participants know they will be on their own?

What meals need to be ordered from the caterer?

Visualize people arriving for the event: What will participants expect as they arrive?

Will they know where to go? Do they know what to bring with them or how to dress?

Do they know each other? Would name tags be helpful?

Do any of the guests have special need—special diets, difficulty with stairs, proximity of lodging to the bathroom, etc.?

How will registration look? As people wait for the event to begin, will they expect anything (food, literature, a schedule for the event, background music, etc.)?

What can be done in advance? Who could help you with this?

Visualize each session of the event: How long is each session?

What does the facilitator/speaker need to know to be successful (time limits, important points to cover, expectations of the group)?

Does the facilitator/speaker need audio-visual aids? a podium? a bottle of water?

What are the participants doing during each session?

What will the participants need in order to get the most from each session—paper, pens, folders for handouts?

When will they need breaks? How will they know when to come back from a break?

When they go to break-out sessions, how will they know where they are going?

Visualize what the end of your event is like: Do participants have a way to give you feedback?

What will people take home with them? What follow-up is needed, if any?

Think about the goals you have set: Did you meet your goals?

What items will the participants and you need to take home with you as you prepare to leave?