

EVENT PLANNING 101

Some pointers to consider while planning an event or long term catering contract.



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1. **Number of guests / people to feed**
Be as accurate as you can be and advise your caterer of any possible sources of fluctuation. A price negotiated for 100 people will not be valid if you end up only having 10.
2. **Total budget / budget per guest**
Do not be afraid to tell your caterer what you have or want to spend - any quote they give you can be tendered out to other caterers to see if your price fits the trend. Most caterers will give you the best possible for your price - the bigger / better / more lavish the spread they provide - the more people will remember them.
3. **Schedule of events**
When do you want your guests to arrive? When do you want your guests to leave?
4. **Formalities**
Are there any formalities - speeches, awards, hand-overs etc. These are all important for your caterer to know for them to suggest the correct menu and offer guidance as to when courses should be served.
5. **Entertainment**
Is there to be any form of entertainment for your guests - if so what specifically and how do you see it fitting into the event as a whole.
6. **Menu**
Do not be afraid to suggest your ideas to your caterer - it is your function, you know what you want to achieve and sometimes what your guests like. Think about the number of courses you would like.
7. **Buffet or plated meals**
This will in all likelihood be determined by the facilities, type of function, available budget, etc.
8. **Dietary requirements**
Are there any guests who have special dietary requirements? Religious, Vegetarian, Allergy.
9. **Drinks / bar**
What are your guests going to drink with their meals? Remember that if you are serving alcohol in a public place, or selling alcohol you will need a liquor license.
10. **Accommodation**
Will you need a Marquee to house your guests? If it is an outdoor event, how will bad weather affect the final event - Wind, Rain etc? Fire & Safety Regulations.
11. **Theme / décor**
Will your event have a specific theme or decor?
12. **Seating arrangements**
How many guests to a table?
Do you require a specific seating plan? Will you communicate this using place names, ticket numbers or a notice board?
Do you have sufficient room to place all the tables and allow room for guests and waiting staff to move around comfortably? (Work on 0.75m² per seated person)
13. **Other items to consider**
Dance floor; Entertainment area; Music; Presentation equipment; Gifts; Guests lists; Transport if guests are to be drinking; Security and parking.