

# Guide to Planning and Organising a Sports Event

**E**nergising, exciting and enjoyable, sports have a universal appeal which cuts across race, colour and social status. With their increasing popularity, sporting events are now regularly organised by groups, organisations, corporations and government agencies to foster camaraderie. Managing these events and ensuring that all who participate enjoy themselves requires careful planning and co-ordination.

The process of organising a sports event can be divided into five stages:

- **Stage One: Planning**
- **Stage Two: Preparatory**
- **Stage Three: Co-ordination**
- **Stage Four: Finalisation**
- **Stage Five: Follow-up**

## Stage One: Planning

For starters, it is necessary to interest various parties and motivate them to participate in the planning of the event. Below is a checklist of items you would have to consider when developing a plan:

- Appoint the organising committee
- Set clear objectives for the event
- Have a brainstorming session to gather ideas
- Propose a few locations/venues and dates
- Conduct preliminary site reconnaissance and recommend the best venue based on location, accessibility, suitability, infrastructure and facilities
- Draft a concept paper and proposed date/time, venue, programme and activities
- Decide on roles and responsibilities of sub-committees
- Book the venue
- Propose the guest of honour for the event, if any





## Stage Two: Preparatory

After conducting the preliminaries, you have to formalise plans – layout for the event, publicity, manpower, etc.

If sponsors are required to help fund the event, or raise the profile, you should provide the potential sponsors with a clear, concise statement detailing why their support is needed, stating:

- the costs involved,
- the benefits to the sponsors and/or the community,
- amount of money needed, and
- when the money is needed

*Refer to Annex 1: Sample of Terms of Reference for Subcommittees*

*Refer to Annex 2: Sample of Proposed Budget Estimates*

### Checklist

- Budget estimate, factoring in everything, from rental of sports venue (primary and additional venues) to equipment rental, gifts and gratuities
- Proposed programme, including entertainment and plaque presentation to sponsors
- Layout plan of venue to provide a comprehensive placement of all the activities
- Participants and guests targeted for the event

- Work plan – detailing the many things which have to be attended to and the people responsible for executing them
- Publicity plan – generating interest among potential attendees, sponsors and vendors
- Manpower plan – mobilising and training volunteers and part-timers
- Transport plan – enabling easy access for participants, supporters and guests
- Traffic and security crowd-control plan – ensuring proper management of security for VIPs and invited guests, crowd control for participants and attendees and car-parking arrangements
- Communication plan – command and control to get things done with minimum interruptions, attending to equipment such as walkie-talkies, handphones, loudhailers, etc.
- Contingency plan in the event of bad weather or other circumstances, causing the event to be delayed or postponed
- Evacuation plan – addressing emergency situations

## Stage Three : Co-ordination

Subcommittees must be formed to look into areas such as secretariat, programming, publicity, sponsorships, finance, logistics, manpower deployment, transportation and security crowd



control. But with the sheer number of people involved, including third parties such as the police and the press, proper co-ordination is essential. A timeline chart helps to keep everything on track.

### *Refer to Annex 3: Sample of a Event Timeline*

#### **Checklist**

- Press conferences and media coverage
- Logistics and transport arrangement – purchase/ rental of facilities and equipment and pyrotechnics and electrical clearance
- Security branch for security coverage if the guest of honour or guest list should include ministers
- First-aid personnel for medical services and first-aid assistance
- Relevant authorities for the necessary permits/clearances, for example, Police, Land Transport Authority
- Management of buildings/establishments in the venue vicinity to inform them about the event and especially so if there are road closures
- Engage service providers for fabrication of banners and backdrops, t-shirts, rental of tentages, tables, chairs and signage
- Supply of mobile toilets
- Provision of entertainment programme/ fringe activities
- Supply of public address and sound system
- Design and printing of souvenir magazines, booklets, posters, invitation cards, etc.
- Provision of insurance coverage, public liability
- Catering services
- Feedback form/survey to gauge the responses of participants and attendees
- Standby of a recovery team/overnight security to prevent vandalism and theft

#### **Guest Invitation**

Due attention must be given to the guest list, whether they are people within the organisation or external parties, and mail the invitation cards well ahead to ensure better response. Once you have a confirmed list, you can plan the logistics.

#### **Checklist**

- Prepare guest list and confirm standing/seating arrangement/protocol
- Prepare location map/administrative guide
- Send invitation cards, indicating dress code, VIP/guest sticker, location map or administrative guide

#### **Arrangements**

- Conduct briefing for all helpers
- Arrange for clean-up services
- Arrange for photographer or video cameraman to cover the event



## Stage Four: Finalisation

After months of intensive preparation, you are into the final lap. Good organisers have to check and double-check on the programme, the manpower, transport arrangements and crowd-control arrangements, especially when a big turnout is expected. A rehearsal/familiarisation tour should be conducted to review and ensure that everything is in place.

### Checklist

- Programme – almost a minute-by-minute account of the event on the actual day
- Manpower – providing sufficient staff to manage the event and arranging for back-up plan
- Transport – liaison with traffic police and public transport companies, double checking all transport arrangements
- Traffic control – ensuring traffic snarl does not build up through the appropriate use of signage and deployment of traffic marshals
- Master of ceremony's script – keeping him in the loop facilitates communication flow
- Wet weather plan – back-up plans should there be a sudden downpour or an electrical storm

- Plan of venue layout – up-to-date information on where the respective activities will be held
- Duty list for the deployment of manpower – names of people on duty and their contact numbers
- Logistics – ensuring that the entire operation, from name tags and refreshments to medical and security arrangements, is in place

## Stage Five: After-Event Follow-up

To ensure that the venue is restored to its former conditions; all fixtures, tentages, banners and posters are cleared; the area is cleaned and damages repaired and the reinstatement of area/grounds.

Conducting a review and evaluation, gathering feedback for improvements, to determine the effectiveness and success level of the event. Payments must be settled and a statement of income and expenditure prepared. Above all, formal appreciation letters must be sent to all who have contributed to the success within days after the event ends.

## Annex 1

## Samples of Terms of Reference for Subcommittees

### SECRETARIAT COMMITTEE

The Secretariat Committee will assist the Chairman in the running of the Organising Committee and be responsible for the following:

1. Craft the concept plan
2. Provide administrative assistance and co-ordination
3. Co-ordinate the activities of the various committees
4. Provide a secretary for all meetings and debriefings
5. Organise a ground recce/familiarisation tour for committee members
6. Compile and submit an operating budget, and control its expenditure, for all activities under the purview of the Secretariat
7. Compile guest list and forward invitation to guests
8. Monitor and collate invitation replies
9. Determine and execute reception for members, officials and guests
10. Administer all matters relating to VIP invitations and protocol
11. Prepare advisory notes, circulate and implement an ushering plan for guests
12. Co-ordinate and organise a post-event debriefing
13. Maintain relevant records of the event to serve as a ready source of information to facilitate the organisation of future events
14. Compile and submit an operating budget, and control its expenditure

### TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

1. Compile rules and regulations for the event
2. Conduct and prepare the event fixtures
3. Handle all disciplinary matters during the conduct of the event
4. Manage and organise the event
5. Compile and submit an operating budget, and control its expenditure, for all event expenses under the purview of the committee

### PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

1. Plan and implement the overall publicity initiative and programme for the event
2. Plan and implement pre- and post-event media coverage. Publicise, arrange and co-ordinate all

- media conference(s) and coverage for the event
3. Co-ordinate with all committees for the preparation of media releases. All releases are to be cleared by the Chairman of the Organising Committee
4. Design, print and distribute publicity posters and pamphlets to publicise the event with the aim of reaching out to the target audience
5. Design T-shirts, caps, souvenirs, official and field staff passes, invitation cards, identification stickers for guests and officials and certificates of appreciation for participants
6. Design programme booklets for all participants, specifying the programmes, locations of all games and sports, leisure stations, medical tentages
7. Compile and submit an operating budget, and control its expenditure, for all publicity expenses under the purview of the committee

### SPONSORSHIP COMMITTEE

1. Conceptualise and implement the fund-raising activities for the event
2. Promote and canvass for teams' registration and participation
3. Source for sponsors for cash and in kind, competition prizes, lucky draw prizes, souvenirs for novelty events, drinks, etc.
4. Compile and submit an operating budget, and control its expenditure, for all fund-raising activities under the purview of the committee

### LOGISTICS COMMITTEE

1. Provide physical arrangements and facilities for the conduct of the event
2. Decorate the surroundings of the venue to create a conducive ambience
3. Provide and erect directional signs and barricades (as required) for the conduct of various activities
4. Establish a Command Centre and Medical tentage/s with the necessary infrastructure and facilities
5. Arrange for clean-up service after completion of the event
6. Compile and submit an operating budget, and control its expenditure

