

How to plan your own Rethink Fundraising Event

Besides “thinking differently,” you’ll need to:

SET GOALS.

How much money do you want to raise for the cause? Is your event also going to raise awareness of breast cancer issues? Are you going to raise awareness of Rethink Breast Cancer? Setting these goals will give you something to use as a benchmark for everything you plan to do for your event.

DETERMINE TARGET AUDIENCE.

Who do you think will participate in your event? Think about what would motivate them to attend and what they realistically can afford to spend.

BRAINSTORM BRILLIANT IDEAS.

Surf the web, flip through magazines, chat with your friends for inspiration. Don’t chuck out any of your thoughts and ideas no matter how wild and whacky. It’s all part of the brainstorming process.

GIVE YOURSELF LOTS OF TIME TO PLAN YOUR EVENT.

It helps to create a “critical path” or “work-back” plan. These buzzwords mean you should write down everything you think you’ll need to do (i.e. brainstorm on really fabulous ideas/themes, scout/choose/confirm stellar location, approach sponsors, contact/confirm suppliers, source prizes/auction items, design/produce posters, fliers, invites and tickets, sell tickets, approach/confirm media etc.) and then estimate number of days or weeks for each activity and plot onto a schedule.

PUT SOME THOUGHT TO THE DATE.

The critical path or work back will help set your date for you. So will things like venue or entertainment availability and even theme (if seasonal). Also, be sure that your date doesn’t conflict with any other events in your area.

FORM AN EVENT COMMITTEE.

Recruit friends, family or colleagues to help you with the organizing. Working as a team is much more efficient and way more fun! You could also approach your school, gym, community centre, etc.

CREATE AN EVENT BUDGET.

Be aware that there may (scratch that...“will”) be hard costs involved in putting on an event. Keep a number you are willing to spend upfront in mind. Of course, the costs can be covered within the ticket price but most people who buy a ticket to a charity event want to know that a good chunk of their money is going to the cause not event costs. We recommend your group work to secure a local sponsor to underwrite these costs so that more money can go to Rethink. And, this is yet another place where you need to give yourself enough time. Most large corporations set their charitable sponsorship marketing budgets quite far in advance.

continued on next page

SET TICKET PRICE.

People usually expect to pay a bit more for a charity event than a regular night out, but be sure to keep your audience in mind and think about how much they can realistically spend.

SPREAD MAJOR WORD-OF-MOUTH.

Promotion is an essential element to a fabulous fundraiser. Creating a fun, digital invite that can be emailed to your list of friends, colleagues and contacts (who can then email it to their list of friends, colleagues, contacts and so on) is a great way to create some buzz. Putting up posters around the city is a fast and efficient way to get the word out (see Printing, Design and Use of the Rethink Logo for more details). It is sometimes possible to get a print shop to donate materials in exchange for having their name and logo on the posters and invitations. Leave yourself time to call around to local printers to pitch them on a print sponsorship (you can always call us at 416-920-0980 for help with this). Rethink Breast Cancer can advertise your event on our website. Contact us for more details (416-920-0980 or 866-RETHINK).

SELL TICKETS IN ADVANCE.

Make sure you have at least two months (if not more) time just to get word out about your event and sell tickets. Even the most enthusiastic, bursting with brilliant ideas and hardworking event planner can end up heartbroken in a half-empty venue on party night. Spreading word of mouth is key and advancing ticket sales is even more key. Lots of people might give you the “yeah, for sure, I’ll come” and then not show, but if they’ve paid for their ticket in advance they’re less likely to bail at the last minute. You might want to set two ticket prices (ex. \$20 advance/\$25 at the door) to encourage early sales. You could also create a special prize draw for early ticket buyers (buy your ticket before such and such date and you’ll be entered to win a such and such prize). And of course, make sure your invites mention that tickets are limited.

MAKE THE MEDIA ALERT TO YOUR EVENT.

To get the media to promote and/or cover your event you will need a press release. For pre-event promo, magazines need the most notice and television stations need the least. Leave yourself time to send out the press release and follow up with a phone call (or two)! [Click here to see our sample press release.](#)

TAX RECEIPTS.

Please remember not to promise people tax receipts left, right and center in your eagerness to get the ball rolling with your event. There are many legal issues around tax receipts. Please contact us for further instruction on this issue.