



## Crowd source: How to run a successful event

The following content was advice given by internal comms pros via [@theICcrowd](#) on Twitter and Jessica Bull's article at [www.rachmiller.com](http://www.rachmiller.com) and serves as a checklist when you are planning an event.

### Nine steps to success

- 1) **Always have a strategic aim.** And if you don't have an aim, don't do it
- 2) **Every event needs a good theme.** Some people will hate your theme and tell you this. It doesn't matter – the point is they've noticed there's an event going on
- 3) **Create gorgeous publicity material.** When people remember the event, the pictures you created for them will spring to mind. Make sure these illustrate your key messages in the simplest possible form
- 4) **It's not about the event.** It's about the team briefings, the one to ones, the casual chats before and after the event. Getting your director to communicate their vision to senior managers, and getting them to rehearse it so well they can communicate it to staff means (if only for very brief moment) all your leadership team are *on* message. Of course, your senior team may have a huge falling out before they can agree on what message they want to give. This means you're driving real change in your organisation. Well done
- 5) **Keep people moving:** Ring a bell, try organisational speed dating, set a treasure hunt – provide a reason for your staff to work the room and speak to as many of their colleagues as possible. People enjoy networking but they hate having to talk to new people. Make them
- 6) **Give people somewhere to moan:** Create an ideas tree (stick some branches in a vase and ask them to write their hopes, fears & ambitions on tags to create the leaves) or a graffiti wall (using blu tac, a roll of wallpaper and some whiteboard markers). People need an outlet to express their concerns, give them this and you'll find it easier to engage them in your message



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**7) Make it social:** Find out which social media channels your organisation responds to and use them to build momentum before and after the event. Tweet the details of your speakers as they're confirmed, film the day and put it on YouTube, create a discussion group around the event on LinkedIn. Make it something exciting that exists outside of the office and you might find people want to join in

**8) Measure your success and prove your worth:** See step one – if you know what you are trying to achieve, then it's very easy to ask people if you achieved it. This will come in handy when asked what value internal communications brings to the business

**9) Keep calm and carry on:** Think of yourself as an elegant swan, gliding serenely through the water while paddling furiously underneath. Projector broken? Speaker cancelled at the last minute? Just take a deep breath, smile and continue as if it was all part of your plan

#### **Other top tips via internal comms pros:**

- I always find my plan on a page really useful for bigger events. Not only will it help you to stay in control but it will reassure senior bods. This plan has actions and dates to be completed, key contact numbers, addresses, notes – in fact almost everything I need on one piece of A3 paper
- Take couple of hard copies of the presentation and on a memory stick. Useful in case the system fails and means you can always photocopy some hand outs to distribute.
- Always get to the venue 30 minutes before people start arriving so you can sort out any issues. Test the presentation at least once when you get there to make sure all the slides are there, especially if you've combined several presentations into one.
- If you're doing a briefing document, try to get the key messages out within 24 hours if possible - found that managers are more likely to discuss and cascade while it's still fresh in their mind!
- Get people moving and use all their senses to engage. Think about curiosity and fun, make it different to expectations



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- Avoid death by PowerPoint. If you have multiple speakers, try and keep their delivery styles different
- Ensure the speakers connect with the audience emotionally
- Create a live buzz around the event by sharing photos/videos of it as it happens, through social media.

If you need help from The IC Crowd, simply tweet [@theICcrowd](https://twitter.com/theICcrowd) to ask other internal comms professionals for advice.

Thank you to everyone who provided the content for this checklist.

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