

BPW Special Event Checklist

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The following guides are provided to help BPW organizations plan, promote and hold successful events, to increase BPW's visibility, to build and retain membership, and to make it possible for newer members to be involved in leading an event or program. It is suggested that a checklist be copied and provided to each committee member at the first planning meeting.

Preliminary Information:

- _____ Establish committee chair and members; assign individual responsibilities for action items
- _____ Establish date of event
- _____ Establish and confirm location
- _____ Establish "theme" for event
- _____ Identify mistress of ceremonies, identify BPW leaders who will speak and who will introduce the keynote speaker and other individuals who need introduction
- _____ Define "overview" for event (paragraph to be used for quick promotion and definition)
- _____ Outline intended program outcomes and target audience
- _____ Establish schedule for activities to be completed and for subsequent meetings

Budget Considerations:

Establishing a budget well in advance of a program or event is critical for its success. Clarification about the events goals should be established; an event can be a fund-raiser or promotional with no or minimal profit expected. Consider offering a reduction for early ticket purchases, members, students, or a "targeted" audience.

Income:

- _____ Admission Tickets
- _____ Business or corporate sponsors
- _____ Grants
- _____ In-kind donations
- _____ Advertising
- _____ Exhibits
- _____ Raffle Tickets
- _____ Auction
- _____ BPW Foundation publications

Expenses:

- _____ Food and beverage (include gratuities and tax)
- _____ Hotel room(s)
- _____ Transportation
- _____ Exhibit space
- _____ Registration (forms, name badges)
- _____ Change for cash payments
- _____ Audiovisual, easel and paper
- _____ Printing
- _____ Advertising
- _____ Postage
- _____ Certificates, plaques, gifts, door prizes

Keynote Speaker(s):

- _____ Determine if a keynote speaker or presenter is needed
- _____ Contact speaker to establish availability
- _____ Send confirmation letter, fax or e-mail to keynote speaker or presenter; define fees and/or expenses to be covered along with procedures; provide date and time of presentation, location, topic, length of presentation, attendee profile and theme of meeting or program
- _____ Communicate with speaker prior to the event to ensure needs are met
- _____ Establish special needs of speaker/presenter (i.e., visual, copying, microphone, arrangement of room, paper, pens). Advise her or him of the deadline by which this information is needed

Flyers/Invitations/Letters/Tickets:

Note: When sending a letter of invitation, press releases, or a request for a message to an elected official or when requesting corporate sponsors, it is a good idea to include a BPW Fact Sheet (and the BPW Foundation and/or BPW PAC Fact sheets, when appropriate). Also consider having a letter or request signed or co-signed by a BPW member who may be familiar with an official or business; it may precipitate a favorable response more quickly. Include a name and telephone number for contact information and registration.

- _____ Generate list of dignitaries, guests, businesses or corporate sponsors to be invited
- _____ Consider inviting the Congressional Delegation, state, and local officials and community leaders
- _____ Consider inviting BPW dignitaries (state, district and local officers)
- _____ Establish a list of individuals who will receive free admission; candidates seeking office (except at the highest level generally pay admission for the opportunity to attend a gathering)
- _____ Distribute flyer or letters to businesses and associations, members, and anyone who can help promote the event; post flyers on bulletin boards
- _____ Print tickets or registration forms for advance sale (distribute to members and urge members to sell tickets or registrations in advance; make registration easy)
- _____ Communicate with members about ticket sales and the need to promote the event.
- _____ Establish who will send letters of thanks and appreciation; ensure they are sent

Special Considerations:

- _____ Have a guest book or registration available (important for follow-up with prospective members)
- _____ Identify members who will serve as greeters (team newer member with knowledgeable member)
- _____ Identify members who will serve as ticket and money takers
- _____ Have name tags available (consider identifying BPW members on name tags)
- _____ Have a member assigned to prepare a list of dignitaries and special guests to be introduced at the event
- _____ Have basic supplies available (pens, staples and remover, clips, scissors, etc.)
- _____ Ensure membership application forms and information are available
- _____ Plan room or table setups
- _____ Check facility early on to determine if a public address system or other accommodations such as registration table(s) are available. Rent or borrow if needed
- _____ Have BPW/Foundation/Legislative/BPW Position Papers, 101 FACTS, and related information available
- _____ Have (local or state) Organization Schedule of upcoming meetings and events available; ensure it includes at contact member name, telephone number or e-mail available
- _____ Prepare Program for Event (list names and telephone numbers of officers and/or committee chairs, and acknowledge donors, contributors, committee chair and members, and those deserving recognition)
- _____ Prepare certificates of appreciation or recognition to speakers, contributors, participants, etc.
- _____ Determine if door prizes will be given (members and businesses are good sources). Have something available to serve as an entry (business cards or admission tickets work) and a container in which to put them
- _____ Arrange for a photographer, even if the media will be present
- _____ Schedule post event evaluation and notes for future reference; collect materials for future use

Public Relations:

Early and frequent promotion of a program or event is vital to its success. Promotion should be planned well in advance and geared toward the intended audience. Preliminary information about the date, location, program and speakers, registration and general information about BPW should be available prior to the final drafts become available. Press releases should include who, what, where, when and why information, the release date and a contact name and telephone number, and double spaced. Press release(s) should be sent to newspapers, business journals or publications, chamber of commerce offices, and television and radio stations.

- _____ Distribute press release(s) sent announcing event chair and committee members and event
- _____ Distribute press release(s) announcing event details and keynote speaker (include a photograph if at all possible)
- _____ Submit notice to Calendar of Events section of local newspapers (television and radio spots if available)
- _____ Contact state or local Business Journal or other business-related publications for pre or post publicity
- _____ Send a complimentary ticket to city manager of newspaper(s) or station managers; follow-up with a call to remind see if the news media will be attending
- _____ Submit details of event to state BPW publication (watch deadlines)
- _____ Send event photographs to participants, guests and members as a special thank you

Proclamation:

An event is an excellent opportunity to present a proclamation to recognize a BPW member or individual that will be in attendance (i.e., Young Careerist, Individual Development representative, local/district/state BPW leader)

- _____ Determine if a Proclamation is warranted. If so, draft Proclamation and written request to present sent to mayor, governor or appropriate official
- _____ Arrange for individual to present Proclamation at appropriate time
- _____ Prepare a press release; arrange for photographer
- _____ Invite media for presentation

Business Women's Week:

- _____ Consider using a Business Women's Week event as a publicity tool for Young Careerist nominees, Individual Development program participants, and to promote BPW's mission and vision and upcoming programs
- _____ Distribute press release(s) requesting nominations for Business Woman of the Year or Employer of the Year (as appropriate)
- _____ Include History of Business Women's Week in mailings (see Flyers/Invitations section)
- _____ Distribute press release(s) announcing judges and nominees
- _____ Distribute nominations and selection criteria to judges
- _____ Distribute post press release(s) announcing Business Woman or Employer of the Year (as appropriate)