

HOW TO

HOST A
SUCCESSFUL EVENT



Events can be challenging, with a host of technical and organizational issues. Of course you want to ensure attendees enjoy their experience and leave with a favorable view of your candidate, but you also want to produce a return on your investment, whether that's a donation, a vote commitment or a new campaign volunteer.

There are two main reasons to hold an event for your candidate:

- 1. To raise money for the campaign; and**
- 2. To promote the candidate's message.**

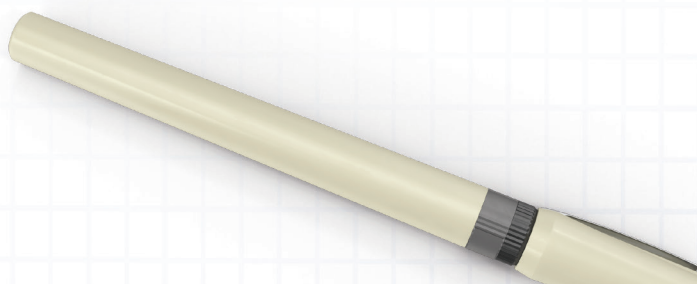
Based on our experience, we believe the outline below represents the best way to successfully plan and execute the two different types of events for your candidate.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Fundraising events are generally more personal. Donors need to feel connected to the candidate and the campaign, and you want to invite people who are interested in meeting the candidate and willing to donate money to the campaign.

To raise money, your campaign can charge for attendance, with a different level of access provided based on the size of the donation. For example, a low-dollar fundraiser may charge a person \$5 or \$10 to enter the event, but with a larger donation of \$250 or \$500, they can attend a meet-and-greet with the candidate prior to the event.

- 1. LOCATION** – When it comes to the location of your fundraising event, make sure it is easy to find and travel to and will provide an enjoyable, memorable event for attendees. Think through the weather possibilities as well if you choose to hold your event outdoors.
- 2. INVITATIONS** – Plan how many people you would like to invite. You should never invite more than your location can hold. If someone is paying to attend this event, you do not want them to stand outside because there is not enough room inside. The same can be applied to parking. If you want people to enjoy their experience, the location should have ample amounts of parking nearby and convenient for attendees.
- 3. FOOD AND BEVERAGE** – Every fundraising event should have something for your guests to eat and drink. If someone is working all day and paying to come to your candidate's event, offering food and beverage is a great way to encourage attendance and provide your candidate with time to socialize with donors and volunteers. Budget for refreshments to ensure your event finishes in the black.
- 4. GUEST LIST** – It is always good to have a list of people who have RSVP'd to the event and have a check-in station at the entrance. Guest lists should be tailored to the event to increase attendance and maximize donations.
- 5. STAFFING** – Staff your event based on the number of people attending. A common mistake is to over staff an event, which may prove to be a waste of time and resources. Think through stations and where you need staff to ensure the event runs smoothly. Is parking tricky? Make sure you have volunteers in the parking lot to assist and direct attendees to open spaces. Are attendees paying at the door? Make sure you have enough staffers at the table to collect donations, accurately record attendees and keep the line moving quickly. The last thing you will want is someone who has pledged a certain amount slip through the cracks with what they promised. A staff member should also be with the candidate during the event to help note questions, follow-ups and any important information that arises.
- 6. ADVERTISING** – Generally, fundraisers are not publicly advertised. The best way to invite people is an email campaign to known supporters and donors that encourages them to bring friends, family and neighbors. An electronic invitation will encourage people to sign up and RSVP online. Make sure you have a place for them to do so on your website that is easy to fill out and mobile-friendly.



PROMOTING THE CANDIDATE

Events geared toward promoting the candidate, campaign and message are generally free and attract a larger audience. These events are typically held in areas that accommodate a large number of people, which present unique concerns like properly functioning microphone and sound systems to ensure all attendees can hear the candidate.

1. **LOCATION** – You need a large venue that can hold a number of people and provide plenty of parking. The best locations are usually school cafeterias, outdoor parks, and large businesses with private parking areas. Never book an event without visiting the location first to ensure it will accommodate the number of attendees you anticipate comfortably.
2. **GUEST LIST AND STAFFING** – This will differ from your fundraising event, as you will need a larger staff to accommodate this audience. You should still have a guest list because you want to know how many people are attending this event. This is the time to tap into your volunteer base to get people to help check-in people, and to be there to direct people to certain things (bathroom, stage, exits).
3. **AUDIO/SOUND** – This may seem pretty straight forward, but this can be one of the last things people remember when planning their event, if they remember at all. It is always good to go to the location beforehand and test the equipment to see how everything sounds from different areas of the room. If you are holding the event outside, you will often have to provide a sound system.
4. **SECURITY** – The location and size of the event will determine the level of security you will need to provide. It may be as simple as checking in people who are supposed to be at the event. At large events, it is always a good practice to have someone next to the candidate at all times.

The best way to ensure an event goes well is to have all of your ducks in a row well in advance of the event. Think through everything, and have plans in place for when things go wrong.

REMEMBER: the most important thing is to make the event enjoyable for those who are attending to encourage support and donations long after the event has ended.



LEARN MORE AT

WWW.MAJORITYSTRATEGIES.COM