

Building a Contingency Plan

Area: Catering

Worst Case Scenario: After serving a meal, you find out that everyone was getting sick (Food Poisoning!)

Contingency Plan:

- ✓ Contact EMT's-take their advice
- ✓ Keep dancers comfortable & calm.
- ✓ Get them all water.
- ✓ Take them outside for fresh air.
- ✓ Call sponsor.
- ✓ Take away the unconsumed food.
- ✓ Last resort - end early.
- ✓ Check medical forms.

Area: Special Events

Worst Case Scenario: Feature band doesn't show up!!

Contingency Plan:

- ✓ Call next band and see if they can come early.
- ✓ Get karaoke machine fast.
- ✓ Call friend and give them a guitar.
- ✓ Have DJ play upbeat music
- ✓ Have morale kick it in and do power hour.
- ✓ Have family speak.
- ✓ Don't let dancers know anything's wrong.
- ✓ Call backup band and ask them to come entertain.
- ✓ Have kids get up and sing.
- ✓ Always have a plan for dead time!!

Area: Communications

Worst Case Scenario: What do I do if there is lack of communication among dance marathon execs?

Contingency Plan:

- ✓ Have an initial retreat where all the members can bond and set basic ground rules for the year. Throughout the year, continue to have retreats to maintain bonds and friendships.
- ✓ Have social events (unrelated to DM) to keep a strong bond and promote ease among the members.
- ✓ Group hospital visits to remind everyone why they are doing this and to put our own problems in perspective.
- ✓ If two people don't feel comfortable working out their differences, then have a hierarchy of who these people could go to (for example, they could talk to the communications director, the president, and then an advisor). All of these other people should be unbiased.
- ✓ Establish a rule that if you can't work out a problem in 24 hours, then just drop it.

Area: Financial

Worst Case Scenario: Money is stolen from the event.

Contingency Plan:

- ✓ Get advisors involved.
- ✓ Interview everyone involved- begin individually with people in finance room and anyone in contact with the money.
- ✓ Put a lockdown on the building so visitors and others cannot leave.
- ✓ Search the building to be sure the money was not misplaced.
- ✓ Don't tell participants that it has been "stolen", just put the word out that some may have been misplaced and we are trying to find it.

➤ How to prevent money being stolen

- ✓ Tight security around finance room.
- ✓ Only have a limited (as few as possible) # of people in contact with the money.
- ✓ Have campus security around (or in) the room itself.
- ✓ Have an organized way of counting the money to be sure it does not get misplaced.
- ✓ Properly train the finance committee to be accountable for it and how to count it.
- ✓ Keep under wraps where and how the money is handled.

Area: Rules and Regulations

Worst Case Scenario: Someone shows up who has not raised their money

Contingency Plan:

- ✓ Can't dance - not full benefits.
- ✓ Able to volunteer.
- ✓ Make them feel guilty.
- ✓ Depends on situation - how much short.

Worst Case Scenario: People sit down.

Contingency Plan:

- ✓ Tell them to standup.
- ✓ Uplifting activity.
- ✓ Send a Riley child to them.

Worst Case Scenario: Students bring in watches, beepers, cell phones.

Contingency Plan:

- ✓ Take them.
- ✓ Have them turn in at beginning - can't leave without them.

Area: Facilities

Worst Case Scenario:

Facility double-booked
Break fire code, Fire Marshall shows up
University says you can't use institution facility.
Power Failure
Fire
No volunteers.

Contingency Plan

- ✓ Meet with key people on campus.
- ✓ Contact coordinators of other event, can they move? Combine events?
- ✓ Research other options.
 - Churches, YMCA, shopping malls.
- ✓ Transportation logistics.
- ✓ Motivating people to go off campus.
- ✓ No loading dock available
 - Find out what the trucks need.
 - Carts, dollies.
 - Portable ramp.
- ✓ How do you keep dancers separate from visitors?
 - Bleachers are not pulled out all the way.
 - Visitors not allowed on floor
- ✓ Power outage
 - Flashlights.
 - Boom box with batteries.
 - Check into back-up emergency power.
 - Megaphone.
 - Have 1 or 2 key staff responsible.
 - Have campus facilities people there - they have contingency plans.
 - Have walkie-talkies - contact campus safety.
- ✓ Over maximum capacity
 - Rotate/move dances/morale people into "mood rooms".
 - For opening and closing ceremonies, move visitors to another area and show ceremony on video screen.
 - Rotate/move dancers/moralers outside to game area.

Area: Public Relations

Worst Case Scenario: Fight during live coverage (drunken raucous)

Contingency Plan:

- ✓ PR committee should have phone numbers for university contacts
- ✓ Spokesperson, media relations, campus safety.

- ✓ Good stories/money raised sent to newspaper - so everyone sees the great things that happened during DM
- ✓ Make sure security is there to prevent.
- ✓ Thank you letters to parents/sponsors so they don't lose interest.
- ✓ Explanation & prevention for next year
- ✓ Radio & TV interviews.
- ✓ Chair should meet with university media relations. Chair should say something during the event.
- ✓ Have Riley family on hand

Area: Entertainment

Worst Case Scenario: Short in the sound system

Contingency Plan:

- ✓ Morale group - play games.
- ✓ Radio station to do a live remote - games.
- ✓ Call a back-up band.
- ✓ Call a DJ with his own equipment.
- ✓ Acoustic group
- ✓ Charades.
- ✓ Improv comedy group
- ✓ Make morale look silly - duck duck goose costumes.
- ✓ Dancer walks around campus.
- ✓ Kids - Riley stories.
- ✓ Group art project - cards to kids.
- ✓ Giant massage circle.
- ✓ Giant twister game
- ✓ Drag queen.
- ✓ Put everyone in tight pants and try to split them
- ✓ Perfect cheer contest.

Area: Marketing

Worst Case Scenario: No sponsors or sponsors that don't follow through with their promises

Contingency Plan:

- ✓ If too few sponsors could be found.
 - Call the sponsors from previous years and try to get them to re-sponsor.
 - Go outside the area of the college town- untapped markets.
 - Chamber of Commerce meetings would also be a good way to discover new sponsors.
 - Using the university board of directors
 - Contact alumni to solicit donations.
 - Reinforce the benefits of sponsorships (t-shirts, banners, publicity!!) and go back with your marketing kit.
 - Work with PR to utilize the mass media to get various donations and emphasize community support.

Area: Family Relations

Worst Case Scenario: One of the kids or a family member is on the stage and it collapses, hurting them.

Contingency Plan:

- ✓ Start before the event, making sure your insurance is in place. Go a further step and have everyone sign a medical release form. Also, make sure you know and trust the people constructing your stage.
- ✓ Immediately after the incident happens, assess the damage-both to the people involved and to the stage. Call the paramedics right away and have the on-site emergency personnel come and evaluate how badly the people are hurt
- ✓ Keep everyone away from the accident and calm-let them know you're doing everything you can to help the people involved.
- ✓ If anyone is taken to the hospital, be sure to make follow up calls to the hospital, and give the dancers the chance to do the same. Have them all make a card at the marathon and send it to those involved. The follow up calls should continue through the week and further let them know that you have learned from the situation and it will not happen again.
- ✓ You also need to call administration and let the people in charge at your school know what happened. Your PR person also needs to try and get the story in the news in a tactful and non-negative way.
- ✓ After the people involved are taken care of the stage needs to be examined and assessed. Depending on how badly people were hurt, the DM could go on or may need to stop.
- ✓ Overall, keep a positive attitude and reassure everyone again and again that you're going to make sure it never happens again.

Area: Dancer Relations

Worst Case Scenario: Two weeks out, only 20% of the anticipated dancers have signed up

Contingency Plan:

- ✓ Marketing blitz
- ✓ Flyers everywhere - campus-wide, on cars, in the union, telephone poles, etc.
- ✓ Do morale dance in the middle of campus.
- ✓ Invite dancers to bring a friend.
- ✓ Allow last minute dancers to fund raise even after the event.
- ✓ We decided not to allow a pro-rated fund raising fee. We were afraid that dancers would start to expect a smaller requirement the following year.
- ✓ We considered canceling the event. But, we decided that it would be better PR and better overall, if we gave an awesome marathon for the few people that were there, than if we were to cancel the event.

Area: Overall Chair

Worst Case Scenario: Fire in the building

Contingency Plan:

- ✓ First, every chair should have a crisis management plan and know it!
- ✓ If evacuation is needed, have an activity plan decided on and ready to execute. (Ex. morale walk).

Area: Morale

Worst Case Scenario: No or low morale

Contingency Plan:

Picture this: It's DM 2007, and [school name] is in its [hour]. There is obvious fatigue in the handful of dancers. The perfect solution is to call on the MORALE TEAM. Much to their surprise, the ever-exuberant Morale Squad is dissolved, most members catching sleep in the corner. Initially, the other members of exec should search for still-active morale members. With their help, they can hope to rejuvenate the tired souls. If this method of revitalization fails, then the responsibility lies within the rest of Exec. As unfair as it may seem to assume more responsibility, it is always important to maintain the structure of the event.