

## Special Events

### Objectives:

- **Plan and host major fundraising events**
- **Work with Promotions to get advertising out for each event**
- **Brainstorm new ideas and evaluate old events**

#### ➤ The Dance Marathon Vision

- It is important that you become a resource on everything related to Dance Marathon. You will consult committee members, student organizations, campus administrators and businesses. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the duties and responsibilities of every committee.
- You are a spokesperson for DM. Attend everything from fraternity and sorority chapter meetings to local government meetings to student forums. Discuss and represent the views of Dance Marathon throughout the campus and community.
- Make sure that you understand all rules/ guidelines set up by your school, the hospital, and even your community. These will guide you and your members need to understand the importance of following these guidelines.
- The responsibilities of a director are endless and limitless- you must learn to delegate. Many committees will work together to accomplish their responsibilities. Make sure your committee set-up is comprehensive and that one chair is ultimately responsible for each task.

#### ➤ Committee Creation

- Chairs responsibilities can be time consuming. The majority of former Dance Marathon council members say the most important task they accomplished was selecting a strong council. After you relay the Marathon vision, the committee members carry this vision to reality.
- Involve as many people as possible, but make sure to assemble a committee that is dependable and energetic. Search to find individuals that are hard working and able to commit a large amount of time to fundraising for the kids!
- When faced with a great task, many of us find the urge to turn to our close friends. If you feel that urge when it comes to selecting your Dance Marathon council, try to resist it. The committee should be a diverse group that has the drive and determination to make Dance Marathon a hit. Use objectivity in your selection process. Just because someone is a close friend doesn't mean they are a good selection.
- Encourage students of all levels to apply.

## ➤ Run Committee Meetings

- Once the committee is selected, it is time to bring everyone together. This is a good time to get chairs comfortable with each other. Let them know what is expected and have them set goals.
- Make the first meeting fun. Conduct some ice breakers and team building games. These activities can immediately make you aware of committee members' personalities and how best to work with them throughout the year. Make the meetings motivational with members leaving feeling empowered to help the kids at Riley.
- Teach the chairs everything about Dance Marathon. Every member must know all marathon information inside and out.
- Be the critical eye and ear for your committee. Often chairs have great ideas, but they also have the tendency to get carried away. It is your responsibility to provide members with a reality check and help them design back-up plans.
- Keep the students on track. Everyone has great stories to tell about the weekend, etc, but you are there for a purpose.
- As you move throughout the year, you will be able to gauge how often meetings should be held. Some committees hold weekly meetings, some don't. This is up to you, however as it gets closer to the marathon (no less than three months away) each committee should hold weekly meetings.
- Set your meeting day, time and place in stone. Attendance should be mandatory and it is helpful to send out a reminder one week in advance.
- Be sure to construct a committee timeline and see that the president receives a copy as well as your committee.

## ➤ Getting Started

- You as one person cannot brainstorm ideas, promote and advertise, run an event and collect money by yourself. Your biggest asset is that you have a committee of intelligent, motivated students at your disposal. Use them.
- At one of your first meetings, set down with your committee and discuss what events they would like to install for your marathon. After you have a list, begin looking at what it would take to put on this event, for example, would you need security, food, a venue, tickets, etc.
- Begin marking out the events that are too large or would require more work than you would receive in return. For example, you might try to put on a concert with a big name artist. Think about all the obstacles and items you would need to put on this event. You might need security for this event and police officers to monitor the crowd, you would need to have the event in a venue that would be large enough to hold a large number of students, you would probably have to pay for this venue and for the artist to attend, this artist might have special needs (certain hotel accommodations, travel, etc.) and it would require large amounts of time for setup, advertising, etc. Do you want to spend an entire summer working on one event?

- After you have this smaller list, begin thinking about what help you would need from other committees to make these events successful.
- Communicate With and Get Help From Other Committees
- Events are a big task to undertake and cannot be successful without assistance. Make sure that you as a Director are sharing with other committees what you will need help with. Work with Catering for food, Promotions for advertising, etc. Work with them but don't expect them to do all of the work. They will most likely need lists from you with what you hope to receive from them. Get them these lists as soon as possible.
  - After your list is complete, share that list with council. They might be able to trouble shoot obstacles for you or give you new ideas!
- Plan your calendar of events in advance
- As you begin to plan events, create a calendar for the entire year. Begin by marking off weeks or days that are important: holidays, finals, etc. Also look at big weekends on campus: football games, homecoming, and rush. These are weekends you will want to avoid.
  - Start placing your events on the calendar being cautious to not place them too close. Your committee members need weeks to plan these events, so leave them at least two weeks of extra time. Now count back the weeks and give them deadlines as to when their tasks need to be accomplished. Allow yourself enough time to finish that task on your own if your chair does not accomplish the task.
  - Give each committee member a list of dates when their tasks are due.
  - Also let them know that the schedule is tentative. Things happen suddenly and there maybe a chair that has a great idea in the middle of the year or you make a contact that creates a new event.
- Work with the community and campus to advertise
- Be sure to look beyond the students. The community surrounding your campus will be a resource to you if you keep them involved. Explain to them what Dance Marathon is and how they can help save the life of a child.
  - Speak with your professors about Riley Hospital and what you are doing to support the hospital. They might be willing to help with an event, maybe advertise at the end of class or even be lenient with your class work.
- Know who you need to contact for permits, etc.
- For some events you will need to contact community organizations for assistance. For example, with a 5K you will need to work with your sheriff's department and campus police to map out a course. You may even need to fill out paperwork with them to allow the event to occur. Be sure to check with these offices in the beginning of the year as they usually have long processing times.

➤ Some Special Event Ideas:

- 5K
- Concert
- Date auction
- Alumni banquet
- Bar nights
- Tailgates at football games
- Ultimate Frisbee
- Car bash
- Car wash
- Poker tournament
- Miss-a-meals

➤ Back Up Plan!

- You cannot predict the weather, outside events, etc. Be sure to have rain dates, back-up bands, extra materials and extra volunteers. There might be another event holding a 5K the same day as you. What will you do? Move the date? But what about promotions? Make it earlier? These are all questions that you should be prepared to answer.

➤ Evaluate Events

- After an event is completed, ask your committee what went well, what didn't and what ideas they have for next year. Pull these notes together as well as your detailed notes from the event and keep them for next year's director. These notes will be of great value in the future.
- Determine the amount of work put into the event minus the outcome. Did you reach your goals? Did it take longer to put together than you expected? What obstacles did you face? These answers will help you determine the success of the event.
- After all events are completed, make a list of the events that were the most successful and those that were not worth the amount of energy put in.

➤ At the Marathon

- For Indiana University, the Special Events team is in charge of greeting and taking care of the visiting schools. Before the marathon they keep in contact with schools throughout the state and from outside the state.
- If time allows and your council wants to attend, try visiting other Dance Marathons; you will learn new ideas and make great contacts.
- Leading up to the marathon, create a packet of information for the visiting schools. Items to include: map, itinerary, tickets (if necessary), any brochures about your Dance Marathon or Riley Hospital and any other information or small gifts that you see fit.

- Schedule a time for the schools to arrive, give them a tour and have a question and answer session so that they can learn about your marathon. After all, you are holding an incredible event and they want to know all about it!
- Be sure to exchange contact information and to thank them for attending.

\*\*\* Remember:

- Always have a back-up plan!
- Delegate! Do not allow yourself to become overwhelmed.
- Act as a DM role model. You represent DM whether you are meeting with a potential sponsor, briefing campus administrators, or sitting in a class. Encourage all committee members to remember they are also role models; everything they do reflects on DM. Have fun but remember to never jeopardize the perception of your organization.

*Do it for the kids!*

## Special Events

Special Events: More than the bottom line

- Positives:
  - Cultivation, prospecting
  - Raises awareness- billboards, media (needs to be free)
  - Opportunity for organization to shine- share your story
  - Business cards in fishbowl - use drawing to gain contact information
- Negatives:
  - Time-intensive
  - Has to be planned in full detail - Step-by-step action steps, date to be completed, person assigned.

Key Steps:

- Recruiting committee is key- volunteers also
- Evaluation/wrap-up is important – need feedback from all involved
  - Rate return on investment
  - Event level- what did I forget?
  - Wrap-up meeting- strategic planning for next year

Event Suggestions:

- Logo, centerpieces, decorations should all be themed- logo and theme remain the same each year
- Close S.A. in sections so donors can bid on items still available
  - Make sure to create descriptions of each item
- Need gaming license if total value of giveaways are over \$1 K

Example events:

- Golf outings
- Dinner/cocktail party
- “Zoobilation”
- Cooking out for kids
- Brunch
- Create handbags- donors vote for favorite, then auction handbags

# Selling Event Sponsorships

## I. Perception of event needs to be outstanding

- Best of it's kind
- Based on tradition, but has continued change
- Create proper image in eyes of the sponsors

## II. Research the sponsor's needs

- Info meeting – face to face
  - What are your needs?
  - Discover how the sponsor's mind works
  - What are their interests? (Get to know them)
    - PF Change CEO participated in run and in turn became title sponsor
  - What is important and valuable to sponsor?
- Return on investment

## III. Proposal

- Don't use same one for each sponsor
- Include/present added value and benefits
- Create the right fit – low carb beer as a sponsor of race
- Help sponsors differentiate themselves

## IV. Benefits (Added Value)

- Sponsorship exclusivity
- Use demographics of event to improve your properties
  - Insurance companies in front of Dr.'s office
- New ideas
  - Duck race- have car donated for first duck across finish line
    - Sponsorship- how many ducks in back of truck? winner got trip
    - Every person that test drove a vehicle received a free duck
    - Accomplished goals, 1. People in dealership 2. Increase test drives
- Run: (PF Change)
  - Hotel sponsors: paid additional money to have finish line in Tempe, more people stay near finish line
- Have Raymond James sponsor pre-concert reception with physicians and committee
- Reiterate goals to sponsor during meeting
  - If I'm hearing you correctly, you are looking for a quick turnaround, interested in research, etc.
  - More males/females? PF Change sponsors because 61% of runners are females
  - Provide business-to-business opportunities
    - Sunkist was able to meet with Senator on Committee of Agriculture in non-business setting, during Sunkist parade.
    - Restaurant Sponsors and Alcohol sponsors together- offer meeting; opportunity to increase their sales

- Activation- ex. Runners received fortune cookie at end of marathon with \$10 off coupon to PF Changs (43% return); not just a coupon! (2% return)

#### V. Potential sponsors

- Leverage retailers -> Fry's sold sponsorships to retailers -> retailers spent \$120 K because they fight for shelf space – retailers (Fry's) has lots of leverage
- If looking for national sponsors, need to have good relations with local representatives
  - National office will call local branch
  - Ask local branch to contact national branch

#### VI. Give more than you promise

- Retain sponsors
- Sense of ownership of event
- Meet with them after to receive feedback and make sure you accomplished everything