Nonprofit Management 101
A COMPLETE AND PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR LEADERS AND PROFESSIONALS
SECOND EDITION

DARIAN RODRIGUEZ HEYMAN
and LAILA BRENNER
NEW INTRODUCTION BY NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR VAN JONES

WILEY
Nonprofit Management 101, 2nd ed.:

A Complete and Practical Guide for Leaders and Professionals

About the Book:
Thanks for your interest in the new second edition of Nonprofit Management 101! This sneak peek offers a glimpse into the quality and usefulness of the comprehensive field guide, which features practical insights and tips from 55 leading experts. The how-to manual and resource guide provides easy to implement solutions for nonprofits seeking to expand impact and meet mission— it’s a compass for the social sector.

Nonprofit Management 101 features contributions from a “who’s who” of nonprofit thought leaders, including Van Jones, Beth Kanter, Lynne Twist, Kay Sprinkel Grace, Paul Rice, and many more. Everything you need to launch, lead, manage, and effectively grow your nonprofit is here in this landmark publication, now in its second edition. Curated and edited by former Craigslist Foundation Executive Director Darian Rodriguez Heyman and Laila Brenner, Nonprofit Management 101 covers the spectrum of social sector management issues, including individual, corporate, and foundation fundraising, earned income, social media, marketing, PR, events, board and volunteer engagement, lobbying and advocacy, and much more.

About this Chapter:
Nonprofit Management 101 is broken into seven sections:

- The Big Picture—What the Field is all About and Where You Fit In
- Managing Organizations and People
- Nonprofit Law and Finance
- Nonprofit Technology and IT
- Fundraising
- Marketing and Communications
- Boards and Volunteers

The following chapter, written by Do Good Event’s Marika Holmgren, appears in the book as Chapter 28: Painless and Effective Event Planning: Let’s Get This Party Started! In it, Holmgren does a wonderful job demystifying nonprofit events, and in the process shares why events can provide critical support for causes, and how to execute them efficiently and strategically, as well as sharing a variety of critical skills and competencies, a key focus of every chapter in Nonprofit Management 101.

Just as all our contributors, Holmgren shares straightforward solutions and best practices that you can put to work at your nonprofit immediately, all highlighted in easy to digest lists, steps, and tips, and underscored through the intelligent use of insightful case studies and a sidebar of dos and don’ts. Finally,
just like every other chapter in the book, the author shares and describes her favorite related resources for those of you interested in learning more on the topic at hand.

Enjoy this preview into Nonprofit Management 101: A Complete and Practical Guide for Leaders and Professionals, 2nd edition and feel free to share this with your colleagues and friends. This chapter, and the book in general, is a tool for changemakers looking to build a better world; may it serve you well to that end.

Sincerely,

Darian Rodriguez Heyman & Laila Brenner, Editors
Nonprofit Management 101
A Complete and Practical Guide for Leaders and Professionals
Second Edition

Essential Resources, Tools, and Hard-Earned Wisdom from 55 Leading Experts

Edited by

DARIAN RODRIGUEZ HEYMAN

LAILA BRENNER

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Painless and Effective Event Planning: Let’s Get This Party Started!

By Marika Holmgren, Founder, Principal, and Lead Event Producer, Do Good Events

At some point, every nonprofit says, “We want to have an event.” Images of galas, frolicking guests, and loads of money for the organization dance in our heads. And at another not-too-distant point, almost everyone of those same groups say, “I thought events would be easier.” Events can be of tremendous benefit to organizations: they can improve your profile, raise critical funds for your work, and engage community, volunteers, and board members in an exciting and rewarding process.

They can also be a big headache.

How do you ensure that your event is fun, productive, profitable, and doesn’t drive your staff and board running for the hills? Events should be approached with the same methodology that you use for a capital campaign or a strategic planning process: with ample time, realistic goals, and a clear sense of the desired outcome.
In this chapter, I will demystify event planning and break it down into bite-size pieces that you can tackle one at a time. I will address the role of events in your larger organizational vision and mission, and by the end of this chapter, I hope you’ll have a clear sense of how events fit in to your organizational development, and of how to begin planning the perfect event.

**Critical Skills and Competencies**

Once you’ve decided it’s time to plan and produce an event, you will want to step back, take a deep breath, and prepare to dive in. I’ll work to make that dive less frightening with some quick and dirty rules and lessons in this chapter.

**What It Takes to Make a Great Event Happen**

Before you call the caterer or book the hotel, *take a look at how an event fits into your organization’s big picture*. This is the step that many of my clients overlook. *So before you even create an event timeline, conduct a goal setting session.*

Start with this set of questions:

- *Why* do we want to have an event?
- *How* do events fit into our larger development strategy?
- *What* are the desired outcomes?
- *Are we planning a one-off or an annual event?*

Whether you are just starting out or approaching your fiftieth anniversary, these questions are all relevant.

**Events can serve many purposes, including:**

- Raising funds
- Raising your profile
- Launching new programs
PAINLESS AND EFFECTIVE EVENT PLANNING: LET'S GET THIS PARTY STARTED!

- Increasing your membership or donor base
- Bringing your allies, partners, and supporters together

Which of these are important to you? Are they being addressed in other ways? How will your event address these goals?

When you take a look at these factors, you may decide that an event is the right choice (see Chapter Twenty-Four for a great example of how to use a cost-benefit analysis to decide between different tactics). You may also decide that these needs are better met by other means.

Once you’ve decided that an event is the best choice for your organization, you’re ready to begin planning! The good news is that many nonprofits and causes before you have hosted Bowl-A-Thons, Starry Night Balls, anniversary luncheons, awards ceremonies, and every other event you can imagine. The event wheel has been invented, and the more you learn from anecdotal evidence and examples, the more successful you’ll be. Having said that, there is always room for new and different event types. Think outside the box!

In this chapter, we’ll look at the key components to successful event planning:

- Setting goals
- Evaluating resources
- Managing expectations
- Creating a budget
- Event committees
- Creating and managing a timeline
- Pulling off a great event
- Evaluating what you’ve done, earned, and learned

Setting Goals

Before you pick out linens or secure a keynote speaker, start by asking some basic questions. This goes back to what I addressed above: goal setting.
Why do we want to have an event?

This is the most critical question of your planning process. The answer will likely include some of the following answers:

- Raise money
- Honor key supporters
- Present awards to those who exemplify our cause
- Raise our profile
- Thank key allies and supporters
- Generate press
- Have a community presence

These are reasonable and achievable goals for an event – just not all at the same time. Although an event should strive to achieve several goals at once, it’s a tall order to expect your event to achieve all goals at one time. As you begin planning, identify the most important goals for your event, and then prioritize. No one event can equally address every goal, so you need to rank your goals in order of importance. This will help you ground your event in reality and set you up for success.

You might decide that the goal is to honor key supporters, to present awards, and to thank allies. This event may not be a big moneymaker, but it will help you cement your relationships with donors and the community, and raise your organization’s profile.

Perhaps the most important goal is to raise money for your organization. If so, spend ample time mapping out your fundraising goal and identifying the elements that will entice donors to support your event.

If your goal is press, which is difficult to earn on events, identify what the “news” angle is. Are you releasing a major report? Recognizing someone notable with an award? Is your keynote speaker a high profile figure the press would like to interview? Bottom line: if your goal is press, your event needs to be press-worthy. See Chapter Twenty-Nine for more tips around engaging the media.

Setting goals early, and with input from key players, will help you plan the most appropriate and effective event to get the job done.
Evaluating Resources

You’ve set your goals and you’ve decided why you want to have an event. Now you need to identify how. This requires evaluating resources. One myth about event planning is that it’s easy and fun. That’s not to say it can’t be either or both, but events take time, money, and a good measure of sweat. Taking time to evaluate what resources you can allocate toward your event is as critical as setting your goals.

The resources required to plan an event include a combination of the following:

- Time
- Money
- Volunteer and board support
- Community and business support

Remember the old saying “Good, cheap, fast: Pick two.” The same can be said about event planning. Events require resources, whether they are paid for, pro bono, or in-kind. Start by taking stock of what you have to make your event happen.

This phase of planning is even more important if yours is a small or new organization. If you have limited resources, it’s important that you evaluate carefully – and realistically – what you allocate to an event. Because nonprofits operate with limited budgets and staffing, this phase of planning is critical.

We’ll start with the first resource: time. Anyone who has planned an event knows they are like home renovations – they seem to cost twice as much and take twice as long as you expect. Whether it’s a house party for 20 or an awards ceremony for 5,000, a successful event requires time from your staff, board, and volunteers. With your development staff and/or your event consultant, creating a timeline and task sheet (outlined later in this chapter) will help map out where your time will be required and where your staff and board will need to pitch in.

Let’s talk next about money. Although the ideal scenario is one in which local businesses, caterers, performers, and audiovisual companies are compelled enough by your issue to donate all the elements of a great party, this is not typically the case. Organizations often erroneously assume that they can throw an entire event based on donated goods and services. We will dive into budget planning later, but in short, you need to evaluate what funds you can direct toward your event before you begin so
there are no surprise bills in the end. Many nonprofits fall into the trap of poor budgeting, investing time and money, only to break even or incurring a loss at the end of the day. A budget that is realistic, detailed, and carefully managed is one of the best tools in your toolbox.

Next, review your potential volunteer and board support. Some groups have an extensive network of volunteers to stuff envelopes, staff a registration table, or approach local businesses for in-kind donations. Others have little or no volunteer program. Though all nonprofit organizations have boards of directors, they can vary in size, capacity, and engagement level. As a board chair myself, I believe it’s critical to engage your board in your event. Your board may have fantastic connections, whether it’s guests who will purchase tickets or tables, a friend at a winery to donate the wine, or access to a high-profile speaker to deliver the keynote. Talk with your board members and ask them how they see themselves contributing to a successful event.

An often-underutilized area of resources is community and business support. As a nonprofit you give back to the community on a daily basis. It’s perfectly appropriate to approach local businesses and members of your community to solicit support for your event – you might be surprised at the amazing resources available to you and your organization. Perhaps your local restaurant will provide an appetizer station for your reception, or a videographer will produce your opening video, or the neighborhood brewpub can donate beer for your dance party. Some local businesses may even provide cash and sponsor the event, especially if they have close ties to your cause. If you don’t ask, you don’t get. Be sure to back up your request with well-produced materials about the event and your organization, along a description of the benefits they’ll receive in exchange for their donation. Your organization has plenty of opportunities that are appealing for businesses and community partners, including:

- Tax deductions
- Advertising in your event materials
- Social media mentions
- Links on your website
- Recognition or booth opportunities at the event
- Tickets or tables to the event
- The opportunity to address your audience
Managing Expectations

Once you’ve figured out the why and the how, it’s time to plant your feet firmly on the ground and repeat after me: “I will not have unrealistic expectations. I will not have unrealistic expectations.”

It’s easy to think big when planning an event, and this may generate great ideas and identify your stretch goals. However, revisit your goals and resources and you are more likely to stay grounded and realistic. Having a huge benefit concert with Beyoncé may sound great, but is it doable? A gala dinner for 900 certainly sounds like a party worth having, but if your organization doesn’t have an individual donor base yet, it may be an unrealistic stretch.

Plan something that invigorates, instead of exhausts, your staff, board, and volunteers. Create a plan for an event that is achievable and manageable. If an event takes you away from your work with foundations, for example, you may hurt your organization and your bottom line rather than help it.

It’s not just important to manage your own expectations, but those of your board, event committee, and key players. It’s easy for board and committee members (and I’m speaking as one here) to dream and talk big, because after the brainstorming we get to walk away and leave the bulk of the work to the staff and consultant. Brainstorming is a great process and shouldn’t be discouraged, but you don’t have to say yes to every idea that is presented. Set your team up for success by creating realistic and achievable goals.

Creating a Budget

Before you spend a penny on your event, you must create a budget based in reality, on both the expense and income sides. If you haven’t managed an event before, consult an event professional when creating a budget. I’ve worked with clients that create budgets overlooking significant costs, whether it’s forgetting to include a line item for a venue, neglecting service and tax1 on a catering estimate, or vastly underestimating the audio-visual equipment you’ll need to present your program. On the income side, I’ve seen clients create revenue structures that are not reflective of what their donor base can bear. Envision all aspects of your event, account for every component that has a cost associated with it, and think through how you’re going to
raise money and what’s realistic. After this, you’ll be ready for the next step: putting numbers down on paper.

**Expenses and In-Kind**

Even if you can secure some items pro-bono or in-kind, you still need to include them in your budget. **Here are the things you should include in the expense side of your budget:**

- Catering (food, beverages, service)
- Venue
- Rentals (chairs, tables, linens, flatware,)
- Design of signage, programs, and other on-site and campaign materials
- Printing (invitations, program, signage)
- Mailing (postage, mail house)
- Audio-visual (sound, projection, screens, recording, livestreaming)
- Insurance
- Permits
- Decor
- Event consultant
- Additional day of staff
- Travel (honorees, special guests)
- Performers
- Awards
- Video production
- Photographer
- Guest gifts or takeaways
Once you’ve outlined these items, identify what you’d need to spend on each item versus what you can spend. This is when you’ll identify items and services you might be able to get donated. An event professional can help you identify where you can save money, and in which areas you’ll want to avoid being penny-wise and pound-foolish.

Add a 5–10% contingency line item to cover unexpected costs without breaking your budget. If all goes well, you won’t have to use it, but it might come in handy when you realize that the baseball hats you ordered for guests were printed with “.com” instead of “.org” (true story).

**Income**

Next, draft your income structure. Again, stay grounded in reality. When you look at revenue streams, you’ll likely include a combination of the following:

- Ticket sales
- Table sales
- Sponsorship
- Exhibitors
- Ad sales
- Cash donations, fund-a-need
- In-kind donations
- Live auction
- Silent auction
- Raffle or door prize
- Wine pulls
- Book sales

These are all effective and proven methods of raising money. However, when estimating revenue in each area, it’s critical that you analyze your member and donor...
base to evaluate its giving potential is in each area. If your largest donor in 2009 was a $5,000 contributor, it may prove a challenge to expect a $25,000 table for your gala. Conversely, if you raised $36,000 at your auction last year, consider raising this year’s goal to $40,000.

If you’re a smaller group just getting started, don’t worry if these numbers seem big. You may start out with a fundraiser at a friend’s house to raise $500. I know organizations that started with backyard barbecues that now raise hundreds of thousands of dollars annually at their events.

Consider the 2-to-1 ratio: if you raise $2 for every $1 you spend, that’s considered a respectable expense/income ratio. With my clients that produce annual galas, we strive for a minimum of 3-to-1 for most of our events. Even if you’re planning a modest fundraiser with the goal of bringing in $500 for your project, you still need to create a realistic budget and timeline, just as you would for a large gala.

Oftentimes, as you develop your income structure you’ll already know with some certainty who your largest sponsors and donors are going to be – put their names in your budget, right next to the name of the staff or board member who is taking point on securing their support. Do the same with your less likely prospects, and even with your various revenue-generating tactics (e.g., cold calling local businesses).

Ultimately, the key to event-based fundraising success is ensuring that everyone is on the same page regarding who is responsible for which asks.

Once you’ve got your budget developed, reviewed, refined, and approved, don’t let it languish ignored and unattended. Be sure to keep careful track of every expense, no matter how small. A budget that is regularly reviewed and updated is much more likely to be adhered to.

Risk Management

Next, look at risk management. Making the decision to have an event involves certain risk. Although there’s no way to know exactly what might come up, you’ll need to consider the possibilities and identify what measures you will take to mitigate risk.

Scenarios that you should consider include:

- Event income or registration does not meet your goals, financial or otherwise
- Natural disasters
• Hotel strikes and boycotts
• Current events that distract from your cause/event
• A key team member or event planner leaving the project
• A keynote speaker falling through

Review these and other scenarios and identify what you would do in each case and how you can reduce the risk and liability of your organization. In event planning, always expect the unexpected – always come up with a Plan B (and C) and hope you never have to implement it.

Event Committees

You may have worked with a committee when planning an event, or even served on one. If you’ve done either, you have an idea of the complexities involved with event committees. Generally speaking, there are two primary types of committees for events, both of which are volunteer-based:

• **Event committee**: a group of volunteers involved in the logistics and planning of an event
• **Host committee**: a group of connected supporters and donors who promote the event to their friends and colleagues and ultimately sell tickets, tables, and sponsorships

Not every event needs both, or even one, of the two committees. Some events benefit by having extensive committee involvement, whereas others move along just fine without any at all.

**There are pros and cons to consider when deciding whether or not to recruit committees:**

**Pros:**

• Increased involvement from your supporters and broader circle
• Many hands make light work
• Potential resources, including access to donors, in-kind donations, speakers, bands, and other vendors
• Increased breadth and depth of outreach
• Expanding your expertise in key functional areas relevant to your event
• Access and introductions to new donors and allies

**Cons:**
• Committees, no matter how effective, require management and oversight
• “Too many cooks in the kitchen”
• Increased number of stakeholders has the potential to slow decision-making

As you begin to plan, take stock of the benefits and drawbacks before you put out a call to action.

**Creating and Managing a Timeline**

_A well-thought-out, comprehensive timeline is an event planner’s best friend_. Invest time creating this tool and I promise you’ll feel much more in control throughout the planning process.

_A good timeline is detailed, comprehensive, and indicates clear responsibilities, due dates, who is responsible for what, and status updates._

Table 28.1 shows a very quick outline of a simple, but effective timeline that you can create in Word or Excel.

Like your budget, _for a timeline to be effective you must review, update, and revise it frequently_ – a timeline is a living document that must evolve throughout your planning process. This document will also help your successor immensely, and she will revere and thank you!

### Table 28.1: Sample Event Planning Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Due By</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Select venue</td>
<td>Event Planner</td>
<td>April 1</td>
<td>Done</td>
<td>Be sure to consult board for suggestions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send out sponsorship packets</td>
<td>Development Director</td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Already sent 5; 10 more to go</td>
<td>XYZ expressed interest in sponsorship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pulling Off a Great Event

Somewhere on that perfect timeline you’ve created, you’ll see the words “Event Day,” probably in bold, 18-point font, all CAPS. There’s no getting around it – after the goal setting, resource evaluation, budget planning, and timeline, it’s time to have the event.

This is where the rubber meets the road, and where you see how your meticulous planning and preparation come together to result in a gorgeous, inspiring, and lucrative event.

I believe that all nonprofit event planners should live by five golden rules:

Rule #1: No Assumptions

It’s critical that everyone involved be crystal clear on how event day will flow, what their role is, and what all the key players will do. If anyone starts a sentence with “Well, I assumed . . .” then you’ve got a problem. Call it transparency or the right hand knowing what the left hand is doing, but a beautifully executed event is a well-oiled machine where all the parts work independently, but as one.

Rule #2: Start the Day with Nothing Left to Do

When you begin event day, there should be nothing on your list that could have been done the day, week, or month before. Avoid leaving anything to collate, stuff, or compile on event day unless there’s no way around it. You’re better off splitting up your volunteers and bringing some in on the days before the event to stuff nametags, assemble goody bags, or label auction items. Event day is a strange parallel universe where time accelerates to the speed of light – plan for that and you’ll be okay. Further, you need to leave yourself time to address the unexpected (see Rule #5).

Rule #3: The Curtain Rule

I tell all my volunteers and staff participants about the curtain. I like to think there is a curtain between the public side of an event and behind the scenes of the event. When we are out in front of guests, at the registration table, staffing the silent auction cash-out, or even backstage with the master of ceremonies, we are in front of the curtain, where we must remain professional, composed, and gracious, and most importantly, calm.
When you are behind the curtain – whether it’s in the makeshift event office or in a private corner, that’s when you can gripe, cry, tear your hair out, or curse the day that someone thought of silent auctions. Remember the old ad campaign, “Never let ’em see you sweat.”

Rule #4: Remember That You Are Part of a Team

No matter what size event you’re planning, it takes many hands to create a great event that your guests will enjoy and to which they’ll want to return next year. From staff participants, to Junior League volunteers, to the team running the audio-visual, a cohesive and comfortable team knows how to communicate to pull off true event magic.

Remember that all team members need to be briefed, trained, and managed throughout the process. In order for the team to function seamlessly, each part needs to work independently, but be comfortable with the other key players. Think of your event team like a baseball team. The shortstop doesn’t need to know how to pitch, but he needs to be able to work with the pitcher and know what the pitcher’s job is.

There’s a good chance that you’ll want to work with at least some of your teammates again. Once the event is over, or during if appropriate, be sure to personally thank your team, ideally by publicly recognizing their hard work and contribution.

Rule #5: Don’t Expect Perfection, But Do Expect Perfect Troubleshooting

Events are a live show that you get to perform only once, without a dress rehearsal. Because of the live, one-time nature of events, you can anticipate glitches. As much as you’ve planned, prepped, and strategized, something (with luck, something minor) will not go as you hope or expect. I always tell my clients, don’t expect that nothing will go wrong, but do expect that when something goes awry, your team will be ready and able to deal with the snafu in the most professional and efficient way possible.

However, this can be mitigated by following steps 1 through 4 above!

Evaluating What You’ve Done, Earned, and Learned

Your event is over. The caterers have left, the awards have been presented, the guest have fabulous goodie bags. You’ve had a huge group high five – after all, there’s no
better time to congratulate and thank your team than with a glass of champagne at the end of your event. Now what?

You’re probably itching to check into a spa for a week (or two), but your work is not done yet. This next task is just as critical as all of the work you did leading up to the event. This is where look back and figure out what worked and what didn’t.

Evaluations are best done when information is fresh, so schedule debriefs within two weeks of the conclusion of the event. Although it’s good for people to take a couple of days after the event to digest what happened, don’t take too long or the feedback – good and bad – begins to lose focus and specificity.

Who do you invite to a debrief? You’ll want to include the key players involved in the event planning. That might include any combination of:

- Development staff
- Executive director
- Event consultant
- Event chairs
- Event committee

Some organizations invite a larger circle of people to join, such as host committee members and staff that were only peripherally involved. However, effective debriefs are ones in which those present feel safe, comfortable, and have been involved in the event in a meaningful way.

A debrief can be a surprisingly challenging. By the time you reach the debrief, your nerves are raw and you have what I call “Post-Event Depression.” It’s difficult to work on a project for months or even years, only to hear, “Well, it would have been nice if we’d had better name tags.” In order to ensure debriefs are effective and that participants don’t get defensive or cast blame, focus on the parts of the event that went well as much as on the parts that need improvement. Start by highlighting your achievements and successes, and then delve into areas for improvement, making sure to acknowledge those elements and record them for the next year. Make sure you hear from everyone, and that everyone is heard.
A sample debrief agenda might look something like this:

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Celebrating our success – we did it!
3. What worked and what needs improvement
   a. Planning process
   b. Committee
      i. Need a larger, more diverse committee in future years
   c. Program
      i. Work to shorten speeches of awardees
   d. Logistics
      i. Set up
      ii. Break down
   e. Food and wine
      i. Need more wine – ran out early
   f. Staffing and volunteers
      i. Ensure that volunteers know where volunteer check-in is
4. Next Steps

*After the debrief, circulate clear and concise minutes* as appropriate. When you begin planning for next year’s event, pull out those notes and memorize them as you begin your next planning cycle.
Event Planning Dos and Don’ts

• **DO** start the planning process early — at least six to eight months out for a larger event — setting clear and achievable goals.

• **DON’T** assume that hosting an event will be easy or free.

• **DO** a careful and realistic analysis of the resources your organization can allocate to the event including time, money, and staffing.

• **DON’T** assume that hiring an event consultant means you won’t have work to do.

• **DO** create a timeline and a budget that is grounded in reality as your very first step.

• **DON’T** forget to thank everyone who has supported your event.

• **DO** conduct a thorough and inclusive debrief and evaluation within two weeks of your event.

Conclusion

Events can be an exciting and effective way to showcase your work, your achievements, and to raise critical funds for your organization. When done with thought, attention to detail, a little bit of humor, and a lot of patience, they benefit your organization, your volunteers, your board, and the community at large.

Take time at the beginning to set goals, evaluate resources, and manage expectations. During the process, adhere to your budget and timeline, updating and revising as needed. When it comes time to execute your event, ensure that there are no assumptions, don’t leave until tomorrow what can be done today, remember the curtain, work as a team, and be ready for anything. And when the party’s over, debrief and evaluate so that next year’s event is an even bigger success.

And of course, don’t forget to have fun. It’s your party, after all!
Marika Holmgren is the founder, principal, and lead event producer of Do Good Events (http://www.dogoodevents.org/), a boutique event production firm specializing in high-impact event production for progressive nonprofit organizations. Do Good Events’ roster includes the annual Goldman Environmental Prize ceremony, the largest environmental prize program in the country, and Marika’s clients include Sierra Club, Human Rights Watch, Breast Cancer Prevention Partners, Mother Jones, and many other social change leaders and innovators.

Event Planning Resource Review

BizBash (https://www.bizbash.com/)
- A comprehensive site with more than 50,000 resources for events, from venues to how-to’s, to highlights of new trends in event planning.

MeetingsNet (https://www.meetingsnet.com/)
- With a focus on conferences and meetings, this resource is a helpful tool for anyone planning a large gathering.

Special Events (https://www.specialevents.com/)
- From the International Live Events Association, this site showcases the latest in galas and live events, and serves as a resource for planners everywhere.

Here Comes the Guide (www.herecomestheguide.com)
- Developed initially for brides, this site provides info on venues, caterers, photographers, bands, and more.

Grassroots Fundraising Journal (www.grassrootsfundraising.org)
- A resource for nonprofits navigating their way through development work, including tips on fundraising events.

Terry Axelrod, the Raising More Money book series
- A terrific resource for donor cultivation and “ask” events.
Soul of Money (www.soulofmoney.org)

Lynne Twist (see Afterword of this book) is an expert fundraiser, and her work will help demystify “the ask” and believe it or not, get you excited about raising money.

Green Meeting Industry Council (www.greenmeetings.info)

Visit this site if you’d like to venture into green event planning.

Sustainable Communities Network (https://www.sustainable.org/index.php)

Additional resources for green event planning.

Google (www.google.com) – need to find a vendor that does photo booths? Someone who rents whiteboards? Google it – there’s a pretty good chance that exactly what you need is just a couple of clicks away.

Local sites dedicated to charitable events. In San Francisco, there’s www.sfphilanthropist.com – a great spot to see what other nonprofits are doing, what parties and events are hip and hot, and to view a calendar of upcoming events.

Venues Online (www.venuesonline.com)

Ideas, tips, event products, or visit simply to brainstorm about what’s possible when planning an event.