PRE-PLAN TING TIPS

Pre-planning is one of the most critical parts of meeting planning. Why? Defining the objectives and goals of an event is the key to hosting a successful one.

ATTENDEES

- Who is this event intended for? Why is it being planned?
- What is the intended outcome of the event (training, hands-on learning, discussions, decision-driven)?
- Where will attendees be coming from? Will they need air transportation or can they drive to the event?

SELECTING A HOTEL/VENUE

- What is the optimum place/venue to get the most ROI and stay within budget? What are the pros and cons of each location?
  - Downtown?
  - Airport?
  - Suburb?
  - Resort?
- What time of year is the event? Is it a good time for the venue or should dates or location be changed to lower the cost?
- Is ground transportation needed?
- Any Outings?
- What type of meeting space is needed (be detailed and as accurate as possible)?
- Will any meals be served?
- Send out RFPs (Request for Proposal) for several bids.

For more information or to let GCFA's Travel and Meeting Planning team help you with all your event needs, contact Brittany Enright at connectionalrelations@gcfa.org or at 615-369-2395.
NEGOTIATING WITH THE VENUE

- Does the hotel room rate include WiFi in the room? Is there a resort fee that can be waived?
- What negotiating is there in the room rate? Better rates if date pattern or week was flexible?
- Meeting Room Space – Is the rate reduced or waived based on the Food and Beverage minimums? Do they have the space that you need for the layout you require?
- Food and Beverage – Do the math. Is the minimum amount required within your budget per attendee? Negotiate down if not.
- Audio Visual – Can you use an outside vendor for A/V? What is the discount if using in-house?
- Have legal representation review your contracts – watch out for attrition, cancellation, and other contract clauses that can affect the performance of your event.

BUDGET

- Know your budget!
- Who pays the expenses? The host? The attendee? Both? Additional Revenue Streams?
- What are the fixed costs (airline tickets, hotels)? What are the variable costs (AV, Food, and Beverage)?
- Are there any hidden costs to add to the expenses (taxes, services, gratuities, resort fees, taxis)?
- What is the outcome of the event from a budget perspective? Will the budget cover the event? Does the event need to break even?
- Make sure the budget covers all expenses. Determine if revenue from registration or additional streams need to be adjusted.