

# THE 5 E'S OF PLANNING AN EVENT

## 1. Choose the **EVENT** Type

- What type of event will you host?
- Size of the venue
- Cost; if tickets needed
- Throughout the year think about different audiences, different events, and introduce a balance of diverse programs

## 2. **ENGAGE** Your Audience

- Think about your favorite place? What comes to mind?
- What things make you keep going back?
- Engage your audience before the event(flyers, emails, Facebook, work-of-mouth)
- How do you connect with them to ensure they will come to your event?
- How will you capture the attention of your audience? (background music, PowerPoint with pictures of past events, etc)
- Have a specific start time (should be ready 15 min before the first person walks through the door)
- Have a process (stay consistent in your messages, welcome people, introduce your committee)
- Have an end point (thank you's and plug your next event)

## 3. Set **EXPECTATIONS**

- Your favorite place what do you expect every time you go there? Event planners should design your events this way
- Set expectations at each stage of event planning—Set, Meet and even Exceed the expectations of your audience
- Create a vision (what you want the event to look like), be optimist!!
- If you have multiple things going on, create a program/agenda
- Provide accurate information about the event (level of quality if having entertainment—set expectations in timely manner)

#### 4. Create the **ENVIRONMENT**

- Favorite place—how is the environment in the restaurant? (look, feel, atmosphere)
- Produce quality in your room transformation (recreate a comedy club in the coffeehouse, recreate concert hall in the university auditorium)—**ex. Student Center Commons into a coffeehouse**
- What look and feel do you want to create in the room?
- After the thought, make it happen!! (decorations, room set-up, lighting, music—all components—**DOESN'T HAVE TO BE EXPENSIVE!!**)
- Research the environment you want

#### 5. Make the Event an **EXPERIENCE**

- Difficult part of planning an event
- Energy is individual to each person...so have to create a lasting effect from all angles
- “Set the Stage”—create memories for your audience (have them talking about your events for days, weeks, months, even years!)

#### **FOLLOWING THE 5 E's**

- Transform the activity for each person
- Create a buzz from each individual story
- Help students find a place on campus that positively affects retention of students
- **ENJOYMENT**: Most important E

#### **CITATIONS**

Pine II, J., and Gilmore, J.H. (1999). *The experience economy: work is theatre and every business is a stage: goods and services are no longer enough*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Gardner, Brian and Heusted, Leslie (2008). *The 5 E's of Event Planning*. Campus Programming, Back to School, 2008. Vol.41, No.2.

Adapted from Wartburg College Student Orgs page <http://www.wartburg.edu/orgs/index.aspx>