

Resources optimization and overcoming challenges for event organization

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ABSTRACT: *This article will discuss the challenges faced and importance of careful planning for conducting events at national level. Multiple challenges have to be anticipated and proper methodology to be devised in overcoming the same. Due to involvement of public money the added responsibility of proper management and optimization of available resources is of prime consideration. Practically two cases are taken and detailed analysis is brought out. The first event is technical in nature and the second one is sports event. The prerequisite of handling such events with utmost planning is of prime consideration and situation arising due to varied nature is to be taken into account. Further time management of the event is an important parameter to be considered. Various factors such as planning, handling, execution, resource mobilization, budget handling, assignments and overall analysis is presented in this article.*

Keywords: *Event; workshop; management; planning*

INTRODUCTION

Event is an occurrence at a determinable time and place. It involves identifying the target audience, devising the concept and coordinating the technical aspects. Each event is different in nature due to the fact that it depends on the nature and the participants. The first consideration for any event is defining scope and the area targeted. Duration of the event, purpose, budget are some of the key aspects to be looked into for the proper conduct of an event. The key parameters in organization of an event are:

- Goal and Objective: tangible goals, speakers, publicity, volunteer
- Finalization of dates: availability of guest speakers, participants, topic for keynote address
- Master plan: venue, logistics, registration, activities, logo
- Administration: budget, catering, micro management, billing
- Feedback mechanism: daily feedback for improvements
- Transparency: decisions in democratic way and sticking to plan

The case study in this article is based on the actual conduct of events-first one related with the technical workshop (2014) attended by eminent scientist, professors and researchers from all over India and second one is the sports event (2015) with participation of more than 1200 persons in two phases. The challenges of organizing such events are multifold due to varied nature and participants. The first one is related with intellectuals and are more concerned about the technical content but second one is prone to raise flaring in the ground due to intense competition of getting medals and recognition. Thus the role of the organizers and on-ground umpires are under constant scrutiny.

Table-1: Overview of the conducted event

Event	Technical	Sports
Participation	>50	>1200
Nature	Workshop	Inter-centre
Duration (days)	2	6
Location	Indoor	Outdoor (multiple)
Special arrangements	Guest lecture Coordinators Content Talk duration	Ground arrangement Umpires & logistics Ground staff support Accessories/documentations Results updation/recording
Budget	1.5 lacs	7.5 lacs

The prime parameters common for both the events are:

- Venue cleanliness
- Facilities at venue
- Indoor/Outdoor aspects
- Power back-up
- Financial aspects

The sponsorship for such events can eased budgeting aspects which needs to be worked out prior to initiation of such event. This article touches upon the events which are dissimilar in nature (Table-1) and the various aspects taken into consideration to make it successful by careful planning and proper assignment of work to the team.

1. EVENT ORGANIZATION

Organization of events can be broadly classified on the following parameters:

- Scope/Activities
- Targeted audience
- Participants
- Activities chart
- Time management
- Budgetary aspects
- Accommodation

- Logistics

Themes and agendas of the events are to be defined before initiation of such activities. This is to be followed with the formation of the task teams looking into various aspects. Micro-management of the event and individual responsibility of each task team to be clearly defined and in case of conflicts the redressal mechanism also to be worked out. The management message to the individual of taking defined task seriously with continuous monitoring will enable the progress of the assigned work. Selection of committee members play an important role so for technical event the choice of members are primarily on the basis of technical grounds whereas for sports the members need to be chosen on the knowledge of the games.

1.1 Case Study-1: Technical Event

A national level workshop is organized on the technical topic of sensors related with micro electro mechanical domain. The workshop is primarily part of the national programme of creating and spreading awareness with bringing together of academia and researchers on the same platform. This is also a mean to bring closer the industry and academia for future collaborations. [1] Further aim is to involve young researchers in specific domain by showcasing the existing infrastructure available in the organization. The event to be planned keeping the scope of the conference into consideration. The main parameters in such an event organization are:

- Relevance to the organization
- Required budgetary or funding
- Nature and number of expected participants
- Event duration
- Topics to be covered
- Food and logistics
- Engaging participants with relevant topics
- Optimization of resources

The programme initiated with the background work of the nature and the topics to be covered with the possible dates. Also availability of accommodation and catering services for the same to be looked into. Budgetary and sponsorship aspects are also looked into. The invitation covering detail of the programme, contact information of the organizer and inaugural function are send to the respective participants. The participants are given the performa for filling the requisite info such as requirement of accommodation, pick/drop facility requirement, contact details, any specific requirement such as medical etc. The activity is broken into sub-section with each sub-section assigned to a person. Sub-sections are:

- Accommodation
- Pick/drop to respective places
- Arranging all to a pre-defined place before movement
- Catering management and cleanliness
- Emergency contacts

- Daily briefing

The above aspects are generic in nature and assigned to each individual and instructed to update the record continuously so as to avoid ambiguity between respective committee members. Reception and registration desks are to be established for the smooth flow of the activity. The choice of the comparer is of paramount importance and chosen based on the communication skills. Various activities to be charted out such as:

- Registration
- Inauguration
- Programme overview
- Keynote address
- Specialist lectures
- Visits (technical/Sightseeing)
- Vote of thanks

As the event is technical in nature so the topics to be covered are:

- Overview of the programme
- Specific topics/products
- Capabilities and future roadmaps
- Quality and reliability aspects
- Collaborative approaches
- Summarization/Panel discussions

The overall summarization to be bought out as a comprehensive report detailing the activities carried out along with the budgetary aspects. [2]

1.2 Case study-2: Outdoor Sports Meet

Sports meet are organised by various government departments for building productive and health society along with inculcating intra and inter personal skills for self-improvement. It also provides the opportunity for leading as well as enabling to deal with failures and success equally. The present case study deals with the Inter centre sports meet covering 10 outdoor games which was conducted by DOS with the participation of more than 1200 players from 14 centres across India. As media glare along with prestige of organization [3] is at stake so the need was to conduct the games much better than others. The games are played in two phases to cater for the ground and catering requirement arising for such as huge continent. The event is challenging as both men and women team participated with the age group varying from 24-59 years. The main consideration for the same are:

- Venue and booking of the same on multiple tentative dates
- Availability of facilities such as changing rooms, ground marking
- Support staff such as scorer, lines man along with referees
- Arrangement and equipment availability
- Proper briefing (announcements) and time management

- Strict discipline and on spot decisions

The information brochure should be released prior to the games in which some important points to be included such as:

- Important telephone numbers (covering hospital, general ,airline, railway & bus enquiry)
- Committee description and contact details of focal points
- Participating teams and colour coding
- Venue and event scheduling
- List of participants
- Accommodation information
- Transport information
- Arbitration committee & scope
- General rules and regulations covering pattern of games

The logo of the game with a theme is having its own importance in the raising and realizing the spirit of the game. Beside above, the contingent manager of each team to be briefed about the responsibilities and providing the necessary documentations for the same. It includes ensuring correct names of participants, chest numbers, availability of protest form, match timings, updation of the events etc. Further help desk to be put so as any query can be directed in case of emergency. Formation of the Tournament/Event committee is the first step which was given responsibility of having smooth conduct of the events, framing of rules, regulations, various formats, daily monitoring of events and facilitator for all participating teams. The expenditure incurred was within Rs 9.0 lakhs as anticipated for the overall tournament aspects except catering, transport, printing and accommodation. [4]

Further the matches to be conducted either on league, knock out or league cum knock out basis depends upon the number of teams and the availability of time. Also the availability of daylight and rules regarding any postponement due to bad light/weather etc to be taken into consideration before taking out draws. The national rules in the respective games, wherever applicable, to be followed to avoid ambiguity at later stages. Neutrality of umpires to be ensured by engaging players from SAI or state sports body with bill settlement in the time bound manner. Coordination with various committees such as accommodation, reception, catering, transport, tournament, procurement, publication, help desk, database to be ensured for smooth operations of the overall event. Designated focal person from tournament committee to be present at the venue to oversee the completion and guiding the umpires/officials for any controversy arising at the venue. Video recording/Photographic evidences of the day's activities to be taken so as to refer the same in case of any controversy arising at the later stages.

To keep up the spirit of competition and keeping intact fairness introduction of award schemes such as best player, best centre, man of the match and fair play to be announced before initiation of the same and mechanism to be ensured for maintaining transparency. The clarity in awarding points to be discussed in team meetings prior to the draw.

2. TEAM LEADER: ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The role of team leader is enormous and main consideration in choosing the same is that he should be knowledgeable and can deal the situations without any prejudice or pressure. He should also anticipate the situation before hand and must have put the system in place to deal in case of any emergency arising on the spot. Further quick and immediate decision and leading by example should also be at the core in conducting the event. Team leader to take into consideration the following points into consideration:

- Selection of team members
- Fixing of individual responsibility
- Open discussion and maintain transparency
- Close out of the actions in time bound manner
- Sorting out conflicts with rationale decisions
- Using social media for spreading event information
- Ensuring each member participation by assigning proper role
- Individual attention to each activity
- Inviting other committee members for better coordination

Figure 1 shows the major role of the team leader in organization of an event.

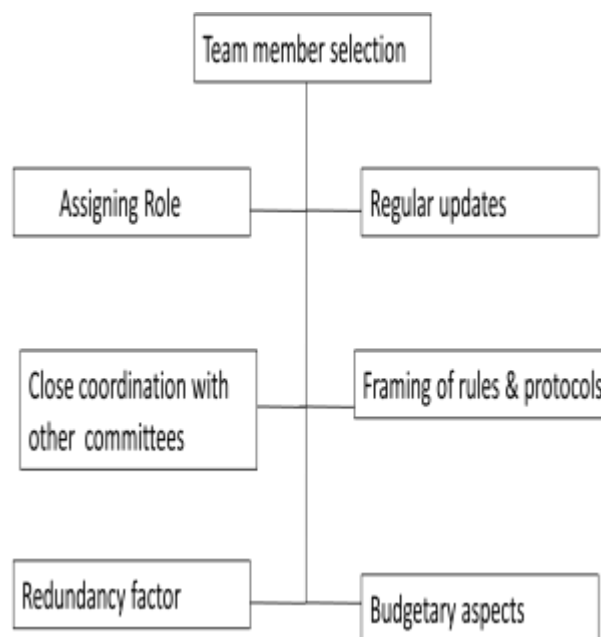


Fig1: Role of the team leader in conducting tournament

3. CHALLENGES

Listing some of the challenges and overcoming the same are listed below:

- Accommodation : Listing the same in the information brochure
- Logistics and catering : Taking into consideration the food habits of the participants

- Medical emergency : Keeping medical team on standby with vehicle
- Crowd control : Committee member to oversee
- Fighting among participants : Try to find solutions otherwise strict disciplinary actions
- Matches re-scheduling : As per prior intimated rules
- Lost/Found : Help desk establishment for the same

In technical event the same may be considered along with other parameters such as:

- Choice of speakers
- Content
- Time management
- Handling multiple requests for participation
- Proper audio system
- Uniformity of presentation
- Feedback and redressal mechanism

The main challenge lies in tackling the situation in the absence of the guidance for the same. In this scenario the team leader should take calculated risk and take steps by visualizing such situations. The personal visit to each place, understanding the situations, guiding the team and taking quick decisions are part of this process. To maintain the goodwill of the organization, bills pertaining to various agencies to be settled along with all necessary documentation at the earliest.

4. DISCUSSIONS

This article is the culmination of the practical experiences gain in arranging the smooth conduct of mega event taking care of multiple tasks in the absence of any experience which indicates the role of proper planning in execution of such a large scale event without any surprises. A micro scale planning of the same is renders the event to be executed as per the plan resulting in greater impact on the participants. In spite of the event magnanimous in nature, the tight control on the expenditure of the event is possible due to personal attention to each aspect. Any event to be conducted at such large scale needs guidance and support of higher management. In the absence of any guidance the role of leader is to take responsibility of taking decisions with logic and execute it without any fear. The role of proper documentation and justification notes ensure smooth sailing till the end. Also team leader job is to oversee that team members should learn from this experience so as in future the same may be handled independently by them. Interest in the overall activity makes the thing looks easier as this provide a learning opportunity to replicate the same in other activities. The organization head is having the role of overseeing the activities but also mentoring and providing suggestions for the same for the success of the event. Individuals taking interest to be credited with good appraisal by the Head along with providing opportunity to groom young leaders otherwise discouragement by finding fault attitude will pave way for failure of future events.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I sincerely thank to my family who stood by me in handling mega events and in tiring time. Also thanks to the members in conducting such events smoothly.

6. REFERENCES

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