

AN APPROACH TO CONFERENCE ADMINISTRATION

There is no secret to producing successful judicial education activities. It requires patience, strong organizational skills, superior management skills, an understanding of the judicial process, the ability to adapt, and above all, a sense of humor. This chapter outlines the principles of programming that apply to all activities, from small luncheon speeches to large conferences. It is a “cookbook” or a “how to” for you, the judicial educator. Included are sections on conference management, finance and budgeting, marketing tips, faculty training, program materials, potential problems, and evaluation.

Conference Management

Attendees at a recent conference for judges commented on their evaluations, “Well run conference!”, “Well organized!”, “No complaints, everything went smoothly!”, “One of the best I’ve ever attended!” How does a program get such accolades? A well-organized conference takes a lot of work and excellent management skills on the part of judicial education planners.

Management Design

Management design begins with a design model. Leonard and Zeace Nadler (1987), in their book *Comprehensive Guide to Successful Conferences and Meetings*, argue that design is the most important ingredient in conference planning. Defining design as “the process of bringing together all the elements involved in producing a successful conference” (p. 17), the Nadlers suggest developing a model or management plan to cover all details and tasks. A model also assists in determining roles and responsibilities. When planning a conference, you must think through all tasks that are required and then set up a design to accomplish them.

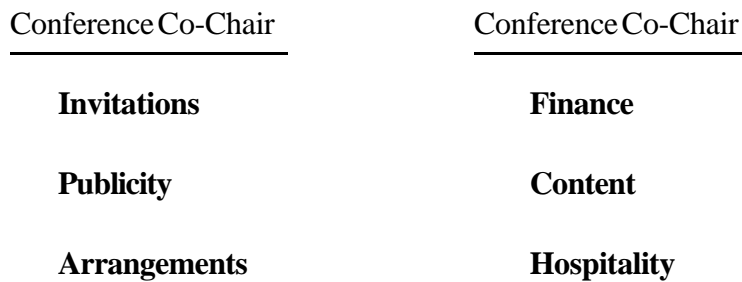
Several design models are discussed here for managing legal and judicial education programs. They can be adapted to suit the needs of any program.

While management structures may vary, all of the planning functions suggested will probably need to be carried out. Before meeting with members of an instructional design committee, support staff, or other committees, formulate your design management model. Use the following charts (Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4) to assign tasks and present this design to critical policy makers or advisory committee members.

For a luncheon or a half-day or one-day program involving few participants, one person can easily handle all tasks. A two- or three-day or longer conference requires additional support. Determine what kind of support you will need, then match those needs to the appropriate people. In selecting the most effective management design for your program, one of the four models provided here may help. In Figure 1, two persons complete all tasks for a program.

Figure 1

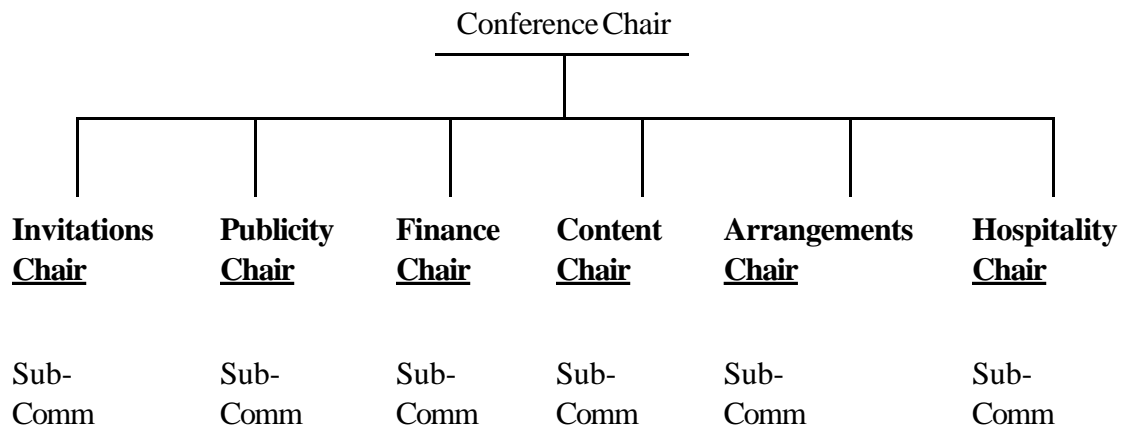
MANAGEMENT DESIGN MODEL A



In the second model, Figure 2, one person serves as conference chair with six committee chairs. Each committee chair has its own subcommittee. Committee chairs report to the conference chair.

Figure 2

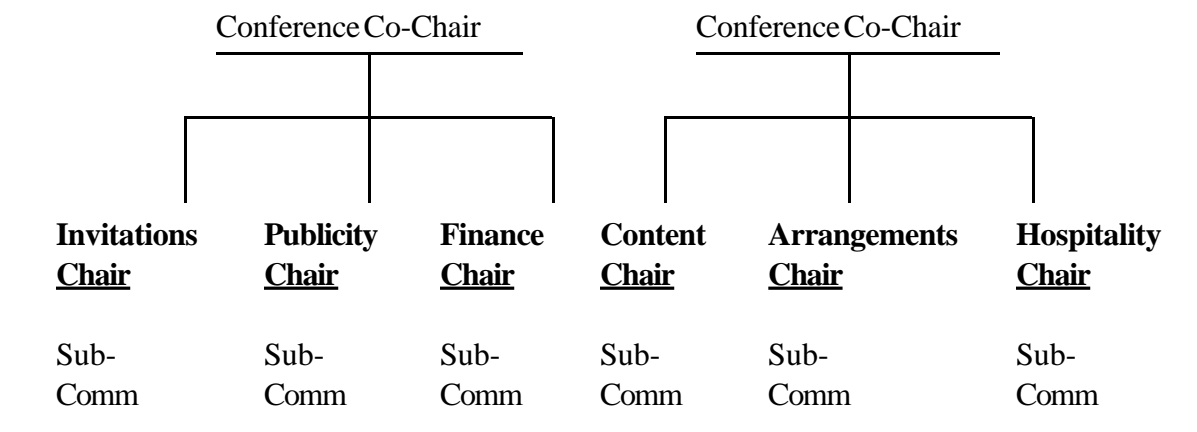
MANAGEMENT DESIGN MODEL B



In Figure 3, two persons co-chair the conference, and each is in charge of half the conference administration. Each committee chair has a subcommittee, with three chairs reporting to one of the conference co-chairs.

Figure 3

MANAGEMENT DESIGN MODEL C



In Figure 4, the conference chair employs a conference manager to handle the administrative details. Committee chairs report to the manager; the manager, in turn, reports to the conference chair. The conference chair is not involved in the day-to-day decisions of the committee chairs, but rather discusses plans with the conference manager.

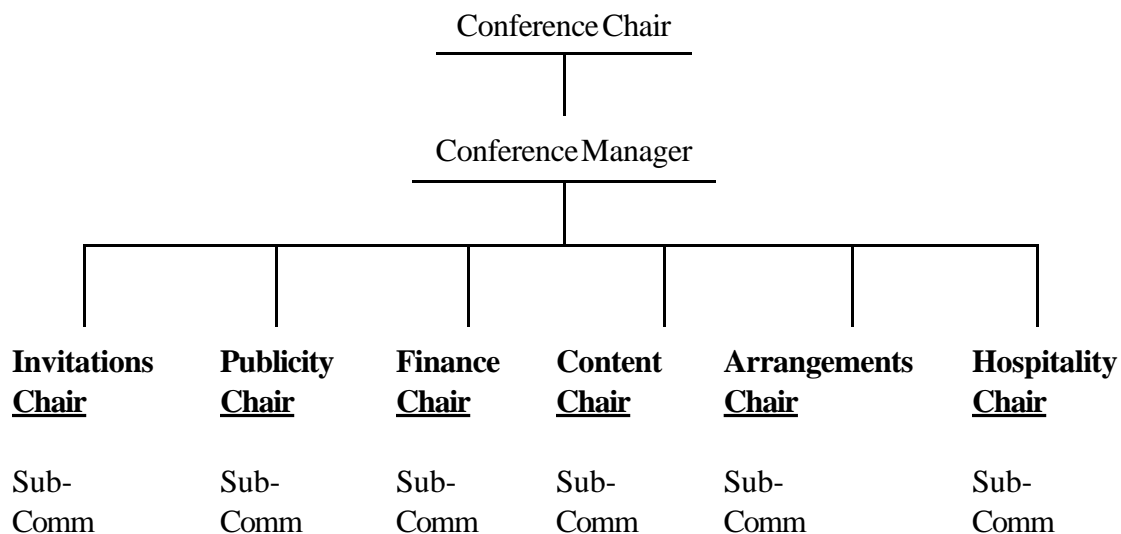
Select the appropriate conference management model and establish a list of tasks and time limits before meeting with an advisory committee or other staff. If a committee is left to make these decisions, tasks may remain unassigned; timelines may be scheduled around personal concerns rather than what is right for the program.

Determining Program Content

Early in the process of product planning, use some form of *needs assessment* to determine topics. Determine learning objectives for programs from various needs assessment techniques. For further information on needs assessment and curriculum, see “Needs Assessment” and “A Model for Curriculum Development” in this manual.

Figure 4

MANAGEMENT DESIGN MODEL D



Checklists and Timelines

The longer and more complex an instructional program is, the more lead time you will need, especially if it is not part of an ongoing *curriculum cycle*. Allow about six months of planning for every day of the conference. You can prepare a half-day program in three to six months. A one-day program may require at least six months of lead time. Two and three-day programs require nine to 12 months of lead time. Do not try to organize larger conferences with less than 12 months of preparation time (confirm the date and site 12 months in advance). Always allow more time than you think you will need, because without fail, you will need it! Deadlines have to be met whether you are ready or not!

A good strategy may be to divide the checklist in Attachment A by duties and then distribute it to all persons assigned to work on the program or conference.

Remember, larger conferences should have much more lead time than six months. Another example of a program planning timeline is given in Appendix 10.

Advisory Committees

After tasks and timelines are developed, seek input from an advisory group. Always work with an *advisory committee or panel*, even when the activity is part of an ongoing curriculum plan. (See the “Board Relations” chapter for more information on the dynamics of working with boards and committees.) An advisory committee can add perspective to a program, helping to make the program practical, timely, and applicable to those attending.

Advisory committees can range from three to nine members. Larger committees may be difficult to keep on task. Choose judges familiar with both your program topic and your potential audience. You may want to appoint a chair, if one is not already provided for. To be chosen as a chair is often an honor to the person asked, and can give course planners a candid ally in the design and management process. To start the advisory process, ask the chair to select a meeting date for a short first meeting. It should not be necessary to have more than two meetings, unless this group is also involved in follow-up evaluation. This is a point you want to stress to those you ask to serve on the committee.

The first meeting. Set your first meeting to last no more than two hours. Because the advisory panel may consist of people who have never worked together before, allow time for getting acquainted. A luncheon can provide an informal setting where it is easier for everyone to become acquainted.

Provide general information about why the topic was chosen, the need for the program, the overall goal for the program, and options for the dates and site. Explain what you hope to accomplish as a result of the program. Then let the chair take control of the meeting. By the end of the first meeting, the group should have determined: (a) the overall goal of the program; (b) the specific topic; (c) the length of the program; and (d) suggestions for additional topics, speakers, dates, and if possible a site. Before the meeting adjourns, request a specific date for the next meeting. To keep enthusiasm high, hold the next meeting within two to three weeks. Make assignments for the next meeting (such as checking recent case law, finding names of possible speakers, researching publications, or checking information provided by programs on the topic).

The second meeting. The second meeting should also be short and should begin with a review of the first meeting. This meeting should begin with a brainstorming session. *Be prepared for major shifts in goals and objectives.* This may occur because the members of the group have had a chance to think about the program between meetings and are likely to have many ideas. Brainstorming will strengthen content of the program and further refine the various perspectives of the committee.

During the session, use a flipchart to list goals, objectives, topics, and speakers. Have the group refine the lists. At least 30 minutes before concluding, the group should make the final decisions on goals, objectives and topics. Ask for alternative speakers' names for each session; compile as many names as possible. All decisions made during the second meeting do not have to be final, but make as many as you can at this time.

Invite the committee to attend the program as guests; encourage them to support the effort during the next few months. Do not overlook the possibility of using these individuals in the evaluation of the activity.

Program Agenda

When setting the *program agenda*, consider the objectives of the program, the dates, the time frame, and the interests and expertise of the participants. The objectives of the program should be very clear to all involved -- those on the advisory committee, those who plan and market the program, and those who attend. When setting dates, avoid dates that may prevent the judges from attending, such as court holidays, religious holidays, and state and national holidays. *Local traditions* should be understood and observed. Seek advice from your advisory committee for the best dates. Avoid dates that conflict with other legal education or judicial education programs or with meetings of judges' associations. List the program date in judicial and legal publications as soon as possible. Ask the advisory committee to help decide the length of the program. Judges and lawyers put a premium on time, so try to make your program as "compact" as possible. Again, keep in mind local traditions. Can your program begin at 8:30 a.m. or is it traditional to begin at 9:00 a.m.? Does lunch last for 1/2 hour or one hour? Do traffic or train schedules cause everyone to rush out before 5:00 p.m.? Always plan a morning and afternoon refreshment break, as well as stretch breaks. Adults have difficulty sitting more than one hour at a time, so try to keep your audience comfortable and alert.

Program Speakers

Speakers determine the success of your activity. A program is only as good as its speakers, so their selection and training are essential. Once the advisory committee suggests speakers, it is your responsibility to contact them. This process can be frustrating. You want the best speakers possible, but they may be in "high demand" and too busy to speak at your program. However, even the busiest speaker has difficulty refusing an invitation to participate in an exciting program with other noteworthy speakers. When inviting a speaker, be sure to mention your plans with zest!

Always make the speakers aware of your expectations. If they are going to be too busy to fulfill all of your requirements, you should find this out in the beginning so you can get a substitute. Always strive for a balance of minorities and women among your speakers. Also, try to use newer, less experienced judges and lawyers in some of your programs. They usually welcome the opportunity to present before their peers and often can add vitality and enthusiasm.

Your speakers are to teach adults; they should use techniques that facilitate adult learning, techniques that focus on the learner as a “participant” in the learning process rather than only as a “receiver.” Judges and lawyers often present sessions very much like they were taught in law school, with a straight lecture. However, surveys of judicial educators find the most popular programs use techniques that appeal to adults. These techniques include *small groups*, *role playing*, *simulations*, *video-taped segments*, and *Socratic dialogues*. Your speakers want to do well; they must be properly prepared. You must help them prepare for their presentation. For more information on this topic, see the chapter in this manual on “Faculty Development.”

Site Selection

Never underestimate the importance of site selection. If you are fortunate enough to have your own facility, then selecting a site will not be one of your program duties. Bar association headquarters, law schools and courtrooms are good sites for judicial education programs. If these sites are unavailable or inadequate, you may have to choose a hotel, and this requires negotiating with conference and convention centers or hotel sales directors.

Many programs or conferences are destroyed by what can be referred to as the “soggy potato chip theory.” When I first became a program planner, I met with a group of approximately 15 people to discuss a 500-person conference I was about to plan. They told me what a terrible conference they had had the previous year. They warned me never to book that hotel again. What was the problem? Soggy potato chips! Apparently the first day, lunch was to be at 12:00, but the session before was running late. The hotel staff put the food in the refrigerator (thus, soggy potato chips). While this may not appear significant in itself, the entire conference received the label of a failure based on a poor meal. Whether it is a lack of hot water for showers, poor meals, cold rooms, or expensive charges for phone calls, attendees at a conference remember these problems long after they have forgotten the stunning speakers.

How can a program planner be sure “disasters” do not occur? The only solution is to establish a solid, positive relationship with the hotel staff. For further tips on selecting a hotel, negotiating a contract, and forming a rapport with the hotel staff, refer to the chapter on “Conference Site Coordination.”

Financing and Budgeting

Financing for judicial education programs usually comes from state appropriations. Often the administrative office of the courts is short of funds, and you may have to plan programs on a shoestring. Plan budgets carefully and, if allowed, turn to outside sources for additional funds.

Examine previous program expenditures to get an idea of what costs can be anticipated. If you are starting a new program, the cost categories in the following list can help guide your planning.

- *Personnel and fringe benefits.* Insufficient staffing is the norm in most judicial education offices. With a half-time assistant, one program planner should be able to plan 10 to 15 programs a year. To plan a program, at least six months lead time is needed. This means working on three to four programs simultaneously. In addition to the conference planner and assistant, help is needed for marketing, registration, and printing. In a small office, the only solution may be to hire outside graphics designers, typesetters, printers, and a mailing service. When personnel costs are recoverable, in addition to figuring staff salaries, you need to add fringe benefits. Fringe benefits can range from 20 percent to 40 percent of salary.
- *Consultation fees and honoraria.* You may want a particular judge, lawyer, or other professional to help plan, conduct, or be part of the program. Be sure to check your state's canons of ethics about honoraria for judges. Know and observe local traditions or customary practices regarding compensation. If the canons allow, pay either expenses or a nominal fee to a judge or lawyer. Unless it is customary for your state, do not give judges honoraria if they speak less than two hours. Other professionals will usually expect some type of fee.
- *Travel.* Again, follow the custom of previous programs. If your speakers live in the same city as the program, expect minimal costs such as taxi or parking fees. If the speakers are driving in from another city, figure \$.15 to \$.25 per mile. If the program is farther away, figure airfare, ground transportation, hotel accommodations and meal expenses. Many not-for-profit organizations plan programs around other events, often the day before, to help cover the speaker's expenses. By planning programs with a Saturday night included, airfare is often one-half the cost usually charged. In addition, hotel rates are usually lower.
- *Office rental and equipment.* You may have to figure the cost for housing a program planner and staff. Equipment needed for a program planner and staff usually includes a personal computer, a typewriter, a telephone, a copy machine and a facsimile machine. The FAX is quickly becoming the "best friend" of program planners. Planners have deadlines to meet and presenters may be late with materials and program copy.

- *Postage.* Costs for postage for normal correspondence are rarely over \$100 unless you send a large amount of copied material to the speakers. The largest postage expense is for program promotion. For a brochure, figure bulk mail rates to be about one-third less expensive than first-class postage. This is a definite incentive for completing brochures ahead of time. (Warning: delivery for bulk mail can take from two to six weeks.) Mailing houses vary in their charges, but figure additional costs for sorting by zip code. Postage expenses also include mailing material to the program site and to those unable to attend. Expect some overnight delivery costs for late arriving materials.
- *Printing of promotional materials.* Printing costs depend upon the number of production staff required and the volume of materials. For instance, if you produce a brochure, figure costs for a designer, a typesetter, and an editor. Multiply each cost by the complexity of the brochure, the size and cost of the paper, and the number of colors printed. A professionally designed brochure can be very attractive. It pays to compare prices and have as much of the work done in-house as possible. If you have your own mailing list, you will not have to purchase one. You may want to send two mailings two weeks apart to be sure each potential participant receives the brochure.
- *Program materials costs.* Program materials should include only information not readily available to the attendees, plus a bibliography of the more easily obtainable materials. Additionally, materials that guide participants in following the speaker should be provided. You can prepare program materials in a variety of ways (e.g., three-ring binders, monographs, or perma-bound). Unless you have three-ring binders donated, the perma-bound is the least expensive method of producing materials. Perma-bound or spiral bound materials require a title page with some design or the title of the program in large letters. If you had a brochure for the program, a “blow-up” of the brochure cover can serve as an excellent title page.
- *Meeting room expenses.* Budget the cost of meeting room rental, audiovisual equipment, meals, and hospitality. If you are using 12 or more overnight rooms and have at least one meal function at the site, you may not have to pay meeting room costs. Check policies with the facility. If you do have to pay, meeting room costs can vary from \$200 to \$800 depending on the size and function of the room. Audiovisual equipment rental is usually an additional cost. The hotel sets a price or contracts with an outside vendor for some audiovisual equipment. Check rental prices and availability several months in advance. Meal costs will vary from site to site. Coffee breaks are less expensive if you serve just coffee and tea. Receptions or hospitalities also can vary greatly in price. Remember to figure in tax and gratuity. Other costs to consider are hospitality suite rental, flowers, music and special decorations. The simpler the preparation, the less expensive it will be.
- *Indirect or overhead costs.* You may need to add indirect or overhead costs to your program budget. Indirect costs encompass administration costs including salaries for the administrative

officer, accountants, and mailroom attendants; office rental if not figured separately; and any other costs necessary for the operation and management of the group. Indirect costs can vary from 5 percent to over 100 percent. If you are figuring costs for a grant, get an approved indirect rate.

Your budget is an estimate and expenses will often be higher than anticipated. It is better to estimate a higher budget than a lower one to prevent deficits. Areas to trim may include:

- *Consultation and honoraria.* Judges are familiar with budget constraints; you may not have to pay them to present. They appreciate the recognition of speaking to their peers. Reward them when you can; when you cannot, recognition may suffice. As a matter of principle, many state judicial education programs pay no honoraria, citing the involvement of lawyers and judges as fulfilling a public service or professional obligation on the part of the presenters toward the improvement of the law, the legal system, and the administration of justice.
- *Travel.* Try to use local judges as speakers. You may want to have “visiting” judges teach, but it is not always cost effective or necessary.
- *Postage.* Stick to your timeline and avoid sending promotional materials through first class mail.
- *Photocopying.* Remember, participants can find most cited materials in local law libraries, eliminating needless copying of program materials.
- *Printing.* You do not need an expensive brochure for each program. Instead, send a letter or use a *desk-top* prepared brochure. Make sure a designer helps you, since a poorly prepared brochure is worse than none at all.
- *Meeting room space and meals.* Meal prices can vary substantially. Find a hotel you can work with; there is a reward for providing repeat business. Avoid *add-ons*, such as muffins for the 9 a.m. session or expensive receptions. Pay attention to your hotel negotiations. The hotel bill alone can determine if you have a deficit or stay within budget. Why not use space in the courthouse, a law school, a bar association, or a continuing education facility instead of a hotel?

Outside Funding

What should you do if you have negotiated hotel rates and figured your budget carefully, but still come up short? Outside funding for judicial education programs is a possibility. Before you actively solicit outside funding, check your state's judicial canons to avoid problems. You might find many groups that are happy to provide money for your functions, but they may have a vested interest in a particular case. **Avoid impropriety at all costs.** Once you have determined there is not a conflict of interest, call a group who might wish to contribute to your program. Such groups might include bar foundations, judges' associations, bar associations, a law school, an alumni association, a legal publisher, or a local citizens' group interested in court reform. Ask them to underwrite all or parts of your program. They may wish to sponsor a luncheon, print the materials, provide funds for a brochure, or sponsor an out-of-town speaker or a reception.

Marketing a Program

One of the more difficult, but necessary, assignments of a programmer is to market programs. Unless every judge in your state is required to attend every one of your programs, you will have to market. Do not begin without a marketing plan.

A marketing plan should consider the various aspects of marketing. The National Association of State Judicial Educators and the Association of Continuing Legal Education Administrators (ACLEA) conduct marketing sessions at their annual conferences and distribute materials on marketing. Francis E. (Skip) Andrew of Co-Creations, Inc., has prepared a package of marketing information for ACLEA members. He maintains that educators should:

- Develop an understanding of the fundamentals of marketing; read the literature.
- Analyze the situation -- know your market, what your office policies and preferences are and what your competition does.
- Work with an advisory committee and/or a consultant.
- Examine all opportunities and problems.
- Do a needs assessment through committee; telephone or personal interviews; questionnaires; or surveys.

- Develop a data base and management plan of the data base.
- Use the trial and error approach -- write different types of copy and use various graphics and designs.
- Do some research and testing of the various approaches.
- Develop software for mailings and/or use a mailing house; become familiar with the U.S. Postal Service regulations.
- Examine catalogs, bulk sales, displays, telemarketing, advertising, and press releases.
- Develop and implement your plan.
- Evaluate your plan and make changes on a regular basis (Andrew, 1987).

In addition to examining the marketing literature, it is useful to look at the research on participation in continuing professional education. Judges are adult learners. They will attend programs because they want the information you are offering. In 1980, Houle developed a typology for organizing continuing education activities in three modes of learning which he labeled *inquiry*, *instruction*, and *performance*. Since then, Cervero and other researchers tested the adequacy of Houle's typology with a variety of professional groups and found them to be consistent with professionals' modes of learning. In 1982, Catlin surveyed reasons judges gave for attending programs and identified five general areas: (a) professional development and improvement, (b) professional service, (c) collegial learning and interaction, (d) professional commitment and reflection, and (e) personal benefits and job security. In 1990, Ratcliff surveyed lawyers to find the deterrents to participation in continuing legal education programs. The lawyers responded that poor quality programs, irrelevant programs, programs offered at inopportune times, and other reasons related to quality and topic deterred their participation. The clear message from all of these studies is: judges will come to your programs if they are high in quality, interesting, valuable, and will not take them off the bench for too many days in a year. Reputation and "word of mouth" alone will make or break your programs. Pay attention to the quality of speakers and the program itself and marketing will be easy.

Faculty Training

Chapter 5 of this manual is dedicated to faculty training. Surveys such as the above credit the quality of the program as the determining factor in attendance. Judges attending programs want information, but they also want to exchange ideas and share their experiences. Judges want programs to be interesting and want to feel a part of the learning process. What judicial educators have to do is to ask the faculty to become "adult educators," which means using teaching techniques that are effective with adults.

A particular example comes to mind: Illinois had changes in the murder statute several years ago. It was imperative that all criminal lawyers and judges know about the changes. Rather than present the statutes one by one and comment on the changes, one program gave a 30-minute review of the changes, followed by a “mock” murder trial that incorporated all the changes. The murder trial was stopped throughout the program to allow commentary from the judge and attorneys and to allow questions from the audience. A rather routine program was thus presented in an exciting way and still provided the information needed within a three-hour time frame.

Program Materials

Program materials can sometimes be more valuable to a judge than the actual program because these materials usually include citations, original writings, and articles taken from law school, bar and judicial journals. *Benchbooks* are another example of program materials. In the last several years, many judicial educators have also produced video and audio tapes.

Program materials can be very costly to produce. You must consider the size, design, layout, binding, and packaging. Publishers may be willing to donate binders or folders for program materials, thus saving money. Packaging all of your program materials in binders or covers that are alike may also save money.

Several states produce bench books and program materials in hard-bound covers displaying the logo of the administrative office or judicial college. This helps the judge to find materials easily and allows instant recognition for the provider.

Since most speakers provide program materials, it is a good idea to give them some guidance. Suggest a limit on pages, set a standard of quality for copied material, and list the date the material is due. Remind everyone of the guidelines closer to the due date. This will not guarantee success but will make your job easier.

Make sure materials are turned in on time. Some programmers have more trouble with this aspect of programming than any other. While there is no magical formula to ensure promptness, you can do several things. First, set high standards for your program materials. Make sure they are attractive, helpful and accurate. A judge cannot afford to have inaccurate information and appreciates materials that are easy-to-read and do not fall apart when the pages are turned. If your program has a reputation for providing first-rate materials, then speakers are more likely to meet deadlines and provide quality materials. With high standards, speakers will be proud to have their names on the materials. Develop a reputation for setting a reasonable date and stick to it. Do not try to “play games” and tell everyone to have materials ready two weeks before you need them. They may find out and will call to ask for the “real” due date.

Second, be firm about your due date. With the invention of the FAX machine and overnight mail, there should be few excuses for missing a deadline. It embarrasses a speaker if he or she is the only one without materials or if his or her materials are handed out separately from the bound copy.

Producing program materials in other formats such as video and audio tapes can be successful. The California Center for Judicial Education and Research and the Continuing Education Section of the Connecticut Judicial Department have developed extensive video and audio tapes for judges. You can contact both groups for further information on topics, costs, and production. Time and budgetary constraints often make the use of video and audio tapes more appealing to judges than attendance at a program.

Potential Problems

Because programming involves thousands of details, “Murphy’s Law” usually takes effect; the unexpected almost always happens. Anticipate problems and handle them without panicking. The saying “the best offense is a good defense” is especially true in programming. Several days before the program, hold a staff meeting to review all details and discuss potential problems. Pay attention to all details, but you must have a sense of humor. No one gets through a major conference without some problems. What follows are summaries from Ratcliff’s (1985) chapter “Problems and Setbacks, and Strategies for Avoiding Them.”

Problem #1: Shortage of Sufficient Lead Time

If you must plan a program with little lead time, your best defense is to organize thoroughly. Make a comprehensive checklist with timelines to avoid panic and to prevent overlooking any task. Delegate whatever assignments you can. Consider hiring a temporary worker to handle some work. Hold weekly staff meetings to review each person’s tasks and status. Do not wait for problems. Do the necessary checking to see that everything is being completed on schedule.

Try to streamline the time needed for program publicity. If you are having difficulty confirming speakers, send a letter to all judges informing them of the date, topic and location, and that more details will follow. This *Save the Date* approach may save your attendance. Produce a relatively simple brochure that provides all the necessary information. Even though it is not good practice to have a “To Be Announced” in place of a speaker’s name, if it means getting your brochure out one week earlier, do it. Whatever the task, streamline.

Problem #2: Registration and Budget Problems

Even though registration and budget problems are not synonymous, they are often related. The larger the registration, the fewer budgetary concerns you will have. A good way to guarantee registration is to publicize early. The earlier the judges know about your program, the better your chances for a good registration. If it is several weeks before your program and registration is low, personally contact those judges who normally attend this type of program and remind them to register. If the numbers are too low to cover expenses, you will need to decide whether it would be costlier to cancel or to continue with the program. Keep in mind that people often register at the last minute, so do not be too quick to cancel a program.

Budgetary problems are common. After coordinating programs for several years, you will develop a working knowledge of the costs of food, meeting rooms, printing, marketing, and personnel. You should always estimate “high.” You must pursue bids and firm contracts. Watch your meal counts and avoid add-ons the night before. Over a year, your program budgets should balance out with the less expensive programs counterbalancing those that are more expensive.

Problem #3: Problems With the Hotel

You can avoid most problems with hotels by having a good contract with as many details as possible written into it. Establish a good rapport with hotel staff; when problems arise, you will need their help. Several problems that may arise are:

- *The hotel is sold, goes out of business or goes through major renovations that will not be completed until after your meeting.* If a hotel is sold or goes out of business, there still should be people available to help you get another hotel. Ask the hotel for help, but do not depend on them entirely. Other hotels will probably be sympathetic and will want your business. Consider dividing your group between two hotels. Read your contract carefully to understand what your rights are and, if necessary, have an attorney read it.
- *The hotel food is a problem.* Immediately discuss the matter with the caterer. If the food is late, see the caterer before the next coffee break or meal. Instead of complaining, ask what the cause of the problem was and what can be done to prevent further difficulties. Offer to work with the caterer rather than becoming angry. If the food is of poor quality, talk with the caterer to review the menu before the next meal. If you receive poor service, document everything and report it to the sales director in a letter after the program concludes. You should be compensated for catering problems. Ask hotel staff to direct traffic for buffet tables and take tickets for meals to ensure an accurate count. Try to keep meal counts and refreshment counts as accurate as possible to be sure you are not overcharged.

- *Hospitality room problems.* If your program function has a hospitality room, know what the hotel policy is in advance. If your budget is tight and you try to provide a hospitality room in your suite, you may be “raided” and charged a *corkage fee* by the hotel for liquor you purchased and brought in. Again, if you have formed a good rapport with your sales director, private rooms may often be overlooked. Keep the sales director informed of your plans and work with the caterer.
- *Unexpected expenses.* To avoid unexpected costs, anticipate each expense before you sign a contract. Possible unexpected costs include room phone calls (sometimes \$1.00 per local call); parking fees for guests (one hotel in California charged \$17.50 for three hours of parking); *union fees*; higher than anticipated gratuity and sales taxes or sales taxes that include the gratuity; unanticipated meeting room charges; audiovisual expenses higher than agreed upon; room rates that are not what you agreed to; charges for the weight room and health club; TV charges in addition to a movie channel; unanticipated deposits; and transportation costs to and from the hotel that were higher than those discussed during the negotiations. Costs discussed during negotiations can increase after six months or one year unless stated in the contract. Contracts usually do not list food prices and these may be increased before your conference. Ask during negotiations if an increase is anticipated, then budget for it. Make sure you have a policy established for reservations. Do not surprise your participants with the hotel’s demand for a cash deposit for room reservations, or its refusal to accept certain credit cards. The more you know about unanticipated costs, the better prepared you will be to deal with the problems.

Evaluation

You should evaluate all programs. You need to know how well-received the program was and how to improve it if you plan to offer it again. Registrants are often eager to express their thoughts about a particular program. They are either very pleased or very disappointed. Most of those who are satisfied may not feel the need to respond to an evaluation. Funding sources may require a written evaluation of the program. Presenters usually want feedback on how the audience viewed their presentation.

Chapter 8 in this manual describes program evaluation. Refer to it for a thorough discussion. Regardless of the type of evaluation you use, always have your own measure of how your program is going.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined details that must be taken care of in order to produce exemplary judicial education programs. Programming requires an eye for detail and the ability to adapt when problems arise. It is a rare program that does not have some problem for a programmer to deal with. An effective judicial educator will take into account the unexpected, will make the changes needed, and in spite of those changes, will produce a successful program. Regardless of the size or type of program, when it is done well, there is a sense of accomplishment and pride that is hard to beat.

DEFINITIONS

Add-Ons: non-essential extras which increase the cost of the program.

Advisory Committee or Panel: a group of judges, court administrators, law professors or others who provide advice on programming.

Bench Books: books compiled by judges for judges that can be carried to the bench as a handy reference for statutes, procedures and other substantive information.

Corkage Fee: the fee the hotel charges for bringing in liquor instead of buying it from the hotel. Fees are charged per cork or bottle.

Curriculum Cycle: a scheduled set of programs to be presented over a stated time (e.g., annual conferences).

Desk-Top: material that is prepared by personal computer software that appears to be professionally designed. The software provides the capability of layout and design.

Inquiry: in Houle's typology -- the process of creating some new synthesis, idea, technique, policy, or strategy of action.

Instruction: in Houle's typology -- the process of disseminating established skills, knowledge, or sensitiveness.

Local Traditions: customs and procedures specific to a given area which must be taken into consideration when planning a program.

Needs Assessment: the process of determining what those who are to attend a program request, need, or expect.

Performance: in Houle's typology -- the process of internalizing an idea or using a practice habitually, so that it becomes a fundamental part of the way in which a learner thinks about and undertakes his or her work.

Program Agenda: a list of activities to be done during the program.

Role Playing: a problem situation is briefly acted out followed by a discussion of the problem presented.

Save the Date: informing judges of the program and date as soon as possible so they can mark it on their calendars.

Simulations: a scenario is re-enacted, creating a very “life-like” situation, for the purpose of illustration leading to discussion.

Small Groups: a technique used in which the audience is divided into small groups for the purpose of discussion of assigned topics.

Socratic Dialogues: dialogues often found in law school in which the professor asks a question of the students and uses their responses to probe their knowledge and perception of a topic as contrasted with a straight lecture that provides similar information.

Union Fees: fees charged by the union for setting up displays, transporting boxes, connecting electrical appliances, and other activities. Most unions are very restrictive of what a guest can and cannot do without a union worker’s service and subsequent charge.

Video-Taped Segments: segments of real life scenarios or re-created scenarios are taped and shown to an audience for the purpose of discussion.

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