



Programs

Organizing Rallies or Targeted Events (Revision date 1-13-2013)

We live in a time of paradox, contradiction, opportunity, and above all, change. To the hopeful, change is encouraging because they feel things may get better. We believe that one person can make a difference and influence what goes on around them. Imagine what change the masses can bring.

Whether you're in charge of a targeted event, such as a Health Care Forum or a large rally at the steps of your Capitol, there are procedures that you will need to follow.

Unfortunately, it takes money to put on any of these events. The size of the event will determine the size of the budget you will need. You need to take into account the cost of time and money prior to making the commitment to hold the event.

The larger the rally, the more lead time you will need to make it successful. You never want to go solo on these things. You need a committee to help share the responsibility. However, be certain that your committee members are reliable, capable and in agreement with the goals of your event.

The first thing that you want to determine is your topic. What are you rallying for? Is it Cap-And-Trade? Health Care? Constitutional issues? Whatever it is, find your theme and stick to it. If you focus on "everything" you will accomplish nothing.

Smaller events that can be held in an indoor facility generally do not require some of the same things that your larger rallies do, such as permits.

Small and/or Targeted Events

Though smaller or targeted events do not require the same functionality as a large rally, the principles set forth for the rallies applies equally, just on a smaller scale. You still need to consider the following:

- What is your theme?
- Set a date, time and secure your location.
- If it is outdoors, you will need to get a permit.
- If it is in a hotel conference room or other building, you usually don't need a permit.
- Arrange for your speakers.
- How are you going to fund your event?
- How will you market your event?
 - Newspaper Ad
 - Radio spots
 - Web-site



- E-mail blasts
- Mailings
- Volunteers for various tasks such as registration, setting up, tear down, etc.
- Printed materials to hand out such as brochures, information, banners, badges, programs, etc.
- Who are your speakers going to be?
- What will be your agenda and timeframe?
- Will you have music?

Large Rallies and Events

Larger rallies that are regional or even state-wide require much more planning and time to ensure maximum response and effectiveness.

The first things you need will be your location (with permits in hand), the date and purpose for your rally. You also need a “go to” person (or board) that ultimately has the final say. From that point, you will need to do a time line indicating what needs to be done by what time prior to the event.

Things to consider when holding a large rally or event:

- Permits – You can’t put on any outdoor rally without permits.
- Speakers – They need to be secured up front so you can properly promote them. You may have to arrange for their transportation and hotel accommodations. Be sure that cost is considered in your budget.
- Media coverage – If you want someone from the media to attend, such as Fox News Network, you must contact them early to give them proper time to schedule the appropriate person to cover your event. Persistence is the key to getting media coverage. One press release will never get the results that you want. It requires multiple contacts with the media outlets.
- Design a proper Press Release to send to all radio, television and newspaper outlets in the area and surrounding areas of your event.
 - Keep it to one page and fax it.
 - Try to find a specific contact person.
 - Include all your pertinent information.
 - Make it “news worthy”.
 - Never start your ad or press release with your name. Who cares?
 - Always create a headline that will grab their attention.



Other media coverage would involve radio ads, and newspaper. Some will be free; others will require funds to pay for them.

- You can usually get interviews on radio stations that are willing to promote your event and that is powerful.
- You can usually get mentioned in the Community section of your newspaper where they advertise activities. Those ads are free

Sponsors – How will you pay for this? If you are depending on sponsors, you need to be contacting them immediately and get the dollar amount that they are willing to contribute. This will allow you to set – and stick to - your budget.

A word of caution. Be careful who you take donations from. If they represent a political party or an organization that is a PAC you may want to re-think accepting their donation for several reasons.

- You want to remain non-partisan. In order to do that, you can't accept donations from any party or you will be labeled and unable to shake that label.
- Some organizations may have strings attached to them that would undermine your rally. If their agenda isn't in alignment with yours, then you may lose control of your own event.
- Other kinds of sponsors are those who will allow you to use their logo in your advertising or on the stage where your speakers will be. Be sure that you have written permission to use any logo.
- Some businesses may donate their services instead of cash. That's great but be sure you know exactly what it is and if it truly meets a need.
 - Printers may donate their services for banners or hand out material.
 - Audio visual people may donate large screen TV apparatus, microphones, etc.
 - Photographers may be willing to take pictures for you to log on U Tube.
 - Party Supply companies will often times be willing to donate tables and chairs.

These are just a few ideas. The list is limitless.

Logo - If your event needs its own logo, you will want a graphic designer to do that for you. You may have a talented artist within your own group.

Music – Will you have live music or taped? Whatever you choose, be sure that it is in alignment with your theme.

Moderator - Try to get a well- known name to be your moderator. A local radio talk show host, a national figure known to your audience, or even a local celebrity. Try to avoid using politicians. Most conservatives feel that they are talked down to by politicians enough already.



Schedule - What's the time frame that everyone is working with? A minute by minute schedule should be done a week prior to the actual rally. This allows time to fine tune it or make adjustments that are always needed.

Volunteers – You will need someone to head up the volunteers at least two months ahead of time. Also, be prepared to provide some sort of training the morning of your event. *Understand that 20% who sign up to volunteer will “no show” on you.*

Provide them with an understanding of what will be required of the in terms of:

- Time they need to arrive and when they can leave.
- What skills are required?
- Are they physically able to do what they have volunteered to do?
- Is there a special item you want them to wear?
- How will you care for their physical needs?
 - Chairs
 - Shade
 - Water
 - Food
 - Supplies to do their assigned task

Categories for Volunteers:

- Set up and Tear Down
- Crowd Observation
- Merchandise
- Donations
- Registration
- Petitions

Vendors - Are you going to allow other vendors to distribute their goods at your event?

- This is a slippery sloop – I make very few friends in these situations but I have had to stick to our guns on this. After all, when it comes to paying the bills for these events, the buck stops with our group.
 - You need your donations so that you can offset the cost of your event



- Other vendors there will take revenue away from you.
- Other vendors may not reflect your core values.
- Selling space to other groups:
 - Another danger if you're not very careful.
 - If you have another group bring in information that is not what you focus on, you will now be identified with that issue.
 - Even if you “personally” agree with another group but your group does not focus on that issue, you now have diluted your mission and opened the door for other groups to come in on your effort.
- Our policy is that we only have our merchandise for donations.
 - Other Tea Party groups who we have vetted are allowed to pass out information about their group meetings and we do not charge for that.
 - However, no outside group that is not strictly in alignment with our three core values is permitted to distribute their information.
- If we have any vendors there, they provide a service such as food or beverages.
- Your reputation for being fiscal responsibility is at stake as well as your willingness to stand up for YOUR values.
 - Other good groups have come to our rallies and tried to “break in” declaring the right of “free speech”. They are reminded that they are on property where we hold the permit to use for a period of time, therefore, their free speech is curtailed as long as they are trying to operate within the bounds we have secured with our permit.
 - We encourage them to hold their own event to get their message out.

Porta-Pottys – You will need to check with the city to determine how many you will need. It's usually a proportion of the estimated crowd. Usually 1 for every 50 expected attendees.

Getting the word out – E-mail blasts to other groups to help you increase your effort is essential. Rally the troops. Get each group to contact their groups and encourage them to arrange for busses to caravan to your rally.

- Solicit help from other group leaders.
- This is also connected to the “media” section and marketing your event.

Printing – Be sure that your registration forms, petitions and any other printed material is ready to go ahead of time and ready for the day of your event. Always have voter registrations available.



Audio Visual – The set-up of the stage for your speakers, music and TV viewing is critical. AV companies that do things like this often need to be hired to ensure quality for your crowd and your participants.

Decorations – You can use the backdrop of the stage to promote your sponsors' logos as part of the décor. You can also use props that would communicate patriotism or whatever your theme is.

Security – Work closely with the Highway Patrol and/or Sheriff's department regarding adequate security. Handling this in advance will off-set problems during the actual event.

- When using "Citizen Security" be sure that they understand that they are just to be the eyes and ears for the law enforcement that is there.
- Have a system, such as a white handkerchief in their pocket that they pull out and wave to alert law enforcement if there is an "infiltrator" and let them deal with the problem.

Anytime you put on an event, there will be glitches. Don't be shocked or taken off guard. Rather, have a "Plan B" ready to go. It takes a lot of unspectacular preparation to produce spectacular results.

Few of us, during our lifetime, come anywhere near exhausting the resources within us. Never shortchange your potential to rise to any occasion and make lemonade out of lemons.

To Do List for a Tea Party Rally Event

- Pick up your permits early to assure you have the location that you want.
- Select your events starting and ending times. Plan on 2 - 3 hours except on special events that may be over several days of celebration and rallying.
- Put your group on Facebook and the national web-site.
- Create your budget and stick to it.
- Location:
 - Get your location permits NOW because some cities have lengthy permit processes so start the process immediately. You also don't want to compete with another group.
 - Ask if insurance is required.
 - Talk to local law enforcement. You may be required to provide civilian support to work closely with the officers, especially if you expect a very large crowd.
 - Consider available parking. You may want to consider bussing people in to alleviate parking problems, especially for those who live a distance away. This needs to be lined up at least a month prior. You can charge a fee for each person to offset the cost of the bus.
 - Check for nearby bathroom facilities. For larger groups, you will be required to rent Porta-pottys.



- Check for nearby electricity availability. You may find a need to have a generator.
- Be sure that you find out if you can bring or build a stage.
- What are your alternative locations or plans in case of rain?
- Determine if there is an internet connection for streaming live feeds of the event.
- **Speakers:**
 - Consider 5 - 8 speakers - for short times rather than long speeches. More if each one is not talking for a long period of time.
 - Obtain quality speakers that will engage, motivate, electrify and excite the crowd. Be sure that they stay on topic and within the framework of the reason for the rally. Do not allow political speakers campaign for themselves. They can campaign for *legislation* that is in alignment with your core values. Limit that type of speaker and be sure it is one that carries conservative values.
 - Speakers should be able to elicit responses from the crowd.
 - They need to be kept to a 10 minute maximum.
 - With large outdoor rallies, the shorter the better.
 - Leave them wanting more, not waiting for the end.
 - Have a person in “the pit” with a sign how many minutes they have left to speak and a STOP sign when their time is up.
- **Special Booths** - From a special booth that is set up called “Being Heard” you can bring people up from the crowd that are passionate and well-spoken and share what their thoughts or concerns are. This brings it down to a reality for the crowd.
- **Music:**
 - Find a band that can and will play patriotic music.
 - Break up the speakers with music that will also involve the crowd. TPP love to sing patriotic music.
 - Find a powerful singer that can sing the National Anthem.
 - Enlist other singers to lead with the patriotic theme.
 - Music should be upbeat and fun as well involving the crowd.
- **Other Activities:**
 - Pre-select a child or group of children to lead in the Pledge of Allegiance.



- Have volunteers that collect names and contact information from everyone who attends so that you can add them to your e-mail list.
- Consider having a live audio or video feed of your event. Be sure that you can have editorial privilege before publications.
- You might want to consider gathering items for local charities such as for fallen soldiers or wounded
- Have petitions veterans.
- available for people to sign as well as voter registration forms. You may even want to have a booth for voter registration.
- You may have a booth set up that would give instructions on how to write a letter or call a legislator.
- Have your local Tea Party literature available with instructions on how to join your group.
- Have food and water/beverage vendors for the crowd.
- Provide Tea Party merchandise that is obtained for a donation. This is a great way to help offset the cost of the event.
- Have a sign making party prior to the event.
- Have a professional photographer and/or video professional to create a DVD of the event that you can offer with a donation from your web-site after the event.

Marketing Your Event:

- Ask a local conservative talk show to interview you at least one time prior to your event. Shoot for several interviews.
- Organize neighborhood canvass groups to put out fliers several weeks prior and the week of your event.
- Build a web-site and draw everything you do to that web-site where they can get detailed information.
- Cross promote your event with other groups and have them send it out on their e-mail list so that it becomes viral.
- Go to local newspapers and write on their blog about your event.
- Hold signs on sidewalks to advertise your event.
- Write a press release about the event one month out and send reminders 10 days out, 7 days out, 3 days out and the day before the rally.
- Write a newspaper op-ed article about your event.



- Add the event to your local Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Sir Optimist, Convention Center and Tourist Bureaus calendars.
- Add to your cities on-line event calendar.
- Add to your cities public announcement shows.
- Add to your TV stations public event calendars.
- Newspaper ads are less expensive to run in local newspapers and will be more likely read. Some local newspapers have free event schedules that they will print for you.
- Radio can be a bit more costly but if you have a marketing budget; it is a great way to get the word out - especially on your conservative talk shows.
- Craig's list has free postings under Community, Events or Politics. Keep your listing there for several weeks.
- Create a Facebook page and add it to your rally to the "event" section. You can promote and invite on that page.

Fundraising:

- Collect donations at your regular group meetings.
- Find corporate event sponsors (non-political) and be sure that whatever donations you receive have no strings attached so that they can't usurp your leadership and purpose for your event.
- Create a PayPal account on your web-site so you can accept credit card donations. Add a donate button on your site to accomplish this.
- For those who prefer to mail a check, be sure to provide an address where donations can be received by mail.
- Ask some people to donate their services and/or products that will be used for your rally.

Volunteers

- You will need a host of volunteers to help with the coordination process. Some of those will include:
 - Busses
 - Civilian Security
 - Merchandise Booth
 - Registration
 - Information Booth



- Back Stage
- Petitioners
- Set Up Team T
- Tear Down Team

Find volunteers from your data base, your regional base from other groups and your state base. You can use some of your marketing strategies as well when you are ready to recruit people.

When putting out the invitation, remember, few of us are motivated by guilt. Most of us are motivated to participate in something big, positive and impactful. People want to be part of a “winning” team, not a desperate one. This is an *opportunity* not a job.

You will need one person to oversee them all and one for each group that you need.

- Provide volunteers with a free t-shirt and lots of praise.
- Communicate regularly with them and keep them all in the loop

Be sure that the volunteers have adequate guidance and support. Do not leave any loose ends with them.

- By being thorough, you will have a regular team for events.
- If you are hap-hazard, they will not want to help again.

Post Event:

- Upload your videos and photos on your online albums, your web-site, Facebook and You Tube.
- Send out a mass e-mail reporting on the highlights of your event.
- Send thank you notes to all of your volunteers. The more personal, handwritten notes the better.
 - Encourage your team leaders to do the same so everyone knows that their efforts are appreciated.
- Enter all the e-mail information that was received and keep personal contact with them those who indicated that they wanted to get involved.
 - Don't let grass grow under your feet here. The sooner they hear back from you the better.
- Notify them when and where your meetings are and invite them to come.
- Send thank you notes to all of your sponsors and vendors.
 - Remember who they are and contact them regularly.

Your attention to detail when putting on a large event is imperative for your credibility as a leader who is known for their professionalism and integrity. Cutting corners is not an option for optimum success.