



CORPORATE  
BLAZING  
EVENTS

## The Corporate Event Roadmap

“Your Blueprint to a Fun, Successful and Stress-Free  
Event!” *By Yola Sanders*

# Intro

If you have the responsibility of organising a corporate event or a team-building trip for your department or company, then this guide is for you!

Your event can be a smoothly arranged, roaring success, exceeding all expectations or a not-quite so-successful event and altogether pretty stressful experience for the organiser! It all depends on how well prepared you are and how you go about bringing it together.

As the organiser you have to deal with finding the ideal destination, the right facilities and the perfect activities according to your objective and aims, and within your budget. This can get extremely tricky when you're dealing with a variety of differing opinions and preferences from a large group of employees and perhaps several decision-makers.

And when you have time constraints on top of that, a tight budget and high expectations, the whole experience can become a rather difficult one!

But not to worry, in this guide you have a step-by-step blueprint to bringing an entire corporate event or team-building weekend together from scratch.

You'll find a run-through of the most common problems event organisers encounter and tips on how to avoid them. We've also listed the most popular and

time-tested teambuilding activities, with advice on squeezing the most value possible out of a tight budget. Plus advice on travel arrangements and transportation.

All of this is based on the experience and feedback from organising hundreds of events. And listening carefully to the goals, concerns, problems and solutions encountered by all the individual organisers in those companies – those in Your shoes.

We hope it makes your job easy and enjoyable, and your whole event a resounding success!

All the best,

Yola Sanders

Managing Director

**Corporate Blazing Events**

[www.corporateblazingevents.com](http://www.corporateblazingevents.com)



"I wasted plenty of time in contact with other more well-known corporate events companies, but none of them came even close to providing the sort of perfectly customized package that Blazing Events gave us.

The atmosphere all this created resulted in a level of teambuilding well above what we'd hoped for. Yola, you are an angel in human form!"

**Edward Buggins, AVL Powertrain Ltd**

# First – A Note On Timing

## When should you start planning an event?

The earlier the better. It takes time to organize events to a high standard, so start planning your event, establish your goals and requirements, and contact event organisers at least a few months before the date. Prices often increase and hotels become full leaving fewer options, so if you have a large group begin the process 4 to 6 months before the event. It will be far more relaxing and ultimately result in a better event than a last minute rush!



## SECTION ONE

# 5 Steps To The Perfect Event

### Step 1: Your Objectives

Before you begin you'll need to think of your objective. Is your event a strictly team-building and motivational one? If so, you'll want to focus on a destination and activities that bring people together. Activities that bring out coordination, cooperation and team-work, with a good deal of friendly competition. A real morale-boosting event.



Looking for teambuilding activities?

Are you arranging a more business orientated event, with conferences or several meetings on the agenda? In which case your focus will be on good meeting rooms and a venue that allows concentration, but perhaps in a relaxed setting. You may also be looking for some lighter, fun activities in the afternoons or evenings to break up the work atmosphere. But not late-nights out. Or your event might be a Thank You to the staff for good performance. Where you will just want

people to have a great fun and a memorable time. Or are you working with a combination of these objectives? Make sure you are clear about what you are aiming for.

## Step 2: Your Requirements

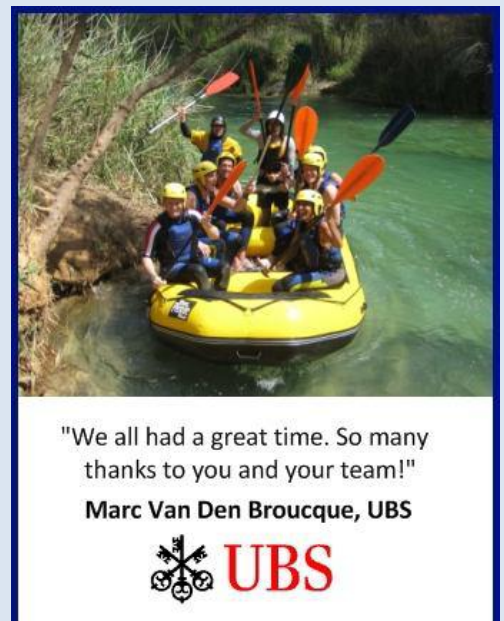
When you are sure of your objectives, the next step is to establish exactly what your basic requirements are. Make a list of these requirements and a separate list of additional interests and desires.

List all the resources and requirements you're going to need. If you are not sure what you would like to do or if you are flexible, just write down the requirements you definitely need, and leave the rest up to the event organising company in step four to come back with a few different possible options.

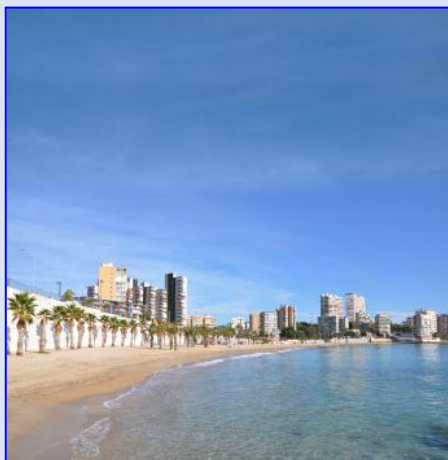


How many people do you have? What age group are they? Are they mainly men or women or an even mix? This helps when planning the activities. How many rooms do you need? How many nights' accommodation and how many meals will you be needing? And does anyone in your group have any special dietary requirements?

**Accommodation location.** What is your priority – a hotel in the centre of a city or someplace more relaxing a bit further out? And how about your dates. Do you have specific dates in mind, or are you quite flexible? Climate and location – is the weather important to you? Or are you planning on spending most of your time in meetings, conferences or congresses? Do you have a preferred location? How many meetings do you need? How long are they and how many attendees? Do you need a laptop, projector or internet access? And how many days and nights will you be there and how many activities will you want to do? Night time and day time activities? And most importantly, what is your budget for the entire event?



### **Step 3: Choose the destination – home or abroad?**



When considering whether to go abroad, keep in mind that often with events abroad the whole package including flights works out cheaper than having it in the UK, because



other countries are cheaper than Britain. For example if booked in advance, a 2-hour flight from the UK to Spain can cost as little as £20 or £30, compared to a 3-hour train journey from London to Manchester that can cost

£90 on weekdays! Add on that the higher cost of hotels, food, drinks, conference rooms & facilities and activities; you can actually make considerable savings by going abroad. And of course, events abroad make a much more memorable event.

If you're still undecided, in the next step approach event companies and options for both home and abroad so you can make a good judgement of which would work out better value for money. If you decide to go abroad, you'll see tips on buying tickets in section 2 and the best activities in section 3.

### **Step 4: Your Events Company**

We're assuming you'll be using an events company. There are a few reasons why you should. The first is that any established events company in a town or area will have close links with all the local hotels, restaurants and activity businesses.



And they will usually have established special discount rates that you cannot compete with by going directly to those businesses yourself. So it actually works out cheaper to use an events company. And you would be surprised by how much time and money can be wasted on unexpected issues once you arrive in your destination unless it has been organized by a professional events organiser.

Secondly, if your event is anything more than one or two activities and requires accommodation and transport then it can become tricky to organise yourself. A professional will make the whole thing run smoothly.

Thirdly, if your event is abroad you will need the language assistance, guides, the local knowledge, and 24-hour emergency contact numbers that any good events company provides.

Here is how best to approach these companies and how to choose the best one for you:

Don't contact too many event organisers, as it can become overwhelming. We recommend you contact 3 at the most.



Contact the events organisers with your budget and requirements, and ask what they can offer. Unless you have very specific needs ask for 3 options – so they can put together 3 packages each including your essential requirements and offering different entertainment and activities for you to consider. The reason you should ask for only 3 options is because if you have a large group, offering them too many options can just become messy and difficult. With so many



different opinions you will be debating what's best to do all the way to the event.

It's best to just offer people the best 3 options to choose from. And this is particularly true if there are a lot of decision makers involved in the event.

## **Step 5: Decision Time!**

Once you have received your offers, go back to the decision-makers in the company and discuss the options. You can mix-and-match different ones, so if you prefer different combinations, go back to the event organisers and ask for a quote with the combinations you prefer. Then it's decision time.

When you are choosing between event providers, apart from price use recommendations and testimonials from their previous clients to help you decide. If you request some testimonials

from previous clients who wanted something similar to you and they cannot provide any, you might want to think twice before using that company.

It's also very important that your events company offers a 24-hour emergency contact number – 24 hour emergency assistance. Through experience we have found it invaluable to also have at least 2 guides the entire time, in any event day and night. If an events company you approach does not have either of these then you might want to choose another one.

Pick a destination and company and move on to booking and buying the tickets! The last step is a series of essential tips that will help you with booking, overall preparation, last minute things, and how to do things during the trip.

## SECTION TWO

### Seven Essential Tips

**One: Flights.** When booking flights you want the best value, and it really is best to get your event organisers to help you with this because when you are dealing with a large group there are a few tricks to obtaining the best offers. If you're booking the flights yourself, it's best to book in smaller groups of less than 20 people.



And you can meet up at the other end. This is because when flight companies see that it's a very large group they know it's a corporate group and they automatically bump up the prices! Sad but true, we've seen it happen many times. This is especially the case when you are using the low-cost airlines.

It's fine for people to arrive at different times. Any good events company will be able to transport them from the airport in groups or individuals over the course of the day.



**Two: Special Requirements.** Find out from the staff beforehand if anyone has any special requirements or needs – dieting requirements, etc. If you and the events company know this well in advance anything can be easily accommodated for.



**Three: Time.** When you have a big group time really becomes an issue – in shifting them between activities, ordering food in restaurants, just getting people together to do things.

This wasted time can really eat into your day and detract from the fun if not prepared for and managed efficiently. Here are a couple of tips to help things along smoothly: Have a strict 20 minute or 30 minute waiting policy and no more. There's no point ruining the day for 30 people while they wait for the 2 who overslept. This is especially important for morning activities – delaying one thing in the morning has a knock-on effect throughout the day. Often on weekends there are a few who stay out all night and get up later, so it's best to be a little bit ruthless with your timing. It's surprising how easily a 20-minute wait can turn into an hour and a half!



Also, when you go for group meals try and have a set and prepared menu of only two or three choices (plus vegetarian alternative for the vegetarians). This way the meal can get under way with ease. Just make sure you go to excellent restaurants and no one will be disappointed by the meal.

It also helps to have a meal where the group can't choose much from the menu but the meal consists of lots of little dishes and a few courses, so there will be a lot of variety to please everyone. Add some good entertainment and Bingo! You have a smooth, easy and thoroughly successful meal and start to the evening.



**Four: The First Day.** When you're organising a corporate event for a large group, people often can't arrive at the same time anyway. So for the first day, don't organise any activities that are very important or that you want everyone to be there. Something more relaxed and fun is ideal. Save the really important announcements, meetings, activities and team-building things for the following day.



**Five: Cultural Differences.** If you are having your event abroad keep in mind cultural and country differences. For example different plug sockets or amenities - many hotels outside the UK don't automatically have a kettle in the bedrooms (if a morning cup of tea is essential for your director to start the day off in a good mood ask your event organiser to make sure one is there!) A good events organising company should notify you of any potential difficulties as part of their package.

**Six: Itinerary.** Get a good itinerary from the events organisers that you can send to everyone before the trip. This should have all the activities and locations, and all the really important information such as names, addresses, organiser's contact numbers and emergency contact numbers.

**Seven: Weather.** Check the weather forecast! And be prepared – do people have umbrellas? Does your events company provide them? Unfortunately you get surprise rainy days even in the far South of Europe, just make sure that if they do happen they don't spoil your fun!



## SECTION THREE

# Team-Building Activities

Need ideas for team-building events? These are some of the best and most popular – for us and around the world.

- GP Moto Racing Circuit Adventures
- Jazz Cruises
- Vineyard Tours with wine tasting
- Mountain River-Rafting
- Zorbing





City Treasure Hunts  
Water Sports  
Catamaran Cruises  
Yacht Racing  
Baby-Bull Running



Beach Team-Building Competitions  
Gymkhana Games  
4 by 4 Rough Terrain Racing  
Cooking Competitions (Paella-Cooking Competitions)  
Assault Course Games  
Themed-Team Games –Robin Hood days, Casino Nights, James Bond  
Team-building, Competing Adventure Days  
Themed Dinners (Casino, Egyptian, Murder Mystery)  
Dinner With Entertainment – like Flamenco Dinners!  
Golf



So there you go! I hope this guide helps you have a successful event and a wonderful time!

We would love to help organize a fantastic event for you in Europe. Please get in touch for some ideas or a free quote.