



Questions to Consider As You Plan Your Event the UCLA Catering Way

Getting Started

Q: *How soon should you begin to plan and book a site for your event?*

While there are no hard and fast timelines, the best rule of thumb is to contact us as early in the planning process as possible so you have the most location options and we can help you think through logistics that may need advance-planning to set up efficiently and be the most cost-effective.

In general, the ideal time to start planning with us depends on the size and complexity of your event. For medium-large complex events, it is not unusual to book a meeting space six months to a year in advance. For small, less complex events, two weeks is the minimum time we normally need to assist you effectively.

We've designed our planning and booking process to be as customer-friendly as possible while complying with University policies and procedures. To help you understand the process and know what to expect, please see ***Steps for Holding an Event with UCLA Catering.***

Goals & Objectives – What's at the Heart of Your Event

Q: *What is the purpose of the event you are planning? What do you want attendees to come away with from your event?*

Some objectives may be to:

- Recognize or honor an individual or group (faculty, volunteers, staff, students, donors)
- Raise awareness and/or support for your organization or a cause it represents
- Teach attendees new skills or encourage them to embrace new ideas
- Help your group establish, maintain, or foster relationships with other people/groups
- Establish or maintain a high level profile or other presence in your field, industry, or among your peers.

This is important information for you to share with your Catering Sales Manager since the main objective of your event will likely influence the type of location you choose. It will also help you set the right tone for the event, the relative importance of various aspects of your event, and the types of service providers you need to accomplish your goals.

More...

Previous Experiences – Clues on How to Create a Well-Run Event

Q: *Have you planned or coordinated an event like this before?*

If so, discuss the answers to the following questions with us:

- In what ways is the event you are planning similar to a past event? In what ways is it significantly different?
- What were some of the highlights? Challenges?
- What would you do differently to improve the event or your experience in planning/coordinating the event?

Answers to these types of questions give us insight into how we can help you make your current event an even more successful one.

Size & Location of Your Event – More Than Just Booking a Room

Q: *How many people will likely attend your event? What kind of activities are you planning? What is your tentative agenda?*

Types of activities you are considering may include:

- A central presentation with break-out sessions
- Several concurrent meetings
- Training involving Internet or other computer capabilities
- Networking activities
- A stand-up reception, self-service buffet, or a served meal with or without a speaker
- Dancing and entertainment
- Outdoor activities
- Off-site activities at the start or end of your event

Knowing up-front the approximate number of attendees, what type of activities you plan to include, and your tentative agenda help us identify the types of rooms and set-ups that will work best for your event. We may also be able to assist you in timing your agenda to make the best use of space and in sequencing activities to help the entire event run smoothly for you and your guests.

Support Services – Success Is in the Details

Q: *In addition to a meeting space and menu that matches your objectives, what other services are needed to ensure that your event is a success?*

Since every event is different, it is key for you to consider what is important to your event and what type of support services you may need. Your Catering Sales Manager can help you analyze your event and recommend options. We have developed an **Event Support Services Checklist** to help you think about the type of service providers you need and have an easy way to start the discussion with us.

Thank you for your interest in UCLA Catering...We make events happen!