

**The forum for conference organisers in the public sector.
4th June 2007 – Round table discussions**

**The most challenging and time consuming aspects
of organising a conference or event.
Obstacles to success.**

Venue

- Finding the correct venue can be very time consuming
- Getting the right sized rooms especially for syndicates - they are either too small or there are not enough.
- Layout of rooms – last minute changes on the day.
- Travelling to the venue if it is far away
- Challenging if the venue has no parking
- Challenging if the venue is not easily accessible by public transport
- Last minute catering problems or changes.

Speakers/ Presenters

- Chasing presentations and getting them submitted on time.
- Confirming their attendance.
- Confirming their requirements
- Confirming their travel arrangements
- Frustrating when presenters do not stick to their timetable
- Key note speakers ill at last minute or have transport problems.
- Preparing contingency plans for speakers ie having their presentation on memory sticks.

Delegates

- Getting delegates to confirm attendance
- Ignoring invitations
- Getting them to reply the time requested.
- Not turning up on the day

- Registration process and details
- Getting delegates to understand instructions
- Time consuming to fill cancelled places
- Late registration of delegates.
- Last minute notification of vegetarians or a requirement for disabled access.

Delegate Packs

- Preparing delegate packs
- Prioritising what goes in the delegate packs.
- Last minute changes lead to increased admin burden
- Not getting handouts in time to pre – prepare delegate packs.

Overall Event/ General

- Managing clients expectations
- If there is a committee involved it is hard to please everyone.
- No clear objectives
- Instructions and positioning of the event should be communicated clearly by senior management in time for event.
- Timescales to be communicated and adhered to.
- Unclear roles and responsibilities. Who does what? Who supplies what?
- Budget to be agreed and cost agreed
- Partnerships agreed and clarified.
- Event collateral
- Time consuming to follow through everything an event involves – bringing it altogether.
- Risk management – contingency planning
- Challenging if it is a sensitive context or topic.
- Getting handouts in sufficient time before the events.