

VIDEO BLOG

How to plan for your Annual Conference

■ AT A GLANCE

- + Why you need to meet ASAP
- + The critical path analysis explored
- + The dangerous "concertina effect"
- + Avoiding last minute costs
- + The on-site schedule



NEXT PAGE





VIDEO
BLOG

mindset
COMMUNICATIONS

Working with your new Producer.

The key, and on-going priority for the producer is to build trust with his client. This is an essential ingredient in the production of any event and lack of it can mean a lack of confidence in the producer leading to misunderstandings and a thoroughly inefficient process. This is where mistakes occur!

Having been awarded the contract the producer will immediately seek a general meeting of all interested client parties. This meeting serves a number of functions:-

1. To commence the 'getting to know you' process which will be an important matter when the heat is on. This meeting will also commence the trust building process.
2. To run through the producer's creative proposal, advising and discussing any required changes and their cost implications. This process must be treated carefully because changes in mid production can be both costly and disruptive.
3. To agree all presenters and their allocated time slots. This will lead to a final event running order.
4. For the client to elect a suitable facilitating person to work closely with the producer during the entire production process. This is a key role, requiring good organisational skills along with sufficient seniority to enable him/her to ensure all information and materials from the client are delivered to the producer on time.

This meeting would normally take a half day and for longer or more complex events, a full day. Should major changes be required it may be necessary for the producer to re-write the creative proposal and re-calculate the cost estimates.

Time is the producer's worst enemy! There is seldom enough of it!

Therefore, the next step for the producer is to create a detailed critical path analysis. This is a very important document, showing in detail every step along the pre-production process path along with dates and timings.

■ Here are some useful tips:

- + Strong bonds with your Producer will pay dividends.
- + Think hard about who the Producer's day-to-day contact will be.
- + Read the Critical Path Analysis. So few people do unfortunately.





VIDEO
BLOG

mindset
COMMUNICATIONS

Working with your new Producer.

Draft scripts, information for presenter support graphics, storyboards for videos and sign off dates for these and all other details.

It is essential that this document is circulated to all participants for their agreement to comply with the timetable.

It is one of the key tasks of the company facilitator to ensure that this timetable is adhered to by all concerned.

Of course we don't live in a perfect world and things do change. The producer is aware of this and will cope with minor script changes, alterations and/or last minute alterations to speaker support graphics. But major changes can be both costly and disruptive to the process. A video, once shot, can only be re-edited or re-shot. This is both expensive and time consuming. A change of mind on the stage set design could mean a re-build. These examples should focus the mind on the importance of adherence to the critical path analysis.

In the event that information for speaker support graphics will only be available last minute, then a small design team can be provided to work on-site. This and many other complications can be allowed for **if the producer is made aware of them early!**

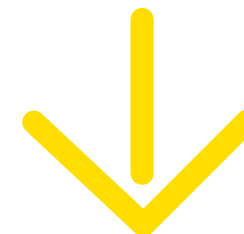
Probably the biggest headache for the producer is for a string of items or information being delivered to him late. This can cause real chaos.

The net result of delays will be a concertina effect on the critical path analysis. Items become rushed, appropriate care might not be taken, the producer may have to work through the night. Now producers are accustomed to this but they are not superbeings! Tiredness leads to error both for the producer and the studio technicians and designers. Of course, working through the night in a studio can also be very costly!

In any critical path analysis prepared by a producer you will see the final week of pre-production blank.

■ Here are some useful tips:

- + The better you communicate with your Producer, the smoother the pre-production stage will be.
- + If there is a change, pick up the phone to the Producer. Don't just rely upon email!
- + Never forget, Producers are just people. They too have families, personal commitments and need time off to relax just as much as you do.





VIDEO
BLOG

mindset
COMMUNICATIONS



Working with your new Producer.

This does not mean the producer has nothing to do! That would be as rare as hen's teeth! No, that time will be used for off-site rehearsals along with unexpected items connected with the venue, technical equipment and the thousand and one things which makes the producer's life o.....er..... interesting!

What the producer would sell his relatives to avoid is for any pre-production delays spilling over into the time on-site. **That is a big no, no!**

Every minute of time on-site is allocated to fit-up, technical rehearsals, presenter rehearsals and a final technical rehearsal. If any work which should have been completed during pre-production spills over into the on-site time, then the potential for 'cock ups' goes through the roof!

I wouldn't wish you to think, having read this doom laden screed, that the work and responsibilities of the client during pro-production are onerous. They are not, if you stick to the famous five P's

Preparation and Planning Prevent Poor Performance!

RS

The author of this series is Robert Scott, who was one of a small group of Producer/Directors from theatre and film who, in the early 70s, 'crossed over' to use their professional talents in the field of commercial events. They gave birth to what is today a multi billion pound industry.

Robert is an expert in live communications and a veteran with over 30 years experience producing and directing many hundreds of major events worldwide.

Robert is now Managing Director of Mindset Communications.

■ Here are some useful tips:

- + The more the Producer is over-worked in the week leading up to the event, the more they will be tired when on-site.
- + Long gone are the days when crew would work all night. Nowadays you are more likely to be charged overtime.



In the next vlog...

In video blog 6 we shall be talking in more detail about the pre-production process.

email:

info@mindsetcomms.co.uk

visit us online at:

mindsetcomms.co.uk

telephone:

+44 1252 333 032



■
+ Mindset Communications
Chesterwood House
Nelson Close
Farnham
Surrey
UK
GU9 9AR