

■ CAMPUS LIFE ■

Organising an event at YOUR INSTITUTION

The key things you need to know

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Whether it be a cricket tournament or the annual science fair, an inter-school football cup or a carnival, for students who help organise these institutional events, the onus is on them to make things work.

When starting out, the first thing that student organisers must keep in mind is that they simply cannot do without the trust and approval of their institution's administration.

Farhan Mashrur, a first-year student at Cornell University, organised multiple events during his A level years. Upon being asked for some advice, he shared, "Firstly, giving the administration detailed proposals outlining the event's segments, budget, and sponsorships will help convince them of your plans. Secondly, taking their feedback and incorporating their ideas into your own shows that you value their input. Lastly, it's always a good idea to keep them updated on every step of what you're doing. This creates a positive impression and helps build trust. Clear communication is key."

But convincing your institution of the viability of your ideas is just the start. The real challenge is the execution of it. To do this, multiple departments are usually set up.

Dedicated public relations and human resources (PR and HR) departments, for instance, are as integral to attracting participants as they are indispensable in convincing potential sponsors to invest. For making and receiving important calls, writing emails and producing social media posts, such departments must include

students who are well-versed in verbal and written communication, graphic design, and presentation skills.

Md Abdullah Bin Jalal, a graduate of Mastermind English Medium School and organiser for many of the school's events stresses the importance of quality when it comes to graphics and caption writing. "The catchier the graphics, the more curiosity they will induce in people. The same goes for captions, but they need to be very precise. People feel it's a hassle to text the page for more information, so the captions must clearly convey everything that one needs to know about the event."

Marketing aside, events should have actual substance to them if they are to be any good.

For intellectual competitions, academic departments are very important. They are to make question papers that challenge the mental faculties of the participants and, thereby, to make victories meaningful. Raida Haque, an A level student at Sunnysdale School and President of the Sunnysdale Math x Tech Club, details what the question-making process entails, "We take some time to find questions or make some, then we set a meeting for each question to be reviewed by the entire department."

Preparations for sporting events, on the other hand, are governed by where and when the right conditions for the sport exist. Fida Md Hasan, a first-year student at BRAC University with extensive experience in organising sports competitions at the school and college levels, describes what to look for, "The first thing you have to find out is whether or not the surface of the field is going to be comfortable. For example, if you're hosting a

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football match, you need to find a good field where the grass isn't too rough or too smooth. Then, look out for weather conditions since you can't have the event with a chance of rain."

However, notwithstanding the competitive quality of the event or the marketing ingenuity of the organisers, it is the management on the days of the event that can make or break it. With so many students from different age groups—and in the case of inter-school competitions, different institutions—roaming throughout the campus, there is almost an infinite potential for chaos.

M M Asif Yousuf, a first-year student of London College of Legal Studies (LCLS) (South) and a former General Secretary of the Notre Dame English Club, advises on how to effectively manage this enormous pressure, "The schedule has to be designed and maintained to make sure that it's not too crowded at a time. In our case, keeping ample break times between segments helped us recover the small delays that did end up occurring. But perhaps the most crucial part of managing an event perfectly is ensuring the volunteer force is present at every part of the campus and prepared to tackle any situation that may arise."

With an unending list of things to do and contingencies to plan for, organising a school, college, or university event successfully is often a nerve-racking ordeal. However, the struggle sweetens the catharsis that eventually follows, leading to some really precious memories. But unforeseen situations are enemies that perpetually lurk in the shadows. A good organiser should know how to think on their feet.

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