



How to screw up your event

Do any of these things, and your event is immediately sub-par... Trust us, this is a useful guide that you should print out and check frequently.

Reminder: we are here to help in whatever capacity is best for you. Ask questions, check in regularly, and let us know how we can help make your event great.

Before the Event do not:

- Hesitate to ask questions to your Startup Colorado support staff. Check in regularly. Trust us, we'll save you a lot of time & energy we've done this many time before.
- Neglect to post & email out a final schedule & directions info to your guests.
- Live in a bubble. Talk to previous organizers and others in your region see what has worked well for events in the past.
- Forget to put mentors/sponsors/speakers on the website
- Assume your food was going to be delivered confirm with your caterer (especially if it's a local business) and ensure they have enough time to prepare the food. Assume your venue will have tables as well as plates and silverware for the food.
- Forget to confirm times, building access, air-conditioning/heating, sufficient internet, garbage.

When planning the event do not:

- Do not try to have equal decision making on all items for the organizing team. Distribute and assign responsibilities and hold people accountable. Know your role and don't be afraid to fire a team member.
- Forget to thank your local AND global sponsors and point them out in the room
- Let speakers/sponsors/yourself ramble on and on. USE A TIMER. This is not optional.
- Have more than one speaker... Seriously, entrepreneurs can't sit still very long no matter how interesting the person speaking might be. No one came to listen to speakers anyways.
- Force people to sit through more than 20 pitches at a time (take as many breaks as necessary) - Rush voting. The more discussion of ideas, the better the teams that are formed.
- Forget to play music. It is so critical in setting the atmosphere
- Endorse laziness. Enforce a culture of being on time, considerate and clean
- Let mentors just randomly wander with no strategy and annoy teams
- Let teams hide in conference or breakout rooms the whole time. Make them mingle with others.
- Let people present without having plugged into the projector to test resolutions. Again, using a timer is mandatory.

When ordering food do not:

- Order from a chain restaurant. Always buy local if there are good options. This is a great way to highlight local entrepreneurs.
- Order pizza for more than one meal (2.5 - 3 slices/person)

- Be a cheapskate. Order enough, healthy food for everyone. Nothing is worse than hungry attendees.
- Assume vegetarians will be fine. You must order some veggie items (often more than one veggie option is preferred).
- Forget water. People drink a lot of water and tap water is perfectly fine.
- Underestimate the amount of coffee people can drink.
- Overlook snacks. People love treats and often remember an event by how good the food was - never underestimate the amount of trash. Have a plan to deal with ~10 bags of trash per meal.

Key elements of opening remarks:

- Welcome to attendees & thank you sponsors.
- Clearly describe who is hosting the event.
- Why are we here?
 - What is the event?
 - What are the expected outcomes for the event?
- Set an agenda and clear expectations.

Key elements of a successful event:

- The venue is well-suited to the type of event and the number of attendees. Everyone should be able to see the speaker(s).
- Speakers are well-prepared and familiar with the venue. Always give speakers the option of arriving early to see the space and practice.
- Any IT that is needed is setup and ready to go before the event starts.