

SIX STEPS TO HOSTING A BUSINESS AFTER HOURS EVENT



As a valued member of the Webster City Area Chamber, we look forward to working with you to promote your business!

We offer these steps as a guide to assist you with planning your event.

Please contact our office to begin planning your Business After Hours event.

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BUSINESS AFTER
H**OURS**

Presented by the Webster City Area Chamber of Commerce

STEP ONE: Set your date!

- ◆ Work with the Chamber to ensure they have enough time to publicize your event.
- ◆ Check community and school calendars to avoid major conflicts
- ◆ Allow plenty of preparation time
- ◆ Avoid holding your event close to a major holiday
- ◆ Events on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursdays get maximum attendance.

STEP TWO: Set a time!

- ◆ Business After Hours events do well in the 5:00 to 7:00 range.

STEP THREE: Who to invite?

- ◆ Current and potential customers
- ◆ Friends and Family
- ◆ Suppliers
- ◆ Employees and their spouses
- ◆ Media
- ◆ Those who helped you get started
- ◆ Neighboring business people
- ◆ Representatives of the Chamber

Invitations—Prepare a very basic invitation. Include who, what, where, when and why. Allow two weeks notice. Allow for longer time for bulk mail.

Early notice will get your event on guests' calendars, but send reminders on social media, via email or flyer closer to the date of the event.

STEP FOUR: Food and Beverages

Some suggestions:

- ◆ Light hors d'oeuvres / Finger foods
- ◆ Fruit and vegetable platters
- ◆ Cookies
- ◆ Soda or punch
- ◆ Coffee, tea, water
- ◆ Wine and beer

Make sure you have ample food and beverages, plus sufficient plates, cups, napkins, silverware, etc.

Please contact the Chamber for a listing of catering options.

STEP FIVE: Plan your program

Speakers—Work with the Chamber to plan your program.

Information—have handouts about your business and business cards available

Plan a tour—have knowledgeable staff present for the event. You may wish to conduct a tour.

Ending your program— End your program promptly, thanking those in attendance. Make time for photo opportunities.

Back up Plan—If you are holding an outdoor event, be sure to have a back-up plan for inclement weather.

Door Prizes— Consider having a door prize or drawing as part of your program. Winning a sample of your product or a dinner at a local restaurant can add to your guests' enjoyment and perhaps even boost attendance.

Thank you notes—Be sure to send thank you notes following your event.

STEP SIX: Promote!

Invitations:

Send your invitation to the news directors at least a week prior to your event. Include a brief personal letter explaining some details about your firm your event.

Press Release:

Include a brief news release that contains the Journalistic basics of who, what, where, when and why. The release does not need to be fancy, just factual (See "Sample Press Releases" online).

Follow Up:

A follow-up reminder call the day before the event is a good idea.

Photography:

You may want a friend or photographer to take photos of the key people or activities at your event. This will make it easy for you to mail it to newspapers with a caption or use on social media.

Promote on Social Media:

Before and after your event, promote the event by utilizing social media outlets.

