

FESTIVALS

Ready for the challenge of large scale outdoor events? The number of festivals across the globe is growing year-on-year - expanding right alongside the opportunities for successful festival managers.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

Being a festival director is a challenging and diverse role – part of the challenge comes from the huge logistics involved in organising a festival event. You will also be required to trouble-shoot; find creative, original options and solutions; fit in with the event's overall purpose; adhere to environmental restrictions, manage whole teams of personnel, suppliers and contractors – and that's before you get to performers and attendees!

At any given time you could be involved in:

- Client meetings and festival development and branding
- Creating innovative proposals, then pitching and planning responsively
- Attracting and engaging sponsors
- Budgeting and financial management
- Venue research and management – including liaising with councils, environmental agencies

and emergency services for permissions and licences

- Marketing, promotion and publicising
- Working with and facilitating celebrities
- Risk assessing, and health and safety management
- Ticketing and security
- Establishing protocols and routines for safe setting up and clearing up
- Evaluation and follow up with sponsors, attendees etc

Remember, these are just some of the facets of festival management, but with the right kind of event qualification, specifically one which includes a marketing focus and accreditation, you can gain the professional skills you need.

FESTIVALS

Ready for the challenge of large scale outdoor events? The number of festivals across the globe is growing year-on-year - expanding right alongside the opportunities for successful festival managers.

GETTING INTO FESTIVAL MANAGEMENT

We'd be lying if we said that festivals are an easy field to get into. The truth is, in tune with the fast growth of festival popularity, comes the rapid rise in competition for festival event roles. You must put yourself in the spotlight in order to succeed, you can help things along by gaining:

Experience – attending festivals is fine but get relevant experience from the delivery side of the festival, through volunteering and work-experience.

An industry-related qualification in event management – like one of our accredited event management qualifications. Successfully completing one of our courses provides knowledge as well as the practical skills and professional knowledge needed to start finding your future in festivals.

A network of contacts – get the chance to spend time alongside others who can support your career. All our lecturers offer a vast network of contacts for you to tap into and completing our courses guarantees you'll also end up with a fast-developing professional network of your own.

Focusing on festivals – all our courses will help you experience those fundamentals which underpin all types of events, including festivals, and we can often arrange work experience within festival management (for our Postgraduate and Degree-Alternative students). Additionally, if you want to know more or if you're moving into festivals from another sector of events, we also offer opportunities to boost your festival focus and extend your industry links with a Festival Masterclass Course.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Festival event management encompasses many roles and may include job titles which fit in with other arts and entertainment event roles. These might include (but certainly aren't limited to):

Event Director / Assistant
Festival Director / Assistant / Organiser
Content Director / Assistant
Production Manager
Event Producer

We automatically associate festival-going with music but there's an increasing demand for food, wine, beer, film, history, hobbies and arts festivals sponsored or run by big-name companies. They are always on the lookout for new talent and new ideas when it comes to festival production.

THE QUESTION IS HOW TO GET STARTED?

Before we deep dive into the details it is worth understanding the different (typical) stages of a career in events to know at which stage you might be entering.

The first step is just realising this is something that you want to do. It could be that you've organised a private party/wedding/charity event and just loved it. Maybe you have worked in an associated part of the industry like hospitality, music, project management or design and felt your skills would transfer nicely into events.

Now you need to bridge the gap. You need to get some experience. Get some volunteering under your belt. Build your confidence, knowledge and CV (we will be coming back to this one) You may also be able to get yourself an internship or a placement in an events agency/role/organisation.

The first real rung on the event businesses ladder is a junior executive role. Here you learn the basics and get involved with everything from laminating signage to designing core elements of 'the show', to budgeting, buying props and costumes, to working on site and to junior client/supplier management.

From this level the roles vary. You could graduate to an event manager, project manager up to a project director, account director, event director and finally producer.

Obviously, these roles can be accessed in any order. Within different projects and in different companies you may be involved in some and possibly all these roles. There are also many specialised event roles... for example the 'showcaller' - directing sound, lighting, film and action cues from an event 'bible' or script through the course of the experience. These special event roles take some years of experience and skill so you are unlikely to be involved with these at the outset, although every event needs someone 'calling the show' (even if it's only a private wedding).

GOING IT ALONE. SETTING UP YOUR OWN BUSINESS.

The other route you can take is to set up your own business. This is obviously a risky venture and not recommended unless you have had either some appropriate training (degree or postgraduate level course) or at least two/three years' experience.

Setting up and running a business is a totally different skill to being an event manager, but if you are still determined to take this route then ensure you are ready to meet all the demands not only of being an event manager but also marketing yourself and managing your business.

The route we recommend would be:

GENERATING EXPERIENCE, CONTACTS AND EVENTUALLY A JOB THROUGH WORK EXPERIENCE VOLUNTEERING AT EVENTS.

Both networking and volunteering are key to your success as an event manager. Event Academy offers a broad range of volunteering opportunities to our students and alumni to enable them to clock up the hours in the events world at a broad perspective on the different type of events.

This allows you to qualify in or out what each role or industry is really like while facilitating a broad range of experiences in diverse roles. Work experience through volunteering can also be a lot of fun. For example, we place students into The Brits every year enabling them to see a big global event going live as well as rubbing shoulders literally with celebs, rock stars and the music business royalty!

Networking is similar, in that you need to get yourself out there and generate the levels of motivation to do that. There are many on and offline experiences, meet-ups, events and hot dates in the calendar that can provide you with the opportunities to advance your career in events plus we run our networking events with major players attending like Lego, Secret Cinema, Bridelux and The Department.

NETWORKING

It's crucial that whatever stage of your career you are at, you get out there and get networking. Follow the key players in the industry online or on social media via hashtags like eventprofs. Go to networking evenings, meet-ups, event conferences, big shows like confex...keep in touch with your course mates, your lecturers and see what they are up to. Try to be creative in how you approach people who may have some influence and then make sure you are polite but to the point...just be you in any live or online networking. Follow, be inspired, then dive in and get involved. You've got to get in to get on.

So the opportunities for a career in events are many and various. The options are almost limitless. Just focus yourself on your skills, your passion, your experiences...then have a look at the following list and/or give one of the team here a call to see if we can help you with your career!

TOP 8 TIPS FOR CREATING A CAREER IN EVENTS...



Volunteer/do anything/start anywhere



Follow/network/use social media to build a network



Get a recognised accredited qualification

(the best you can afford ideally)

Don't start your own business until you are ready

(contacts, clients, funding, and experience)



(blog/vlog)

Capture and publish your experiences



Build a creative CV and target your search



Network, network, network



Do your own event, however small. You will learn the most from your mistakes.

CHAT TO US

Feeling inspired?
Why not live chat with our team now!