When you are handed the daunting task of organizing the catering for the office, business or even private party, it's hard not panic, especially once you start browsing online at the million and one options when you search the term “party food” or “catering,” the mind melts, where do I start? The options are far and wide.

The best place to start is to ask yourself what size of event am I undertaking here?

Big events (100 people or more) take a lot of work and you will definitely need professional help. But if you are catering for less than 100 people it is definitely possible to organize this with a minimum of fuss, if you answer ten basic questions:

• Do you have a budget?
• What time is your event?
• How long will you need food?
• Who are you feeding?
• Is it a meal or something just to eat?
• Is it standing or sitting? Or both?
• Are there any special dietary requirements?
• Is there a place to prepare and serve the catering?
• Do you need staff or self-serv
• Who is cleaning up?

1. Do you have a budget?

Everyone has a budget, even if you haven’t formalized it yet. It’s first thing to finalize. Try your hardest to stick to it, otherwise things can get out of control and you could be in a lot of trouble with your boss.

2. What time is your event?

This determines the style of food you need, do you need breakfast, lunch, dinner or just something to absorb the alcohol before people move on.

3. How long will you need food?

Sometimes people come and go from parties so it’s important to cater to everybody as they arrive at the party, this is the definition of a good host. Sometimes people also want something later in the night, midnight munchies are not uncommon at many modern weddings.

4. Who are you feeding?

Gender and age go a long way in determining what type of food, how much food, what quality food, that you are preparing to serve. It’s so obvious a point that it’s something that people forget to consider – we all eat the same amount, but that’s not true. This can determine whether you over order or under order the amount of food for your function.

5. Is it a meal or something just to eat?

Subsequent to all the questions up to number four, this point will answer itself once you have examined the guest list, the time of eating, the style of party, whether you want something substantial or just something to tackle the fancy.

6. Is it standing or sitting? Or both?

This is an important question because finger food and seated dining are two very different types of catering. Canapés can start the night on a special note, then the chef can whip up something very special for your seated occasion. It’s also worth noting that canapés or finger food are not going to fill people up, unless you have 10 to 12 per person.

7. Are there any special dietary requirements?

More and more we are seeing that people are allergic to food, this can cause anaphylactic reaction which can cause severe injury or even death. This means you have to be on top of your game when ordering food for people with allergies. The other issue concerning this question is the diversity of food lifestyles on offer - i.e. vegetarians, vegans, et cetera.

8. Is there a place to prepare and serve the catering?

This is important for yourself or the catering company to know, as experience tells us that if you don’t have a private or semi-private area to organize your food, then interruptions and general confusion will reign, you’ve heard the saying – too many chefs spoil the broth!

9. Do you need staff or self-serve?

Sometimes people like to do these things on their own, which will save a lot of money. This is definitely possible, as so many people these days are such good cooks, however there are other options available. Our company - Box Catering in Sydney - does drop off catering. Drop off catering is where chefs prepare the food to the point where it’s ready to serve and load it into temperature controlled boxes, be they hot or cold, and those boxes are delivered to the party venue, ready for the customer to serve when he or she is ready. This is a great option for many people, especially as all the food can be ordered online and we are always available for consult if you need any help.

10. Who is cleaning up?

The rule in many homes is that if you cook you don’t clean. However this might not apply as your business event winds up, just be sure to have people allocated otherwise it will fall in your lap.

Information for this article was provided by Box Catering.
Hotel Industry Supports More Than One in 25 US Jobs

New research underscores significant economic impact of hotel industry

Underscoring the significant economic impact and strong growth of the hotel industry, a new study released last week found that hotels support more than 1 in 25 American jobs—8.3 million in total—and contribute nearly $660 billion annually to U.S. GDP.

Conducted by Oxford Economics, the study was sponsored by the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) and the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Foundation (AHLEF) and showcases the breadth and depth of the hotel industry and its value to the communities we serve. The study is part of AHLA’s Dreams Happen Here campaign, which highlights the ways hotels power our economy, support our employees, grow and groom employees, and serve the world’s travelers. The Oxford analysis includes a breakdown of the industry’s economic impact in every state and congressional district in America.

This report builds on the dynamic growth the hotel industry has seen in the last decade. Hotel industry sales have increased 43.5 percent since 2010, with 1.3 billion guests staying in American hotels last year. As the industry attracts more guests, employment has expanded to new highs, reaching 2.3 million hotel jobs directly on property—a gain of more than 160,000 hotel jobs since 2015. The total number of U.S. jobs supported by the hotel industry has increased by 1.1 million since 2015.

Additional key findings from the research include:
- Hotels support a total of $395 billion in wages, salaries and other compensation, both directly at our properties and in the communities we serve.
- A representative hotel with 100 occupied rooms supports more than 240 local jobs and generates $18.4 million in guest spending.
- For every $100 hotel guests spend on lodging, another $222 is spent at the destination—totaling $278 billion per year spent on transportation, dining, shopping, etc. at U.S. businesses during stays.
- Hotels generate $186 billion that goes back to communities through local, state and federal taxes.

“Hotels are an industry of opportunity, and we are proud to make dreams come true every day for the millions of guests we serve, and the 8.3 million people whose jobs we support,” said Chip Rogers, president and CEO of AHLA. “We are at a critical moment for our industry. Demand for hotels has never been higher, but we are also facing the tightest labor market in a generation. Together with our Foundation, AHLA is working to advance policies that will allow hoteliers to meet our workforce needs, deliver the quality service and amenities our guests expect and deserve, and invest in our employees and communities.”

U.S. Department of Labor figures show there are nearly one million job vacancies in the hospitality sector. To address this, and as a complement to the work our member companies are already doing, AHLEF has been creating and building innovative programs to rapidly train new employees, while providing current employees a path toward upward mobility.

“Whether it’s providing a young adult with the technical expertise and soft skills to jumpstart a hospitality career, helping a current employee complete a college degree at no cost to them, or giving a scholarship for an aspiring hotel management major, our Foundation is laser-focused on fueling opportunity and grooming the next generation of hoteliers,” said Rosanna Maietta, president of AHLEF.

Information for this article was provided by the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA), the sole national association representing all segments of the U.S. lodging industry. Learn more at ahla.com.
Marines, Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Coast Guardsmen are deployed across the globe, going in harm’s way to preserve and protect our freedom. Servicemen and women selflessly give up their freedoms on our behalf by leaving friends and family behind as they serve our country. Unfortunately, when many heroes come home, they begin a new battle that is tough to overcome: homelessness.

One in 10 homeless adults across the United States is a veteran. IAEE sought to change that reality by supporting Volunteers of America, an organization dedicated to assisting veterans and their families so that they can be self-sustaining and connected to the community. The result of their efforts was a generous donation of 280 hygiene care kits for veterans! The event took place 6 August 2019 at the Loews’ Miami Beach Hotel in Miami, Fla.

The International Association of Exhibitions and Events (IAEE) worked with Impact 4 Good, a company that focuses on teambuilding programs that give back to community. IAEE chose the activity “Stand Down for Homeless Vets,” which has the goal of both creating awareness of and fighting homelessness among veterans. Participants first learned about challenges veterans face when they come home. Then, participants were split into teams and competed in a digital trivia challenge using tablet technology! Each team put forth their best effort in an attempt to be crowned victorious! While there were winning teams based on performance in the competition, the real winner was the Veterans served by Volunteers of America. Founded in 1896, Volunteers of America is one of the nation’s largest and most comprehensive human services organizations. Through their hundreds of human service programs, including housing and healthcare, Volunteers of America touches the lives of 1.5 million people in over 400 communities in 46 states as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico each year. Since 1896, they have supported and empowered America’s most vulnerable groups, including veterans, at-risk youth, the frail elderly, men and women returning from prison, homeless individuals and families, people with disabilities, and those recovering from addictions. Their work touches the mind, body, and heart of those they serve, integrating our deep compassion with highly effective programs and services.

During the event, Lisa Wilkins-Cancel gratefully thanked the group in person at the event for their time and effort in helping to provide these kits to very deserving veterans. Following the event, Wendy Whitescarver, Resources Development Manager added that, “These hygiene kits will allow a Veteran to wash their face, brush their teeth, comb their hair; something that we all take for granted daily. It means a lot for homeless Vets on the streets as well as those in our programs that may not be connected to their VA benefits.” Trusted since 1928, IAEE provides quality and value to its members through leadership, service, education and strong relationships. IAEE is the largest association of the exhibitions and events industries in the world, with a membership of show organizers, exhibitors and exhibition suppliers. Visit wiaeef.com for more information.