

# Eleanor A. Nelson, CMP

*Orchestrator of exceptional experiences*

## SUMMARY

Experienced meetings professional with a reputation for professionalism, flexibility and making sound decisions under pressure. An impactful event producer and team leader, adept at designing and executing high-quality meetings and events of all sizes. Advanced skills in project management, cultivating c-level stakeholder relationships, and strategic program development. Effective problem solver and communicator. Passionate team leader and detail-oriented project manager who aligns conference development strategy with organizational goals.

## SKILLS

- Aligning conference strategy with organizational goals
- Budgets and forecasting
- Project management
- Managing certification requirements
- Event team leadership
- Cross-department collaboration
- Mentoring/coaching staff
- Leading volunteer committees
- Creative problem solving
- Negotiating contracts
- Marketing and branding
- Tactical delivery
- Sponsorship
- Effective communication

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**gOasis, LLC**, Independent Meeting Planner

2012 – present

Provide meeting and event planning, marketing, and fundraising services to non-profit organizations. Negotiate venue and vendor contracts to provide the best experience for members, sponsors and exhibitors in the U.S. and Canada. Provide leadership and organization to volunteer planning committees. Increase efficiency in logistics and complex systems, such as abstract collection and review, in a cohesive and collaborative manner. Develop realistic budgets that meet financial goals while creating environments conducive to learning and networking. Plan and execute memorable ancillary events such as gala dinners, fun runs, golf tournaments, tours and guest programs.

**American Horticultural Society**, Assistant Director of Development

2014 – 2015

Brought on board to manage and market the two largest revenue-producing projects, the travel program at \$1.6 million and Gala fundraiser at a record-breaking \$75,000, which increased revenue and loyalty to the organization. Built relationships with high dollar donors, board members and industry leaders. Participated in management team for all events at the organization.

**Licensing Executives Society (USA & Canada), Inc.**, Meetings Director

2004-2012

Recruited to elevate performance in full-spectrum conference planning for four annual conferences and 15 educational programs each year, which generated 70% of organization's \$5 million annual revenue. Led major transformation from an all-volunteer department to a high-performing team of dedicated volunteer content experts and meeting planning professionals. Accountable for attendance, logistics, CEUs, marketing and financial performance.

Created processes based on best practices for all aspects of event management, including venue selection, contract negotiation, registration, logistics, housing, F&B, exhibits/tradeshows, AV production, print and electronic collateral and integrated marketing, including conference website and social media applications.

*Delivered record-breaking profit of \$1.5M while increasing member engagement with a series of highly-acclaimed LES annual meetings and conferences for 2,500+ attendees.*

- Modernized Annual Meeting production with live and hybrid general sessions with professional speakers and industry experts, interactive exhibit hall and up to 120 breakout sessions.
- Launched a new, exclusive annual c-level networking experience for the top 100 executives in the industry

*Consistently exceeded department goals*

- Increased total conference department contribution to the bottom line 40% in one year and increased annual meeting attendance 20%.
- Increased sponsorships from \$147K to \$310K the first year with overall increase 250% over 8 years.

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*Ensured profitability of events and protected a vital source of revenue by managing expenses while expanding participation during an economic downturn.*

- Employed diverse strategies to avoid \$100K+ in hotel attrition fees. Developed accurate forecasting to manage expenses.
- Introduced blended and virtual meeting formats, coordinating senior management team to manage the RFP process, establish pricing/promotion strategies and coach speakers.

## **Association of University Programs in Health Administration**

Director of Meetings, Membership and Certification

2000 –2004

Performed a dual role in managing conference planning, membership and member certification. Provided full-spectrum meeting planning services for three conferences of 500 attendees per year: budget, logistics, site selection, contract negotiation, registration, hotel/vendor management, onsite management and post-event evaluations. Led volunteer planning committees in developing educational programs. Administered membership renewals and certification program, including responding to members, updating database, collecting dues and fees and managing renewal cycle communications.

- Elevated conference branding to create a cohesive, professional brand.
- Improved objective, data-driven decision making by increasing response rates for post-conference evaluations.

## **WESTAT, Conference Planner**

1997 – 2000

Initially hired in a temporary role and quickly promoted to a newly created full-time position based on talents for organization and quality management. Rapidly assimilated new information to become a top-performing member of a close-knit team planning 40 government meetings each year with up to 500 attendees.

- Developed the organization's first cloud-based meeting planning/tracking system.
- Introduced branding and graphic cohesion, elevating the professional look and feel of meetings.

## **EDUCATION**

Bachelor of Science, Business and Marketing Management, University of Maryland, College Park, MD

## **CERTIFICATION and PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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| • Certified Meeting Professional (CMP)      | • Guest lecturer at Chesapeake Community College |
| • ASAE Hotel Operations Program             | • Marriott Association Masters Program           |
| • ASAE Convention Center Operations Program | • iMIS and Raisers Edge training                 |

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

- American Society of Association Executives (ASAE)
- Professional Convention Managers Association (PCMA)
- Habitat for Humanity Choptank Events Committee
- American Horticultural Society
- Chesapeake Conservation Landscape Council