Cap your conference with a post-con

Your big conference went off without a hitch. In fact, it went so smoothly, your boss might not realize how well you handled everything. How can you highlight those planning and organizational skills?

Write a post-conference report to showcase your professionalism and to document your work for future events.

Before starting, ask yourself: Who is likely to read it? Knowing who reads it helps you determine when to delve into detail and when to keep things simple. Develop an outline using this framework:

Roles and responsibilities of the meeting planner(s). Here's your chance to showcase your abilities. Include any timelines or checklists.

Agenda. Summarize the conference's theme and the program. Attach a detailed agenda in the appendix.

Demographic analysis. Answer any questions the reader may consider important. *Examples:* Did the number of attendees increase or decrease? Why? Where did they come from? Did you track minority participation? How did attendees hear about the conference?

Evaluations from attendees. If you gathered evaluations for speakers, workshops, receptions, vendors or meals, summarize them here.

Vendor and supplier issues. List any issues that came up when negotiating with third parties. Next time you're considering whether to work with a particular property or vendor, this information may come in handy.

Crisis-management plan. If you had an "in-case-of-emergency" plan, refer to it here. Attach the plan in the appendix.

Publicity and press. Did you produce any publicity materials? Did the press mention your conference? List the reporters who attended.

Budget report. Begin with a summary of the budget strategy, followed by a detailed spending and savings account.

Executive summary. This summarizes the entire report, the conference's purpose and the major goals achieved. Write it last. Often, executives read only this section.

Tip: Choose a format your readers prefer, whether it's a long document with appendices and color charts, or a five-minute PowerPoint presentation. That increases the odds that people will read it.