

Site Inspection

One of the best ways for you to check out a venue in your area is to conduct a site inspection (or **site survey**). A site inspection is a visit to a venue to learn as much as possible about their facilities. You conduct a site inspection by calling ahead to arrange an appointment with the person who is in charge of renting the space or their representative. This could be the **facility manager, events coordinator, or catering manager**.

When you call to arrange the inspection make sure you get the contact's name, correct address and any driving instructions that may be needed. Tell them you are an event planner and would like to visit their facility when it is unoccupied and you are free to wander extensively.

Beware if the person on the phone tries to convince you not to visit and would rather just send you a brochure. Most reputable facilities will have marketing materials (brochures and such) on hand that they are more than happy to give you. However, the best opinion on what a facility is really like is yours. Have you ever booked a hotel room by simply seeing a brochure only to find out what looked like 1000 square feet turns out to

be much smaller? A good photographer is like a magician and can make the smallest room seem like a palace.

Before you make your first appointment, design a simple **site survey sheet** that you can later refer to as a reminder of what you saw and, perhaps more importantly, didn't see. Include the name and address of the venue, the contact's name and phone

number and an afterhours contact name and number. On this sheet you can note the items listed above, plus any other observations – from the staff's attitude to the décor

(or lack thereof). Your survey sheet could look something like the sample on the next page.

Add a large blank space for notes and comments. Your reputation as a professional is on the line here so take copious detailed notes. If you are not comfortable doing this

during the site survey, take a few minutes to jot down your impressions as soon as you get in your car and before you drive to your next appointment. Typical comments could

be: "great summer venue but not suitable for winter events"... "no handicapped facilities and difficult to get to"... "floors and carpets need to be replaced and walls are dingy"... etc.

Sample Site Survey Sheet

Venue: _____

Address: _____

Contact Name: _____ Title: _____

Phone Number: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Fax Number: _____ Email: _____

Website: _____

Seating capacity: _____

Number of rooms: _____

Floor plans available: _____

Parking spaces: Number: _____ Charge: _____

On Site Catering: _____

Staff: _____

Washrooms: Number: _____ Condition: _____

Handicapped facilities: Washrooms:_____ Parking:_____ Ramps:_____

Deposit:_____

Cancellation

policy:_____

Audio/Visual capabilities:_____

Linens:_____

Table decorations:_____

Outdoor facilities:_____

Gratuities:_____

Janitorial service

included:_____

Kitchen: Professional or Home style Appliances:_____

Bar: Portable or Static: _____

Lighting: Natural:_____ Artificial:_____

Cleanliness:_____

Other:_____

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