



## **How to Organize a Workshop**

The decision to organize a workshop for other quilters usually comes after some thought. The topic of the workshop depends on the needs and abilities of the quilters in your specific area. Sometimes the reputation of a teacher and the desire to have a class from her/him provide the motive for organizing a workshop.

The following is a general outline of the steps needed to accomplish the goal of a successful workshop:

1. Decide where (city or town) and when (start with approximate time of year). This step could be taken as early as 1 ½ years before the actual workshop, depending on the teacher selected and her or his popularity and reputation. Usually one year is ample time. Local teachers are generally more flexible and could be contacted closer to the desired date of the workshop.
2. Find a teacher if you don't already have one in mind. This can be done through the CQA/ACC Teachers' list; quilters' experiences at conferences and contact with teachers there; and quilt magazines etc.
3. A letter should go out to the teacher (or teachers) you have in mind stating the approximate dates you want, and asking for a complete resume with references and fee schedule from them. From the teachers resume you may want to contact the references regarding certain courses. You may want the slides or photographs of the work if none have been included in the resume. After you have all the information, select the course(s) you want and notify the teacher of your choice(s). At this time two unsigned contracts should be sent to the teacher and when returned signed by her/him, the chairman of the committee will then sign. Return one signed contract to the teacher along with any information he/she may need ie: map of area, location of classroom etc. if known at this time. Usually the teacher will then send the supply lists if they were not included in the resume. Most teachers will also send details on their transportation/mileage arrangements and how they want to be housed (billet or hotel). If this doesn't happen you must contact her/him to get these details.

You will also be responsible for billeting the teacher or finding a hotel room for her/him depending on what she/he wants (allergies, smoke free etc.). This cost will have to be added into the budget. Usually all costs she/he will incur from leaving her/his home until she/he returns home are to be paid from the workshop budget (includes taxis to and from airport etc, all meals and accommodation).

Contact with the teacher should continue up to a couple of days before the class, to give final numbers and reconfirm the arrangements.

If a number of teachers were contacted it is appropriate to send a letter notifying them that they were not selected.

4. It is important now to find a location which will be suitable for the workshop. Attention should be paid to the following details.

#### Teacher Specifications

Make sure the lighting is suitable for close work etc. Some hotel situations only have subdued lighting designed for lectures.

Make sure there are adequate “plug in” if sewing machines are to be used. Also make sure electrical supply is adequate for the irons which draw excessive power. There is nothing worse than continual blowing of the breakers!

Make sure the room will accommodate the number specified by the teacher and that each person will have enough work and sewing room if that is required. Each participant should have a chair to sit on and it should be in good condition, and her/his own table.

If the teacher requires audio-visual equipment (projectors, screens, microphone etc), make sure it is available and note if there is a cost, otherwise you will have to provide it somehow (in smaller towns and the local school may be of assistance). Make sure the room will accommodate showing slides – that it will black out sufficiently, and you know how to turn all lights off and on.

Some examples of locations used in the past are community centres, hotels, school rooms on weekends, church basements (watch lighting here) etc. Easy accessibility for people carrying equipment and sewing machines is important. Some thought towards access for handicapped and/or elderly quilters is advisable. The facility should have room for lunch or at least water for coffee. In a non-hotel situation participants could bring their own bag lunch or pot luck etc.

5. Make a budget which should include the following:

Teacher Fee

Teacher airfare (economy or bus (however she gets to you)

Taxi fares

Teacher meals

Cost of location selected – room, lunch coffee breaks

Cost of audio visual equipment

Advertising if required ie: posters, write up of workshop

Photocopy costs, telephone long distance calls, postage

Receipt books to record money incoming.

To arrive at a fee charge per student:

Add up all the expected costs and divide by the maximum number the teacher will have in the class. If you have any doubt about the class filling – use less than maximum number for budgeting i.e. instead of the max. of 20 students use 15 for budgeting. This may result in extra funds if the class fills but it will help to prevent the workshop costing you money! Remember you do not want to have to pay any deficit out of your own pocket!! It is best if you do not require a full class to pay the expenses just in case it does not fill.

This will give you an idea of how much the workshop will cost each person. Remember to round figures off a little to cover any incidentals that might come up after the workshop is advertised.

6. Advertising can be done very inexpensively through your Guild newsletter or by announcing it at a meeting. Local Quilt stores will usually allow you to put up a poster or something similar to publicize this, local newspapers will run “free” community announcements, and probably the quickest is to tell two quilting friends and encourage them to tell two more.
7. Collect money and issue receipts – can be just the cash receipt books that are available in most drugstores and stationary stores. It is important to keep a class list and receipt of the money. Money should be deposited in an account (in Trust in the organizers name) hopefully that does not have bank charges (but if it does, they should be approximated and added to the budget). Issue class requirements/supply lists after participant pays for the class, and do not give refunds. Instead they have to sell their place to someone else if they are unable to attend, and if a waiting list is kept you could put them in contact with someone on it to fill their spot.
8. Pay the teacher usually upon completion of the workshop. Sometimes they want the airfare paid in advance. Pay for the facility and coffee etc and hopefully there will be a little left over which can be donated to the Guild or kept in a separate account for the next workshop you organize.
9. A dinner or lecture by the teacher in the evening would accommodate a large number of quilters and sometimes this will help defray the cost of bringing in a teacher.

Organizing a workshop is an easy task as long as you think through all possibilities and keep yourself organized. Included is a sample teacher contract if they do not supply their own. Having a Contract is most advisable. This is a wonderful experience and should be fun for all!

Good Luck with your Workshop.

For CQA/ACC membership information,  
visit our website – [www.canadianquilter.com](http://www.canadianquilter.com)

### Workshop Employment Contract

Employment Agreement between

\_\_\_\_\_

(Host committee)

and

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Teacher, Full Address

The above teacher agrees to teach a workshop(s) entitled:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

in \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_  
(City, Province) (Dates)

for a maximum of \_\_\_\_\_ students. The time of the workshop(s) will be from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

The teacher's fee for this workshop (s) will be \$\_\_\_\_\_.

The employer (Host Committee) agrees to pay the teacher's fee and travel expenses (commercial economy class airfare – including taxi to and from the airport if necessary, bus or car) at the conclusion of the workshop. All accommodation and meals for the teacher upon arrival to departure will be arranged by the Host Committee.

These terms are fully understood by all parties and may be dissolved subject to the agreement of both parties no later than 28 calendar days before the above dates.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Teacher)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Host Committee Chairperson)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_