



**ABOUT:** Table for 6 (aka TF6) dinners are intended to attract alumni who are interested in professional networking while sharing a meal with fellow alumni. The event encourages relaxed open networking with the opportunity to meet a wide variety of attendees, combined with a more intimate interaction with the five others seated at table during the dining portion of the event. The event can focus on one industry (i.e. Real Estate) or theme (i.e. High Tech Entrepreneurship) or may offer the chance to interact with a group of executives in various unrelated industries and/or functions. Whenever possible, a diverse group of table speakers should be invited. Young Alumni can be targeted with a lower cost by hosting in a contemporary office setting with take-out food or a catered inexpensive menu and relevant speaker guests. Partnering with the Duke Development team to suggest alumni to invite and highlight is recommended. TF6 dinners are open to all alumni. The suggested number of speakers and guests can vary dependent on the venue, but it is important to maintain a ratio of 1 speaker to 5 attendees.

## PLANNING

**As You Plan the TF6,** communicate with DAA regional staff and volunteer leaders who can provide assistance and advice for holding a successful TF6 event. They will also help identify dates that do not conflict with other Duke programming. Reference the Event Planning Timeline – General document and use the DAA Event Information Form to compile all event details.

## SCHEDULE

**The TF6 schedule is dependent on availability of speakers and content.** It is recommended that no more than one “Table for 6” dinner be scheduled per quarter. It is suggested that they start at 6:30pm (may be adjusted for the region) and last no longer than 2.5 hours. The typical schedule includes 30 minutes of open networking, 90 minutes of conversation over dinner with the one executive seated at each table, then 30 minutes additional networking.

## COST

**TF6 events Should Break-even on Costs.** The lead volunteer determines the venue based on a central location in a desirable setting offering universally appealing meal options. Ticket charges have ranged from \$40 in Charlotte to \$70 per attendee in New York, with a cash bar option.

## ENGAGEMENT

**A Variety of Event Promotion Increases Alumni Engagement.** After the DAA Event Information Form is submitted to the Regional Director, the DAA will create a registration page and email invitation. Additionally, the lead volunteer should post to Duke regional social media outlets (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.) and share with personal Duke networks. Word of mouth (or personal email) is the most effective method of increasing interest and attendance.

## VENUE & REGISTRATION

**Venue and Registration Should be Given Attention by the Lead Volunteer.** Event registration must include a ranked alum registrant preference for seating at the speaker tables. The regional director should communicate that guests will be allocated to tables on a first come, first serve basis. The lead volunteer should lock in a venue and identify the cost per registrant for a prix fixe meal that includes non-alcoholic beverages. A cash bar usually is also provided. A private or semi-private room at a restaurant is ideal, but networking portion of the event may also occur in a less crowded bar area with the use of nametags for guests. Recommended cancellation policy is to require 5-day notice by alumni.

## DAY OF EVENT

**Once at the TF6,** volunteers should make introductions to alumni that they do not recognize and ensure that they feel welcome and meet others. The volunteer who secured the speaker should introduce the table hosts and make announcements about upcoming regional events and volunteer opportunities. If a DAA representative is visiting for the event, they should provide a quick (2 minute) campus update to the attendees during the opening comments. When the event is over, make sure that DAA receives the final attendance list.

## SAMPLE THEMES FOR TABLE FOR SIX EVENTS

- Trends in (Insert Industry such as Healthcare, Real Estate, etc.)
- Entrepreneurs in (Insert City)
- Moving from Business to Faculty (invite professionals who transitioned to higher education options)
- Success Stories: Restarting or pivoting your career
- Adding volunteer work to your life
- Doing business in (Insert Country or Region such as China, Eastern Europe, Latin America etc.)
- Balancing Work and Family
- Success Stories: Working Alongside Another Generation (Invite successful executives of various ages including Gen X, Millennials and Baby Boomers)
- Success Stories: Employee Engagement
- Success Stories: Encouraging Leadership over Management
- Success Stories: Embracing Change and Adapting in the Workplace
- Success Stories: Mentoring
- Small Business Founders
- Preparing for Your Retirement “Career”
- Big Data

### TIMELINE

