

12 Secrets to Make Your Meeting a Success

Check list courtesy of Rita Emmett

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- 1 Make a habit of providing meals before alcoholic drinks. When attendees drink on an empty stomach, you are asking for *intoxication* problems.
- 2 To increase ROI on a tradeshow, you consider cosponsoring with another organization that has similar objectives. This could lower your expenses and increase attendance, benefiting both your organizations.
- 3 When attendees register in advance, make sure they know what to watch for next. With online registration, you can set up an autoresponder that will inform attendees if registration materials will be delivered by email or snail mail or will be available when they register onsite.
- 4 In order to protect your room block, try to include a clause in the hotel contract specifying that rates lower than your group rates will not be offered during the dates of your meeting. This will help to ensure attendees won't find a lower rate and book outside your block.
- 5 If sleeping rooms and meeting rooms are not in the same building, be sure to take into consideration the transportation time between locations when scheduling programs.
- 6 To create interest and enthusiasm ahead of time, set up a blog dedicated to your meeting or event. Here you can post teasers, discuss information to be presented or even debate related issues with potential attendees, all in an interactive online environment.
- 7 Stay on top of the final bill by making a point to review all meeting changes either daily or before you leave the site. Reconciling accounts onsite is often much easier than doing so afterwards.
- 8 To make tracking meeting income easier, set up a separate bank account prior to your meeting, into which all registration fees and other advance income will be deposited. This way, all meeting-related income will be easily accessible in one spot.

- 9 Keep cultural differences in mind when selecting meeting dates. Websites such as www.interfaithcalendar.org are an easy tool for respecting important religious holidays.
- 10 Before planning to record a speech, make sure you've obtained written permission from the speaker. Include language in the contract clearly stating that you intend to record and distribute the material. Distributing a speech without permission could be an infringement on the speaker's intellectual property rights.
- 11 If your attendees are required to attend the meeting or event as part of their jobs, enthusiasm may be lacking. Make special efforts to engage these attendees by offering relevant, interactive content based on their needs. Consider surveying them to see what topics they want covered and search for speakers who can deliver these topics in their presentations.
- 12 If you're expecting international attendees, spend some time familiarizing yourself with their cultural customs. Gift-giving, for example, may be expected by some or considered inappropriate by others.