

gives us and we all respond to the space we're in. So it's important to look at what messages and responses meeting environments generate.

"Turf" and Power

The most important thing to consider about spaces at work is the relative amount of power that differing work environments connote. Therefore, depending on what you wish to accomplish, the choice of meeting location must be carefully considered from the power point of view and for the messages it sends.

- Who's calling the meeting and for what reason?
- How do you want your opposite number(s) to feel?
- Do you want him/her/them to be aware of how much power you have?
- Do you want to downplay the power so your opposite number(s) feels more secure?
- Are you trying to neutralize the power issue in order to motivate and build a team spirit?
- Do you perhaps wish to add a personal touch? To relax your client, employee, or co-worker?
- What effect does eating-and-meeting have?

Let's look at each of the most common meeting environments for the statements they make and the effects they create. We'll focus on the players, the subject matter, and the desired outcome.

Your Office

The most important effect of "my office" is one of turf. Be aware of the obvious ownership and power your office connotes. Look at it. It's filled with *your things*: *your* calendar, *your* urgent work spread before you, *your* trophies and awards displayed, *your* pictures and mementos on the wall—in short, *your* turf.

This fact creates the following response: It makes the other person feel like a fish out of water—*his* or *her* water. Your office obviously sends "someone else's seat of power" messages to whoever enters it. It speaks of someone *else* exercising sole discretion and judgment about how things are done in that space. It's clearly not the space where the visitor does that, too.