Title:
Don't Neglect Those Seminar Rituals

Word Count:
494

Summary:
Once everything is in place for your seminar, workshop, conference or other
event and all of the finishing touches have been applied to the main venue room,
make a point of testing the delegate experience. Run a presentation or a video
on the screen and try out seats in all corners of the room to check for screen
and text visibility. Test the sound level at the furthest point from the stage
and remember to compensate for the deadening factor of the audience. You will
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Keywords:
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Article Body:
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on the screen and try out seats in all corners of the room to check for screen
and text visibility. Test the sound level at the furthest point from the stage
and remember to compensate for the deadening factor of the audience. You will
also want to find areas that you feel may be problematic once the audience has
arrived so that you can quickly make adjustments.

As you sit in various seats, pay attention to the overall feel of being there.

• Is it pleasant?
• Are there draughts from doors or air-conditioning units?
• Can you smell cooking from the kitchens?
• Does the room look clean and tidy from this angle?
• Are there distractions like activity outside a window that the presenters
cannot see but the audience can?
• Does the view from the seat reflect the value of the ticket?

Remember that, for longer events, this seat may be home-for-a-day to your
delegate and they will appreciate small touches like easily reachable water
bottles and bowls of mints.

The arrival ritual

As on any other public occasion, people have certain expectations when they arrive at an event. It is a kind of ritual that must be undertaken to gain entry to the magic kingdom of information.

If a delegate has been invited or has been pre-registered, they should be able to arrive twenty minutes or more before the start time and find a table outside the event rooms covered in name badges neatly arranged in alphabetical order. This table will be managed by a smiling administrator ready to acknowledge them quickly, to welcome them and to provide them with their name badge and any supplementary information they will need. The additional information is usually contained in a professionally prepared folder.

The administrator will direct them from the reception table to a coffee area and will also provide them with information about the location of toilets, telephones and smoking areas.

Many will have come alone and may not be acquainted with other delegates. To ease any awkwardness, some quiet background music will disguise uncomfortable silences. The event team, especially the presenters are expected to mix with the guests and, as well as making small-talk and introducing one delegate to another, they should be continuing their information gathering task to ensure that the event resonates with relevance.

At the advertised start time a robust voice should invite the assembled delegates to enter the inner sanctum of the main event room. Upon which note there will be a surge of activity as delegates find their seats.

This approach is obviously tried and tested and it's what people expect but if you want to experiment with different techniques, this is your opportunity to stamp originality on your event.