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Contagious Energy • Customized Content • Motivated Audiences

IDEAS TO HELP YOU HAVE A GREAT EVENT



My name is Chip Eichelberger. I have been speaking professional for almost 20 years and spent 6 years with Tony Robbins throughout the US, Australia and the UK. Over the years I have also spoken at and attended over 1000 events and have a few ideas you might find helpful. You could be a meeting planning rookie or be a veteran. It is hard to think of everything! If you are **looking for a great opening or closing speaker** please consider my services.

- You may not want to hear this, but **less is more**. I know this is an important event for you. You have so much to cover and so little time. A great event will not be remembered by much you cover and “check the box” that you covered that! **The key is how much will the audience remember and take action on?**
- **Consider shorter sessions**. History tells me that most speakers from within your organization can be more effective doing a 40 minute presentation then in a 60 minute presentation. If you have shorter sessions the presenters will be FORCED to really think and determine what is most important! If they are long they will not be as focused or prepared.
- **ASK!** Ask your vendors, sponsors, speakers, hotel meeting planner - **“Is that the best you can do?”** What else can they offer you? What is possible? I will often give the recording rights to my session instead of charging for it. I often can do an additional breakout session. Vendors can donate and IPAD or other cool gifts. Hotel can give a free meeting room, meal discounts...ASK!
- Pick theme that the audience can rally around. See the **Choosing a Theme For Your Meeting** document I have on this page for over 100 great ideas. **Get Switched On! - Own It! - Breaking Barriers** are very popular for events I am speaking at.
- Choose the **opening** and **closing** speaker very carefully. Follow those links to see videos where I give you specific advice. The opening sets the tone for the entire event and the closing speaker should them they out the door pumped and ready to take action on everything they have learned.
- Always have everyone use a microphone. You may have a few (if the meeting is under 150) who say, “I can go without the mic. **Truth - no you cannot**. Your voice is very directional and if people cannot hear well they tune out – ideally use a wireless mic where they can get away from the podium.

- Try not to have a party that runs late and then have a 7 am breakfast. Make sure morning meals are not have too heavy – have plenty of fruit available. The same applies to lunch and any snack breaks . A heavy lunch or snacks will weigh them down in the afternoon and lower energy.
- To encourage new people to meet each other have assigned seating for meals. Instead of a normal opening cocktail reception create a way for them to network. **Create a game** with a simple card where they have to get completed and get questions answered: find a Yankees fan, someone who has been to Puerto Rico, a 20 year company vet, _____ award winner, a chef, someone with over 4 kids, married over 25 years...the possibilities are endless.
- At many events the most valuable time for the attendees will NOT be in the meeting rooms. Give people enough time during the breaks to network and enjoy each other. Breaks need to be 20 – 30 minutes long – 15 minutes is never enough time!
- If at all possible, have a **break** before your opening or closing speaker. If they audience is sitting down too long before they begin, it is more difficult to get the energy going.
- **Conference survival kits or ‘fun packs’** - small or large can be given on arrival or on each chair - do something fun. If in hot weather include sun screen, in cold include chapstick or a stocking cap. Be creative.
- If you are giving out awards/bonus checks remember to have personalized notes written from the leaders to the winners, not just the award. Those notes will be cherished!
- **Send a “To Bring” Reminder to Attendees and Speakers** No one does this. But why not send an email a couple days before the event reminding attendees to bring cards, a bathing suit if it’s a warm area with a pool, sunglasses, etc. Send the expected weather forecast. And send logistics of the event (hotel address, conference address, etc.). This creates goodwill, excitement, and is a little thing that prior to the event shows you’ve got your s&%t together.
- **The conference organizers and team** could identify themselves by wearing hats, t-shirts, badges etc that reflect the title/theme of conference. Name badges for attendees are more useful if the first and last names are **large print**. Names are more important than the conference logo/name - they know where they are. Can I see the name of the person and company on the badge from 20 feet away?
- If you are having a larger event, the hotel typically has **channels on the TV dedicated to the events on property.** You can have someone energetic interview vendors/sponsors/exhibitors about their business, interview key attendees and have run it on the channel.
- Give **fun prizes** throughout the conference. These can be given to individuals who have done something useful, silly or funny. Do a raffles for great prizes throughout the event, toward the end of sessions. Do not do all at the same time. Ask your sponsors/vendors for donations!
- **Keep the energy high throughout the day.** Use stand up and stretch breaks for 30-45 seconds. Play music and get someone to lead the break from the stage. You can dance, twist, do aerobics or even a good march on the spot.

- Hire some **great local talent** to entertain from local colleges: bands, jazz combo, choirs, etc. A fun musician, magician, comedian from the area can be a bonus and liven up your event.
- Give instructions to anyone preparing a **Power Point** presentation. My experience tells me they are often not very effective. I hear all the time the presenter say, "sorry that is too small to see." There should not be a paragraph on a slide. There should not be a chart with small numbers - pull out the salient statistic and put that on the slide.
- **Content, content and content.** Make it useful, make it creative, make it engaging, make it personal and make it interesting. What can I get there that I'll regret missing if I stay home?
- To make PPT easier to see, you need to use a contrasting background and letters - **blue background** - 36 pt. size letters if not bigger. Limit the number of items on a slide to a few key ideas. Too much on the slide will put the audience in a trance!

If I could do their presentation from their slides – they have too much information!

- Train your presenters to not talk to the slides, engage the audience. Conduct a training with all the presenters BEFORE the event and make them prepare weeks in advance NOT days!
- **Prep speakers on the phone before the event.** Discuss how presentations should go, expectations, guidelines, templates, etc. This creates a high quality show and content. Reinforce what the audience wants to hear, show examples of high rated presentations, require case studies and examples, and reinforce no selling. An email won't do this effectively.
- Have time for an **integration session** at the end of the convention. Often people come to the convention, attend every session and never look at the material again. Have someone lead the participants through a process to determine the best ideas they received and how they will implement them. Why will they use them? What impact will they have? Bring them to a clear call to action before they leave.
- Consider have a professional like Chip come in to **coach all your presenters in advance** of the convention. Don't most of the internal presenters at your event every year prepare 36 hours in advance? Are they able to engage the audience effectively? Are they memorable? Review the **Convention Preparation** document next to this one.



"Call me directly and I will help you plan a tremendous event. The right theme and the right speaker to bring it home can make all the difference in have a great event and a boring one."

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