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Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

Follow Up To Get Quality Event Feedback

By My Booking Manager

"Well, how did it go?" asked the CEO as he wandered past Siobhan's desk on his weekly tour of the offices. He was referring to the conference Siobhan had organized and run to involve their industry in standardization guidelines. Although her first impression was that the conference was a real success, she knew that she only had a small proportion of the total feedback. "I'm still in the middle of collecting feedback data", admitted Siobhan, "but the initial data looks more positive than we hoped. I'll have the full results at next week's review meeting."

Seminars, roadshows or workshops are held for a very specific reason and they will belong in one of the following categories:

- To generate sales opportunities for your products or services
- To spread information or increase productivity throughout an organization
- To raise general awareness about a topic
- To gain support for a change (political, legal, social or environmental)

It may be tempting, once the event is over, to sit back and wait for a reaction but, because you have invested time, emotion and money into developing and running an event, you ought to be pro-active in testing its effectiveness. Events are like all other products, some do everything they were expected to do whereas others fall short and need to be improved either by modification or enhanced design, if they are to be repeated.

With an event you cannot expect to satisfy everyone 100%, but you can get close by understanding what worked and what did not. As you will see, not everyone is prepared to give their true opinion during or directly after the event and some degree of post-event follow-up will be necessary to draw a balanced picture of audience perception.

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Because your delegates have different learning styles, you will not have seen a complete and considered reaction from all of them during your event.

Delegates, whatever their background, can be pigeon-holed into 4 categories:

- Activists
- Pragmatists
- Theorists

and

- Reflectors

The activists and pragmatists are most likely to have responded immediately to the information or activities that you provided as they enjoy interaction. Activists and pragmatists, by nature, have a strong tendency to engage and take on board new ideas. Pragmatists will test the realism of the new idea whereas activists just enjoy the thrill of the new.

Theorists, as you might expect, like to take time to break ideas down and think things through step-by-step. Reflectors prefer to gather information, stand back and consider things from different perspectives. Both of these learning types may need a little more time and space to assimilate what has been said and would probably respond well to a follow-up process.

Siobhan was right to hold back on boasting about her success. Some of the later feedback demonstrated that there were real practical problems that would take time and money to overcome. These had only surfaced once the delegates had returned to base to analyze the in-depth business implications for themselves.

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It'll Be All Right On The Night

By My Booking Manager

There was only a week to go before the major product launch and Sara had a "concern"; a phrase she used when she was shaking in her boots with sheer panic. She had been checking with all of the presenters to make sure that their presentations were well into development, if not complete and,

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although she had not heard or read them all from end-to-end, she could tell that there was an unacceptable amount of repetition. The audience was in danger of walking out after the first hour if she could not convince these high-flying executives to modify their approach.

Originally, Sara, as the event organizer, thought she could avoid a rehearsal to save cost and time, she now saw that this might be the only way to rapidly convince the presentation team to "adjust" their material. "Adjust", in this case, might mean "completely rewrite" but it sounds less challenging.

Wherever possible, it makes sense for the entire event team to assemble before the event to run through the complete timetable. If this cannot be done at the venue, then find somewhere that is a close approximation to the venue in size and shape. Lay out the audience seating as you believe it will be and provide the equipment that will be available on the day. Invite along a few colleagues who can spare the time to act as the audience and provide valuable feedback.

As the event organizer, you should be most interested in the timing of each activity and, if elements of the program turn out to be too long or too short, don't try to debate how to change them there and then. Let the entire event run its course, take copious notes about areas for improvement and then once the final words of the event have been spoken, hold a formal review meeting to discuss how the program or the timetable should be modified in order to better fit the time available.

Other review subjects may include:

- presentation content
- quality, consistency and clarity of slides
- segue design between elements
- energy levels in the audience throughout the event

If you have not run an event before, this is a useful opportunity to gauge how much time you will need to set up and dismantle everything that is to be used on the day and to plan any last minute changes that might need to be made.

Sara's "concern" was quickly taken on board by the entire presentation team when they were given an opportunity to sit and listen to each other's scripts during the rehearsal day and they quickly decided on a recovery strategy. As a result, on the day the event flowed effortlessly from beginning to end without noticeable repetition. According to the audience feedback, they were entertained and informed and they found the presentations to be slick and professional. Although Sara may not have been fully recognized for saving the day, she was praised for her quiet efficiency as event organizer.

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