



## *News Release*

Contact info.  
Denise Benoit  
Benoit Marketing LLC  
703 919-1589  
[denise@benoitmarketing.com](mailto:denise@benoitmarketing.com)  
@dfbenoit

### **Five Trends Observed in Experiential Learning**

**Leesburg, Virginia, December 6, 2016** ... [The National Conference Center](#) – one of the nation’s largest residential conference centers and the largest on the East Coast – with its strategic partner [The Browne Center](#), has observed five trends in experiential learning.

Experiential learning presents a highly unique growth opportunity for participants, and a tool that planners can use to achieve a specific outcome. Differentiated from the more traditional teambuilding, experiential learning uses a blended approach to learning, integrating activities, exercises, adventure elements, quiet time and ongoing post-event coaching to create powerful programs of leadership development, strategic planning, mentoring and coaching, communication, feedback & observation and enhancement of behavior styles.

#### Five Trends Observed in Experiential Learning:

1. **Barrier Free Learning** ... Take away the white classroom tables. Barrier free learning is ongoing training in a lab-like setting verses the meeting room or classroom. For example, The National has created an entire workroom and lab for simulation, case studies and interactive training for a top client, Verizon, taking away the barrier of the ‘white table’ with attendees learning in a lab or open space area.
2. **Learning by Choice** ... Blending classroom training with outdoor activities. The Challenge Course at The National has both high and low rope elements, and increasingly planners are using a Challenge-by-Choice approach. Learning Programs are designed to meet the variety of goals unique to each client, whether conferees make use of the elements of the high or low course, or none at all. There is a role for everyone in the training, even if individuals choose not to physically participate.

3. Learning by Shared Experiences ... Creating ‘shared experiences’, such as a building project, where everyone is involved collectively – from C-level executives to assistant managers – taking each participant out of their comfort zone and into a creative problem solving task to construct the future.
4. Post Program Application ... While debriefing is a structured process facilitated by a skilled professional throughout the process of a program, it has been in place for some time. Today a post program application assists participants *over time* with how learning translates back at the office. There are a number of strategies that can be arranged to help facilitate this continued learning process. These include, self-directed debrief meetings, professional coaching sessions by phone or in person, or follow up, mini sessions at the one, two or three month intervals. These sessions can be highly productive and fun, assisting the participants in real time learning application issues. They can be on the participants work site or scheduled as an offsite.
5. Learning by Silence ... Groups are increasingly exploring the power of silence in a high-speed, technically dependent world. Meeting planners are allowing more time for conferees’ solo quests, reflection, meditation time and movements like yoga that can provide powerful reconnection with the natural world, and the true inner self, opening new channels of connection and learning.

The National Conference Center installed a state-of-the-art challenge course last year to provide additional training opportunities for their clients. The National Challenge Course consists of five low elements plus many portable options, which are weight bearing problem solving activities that can accommodate 15 or more people at any one time. Also six high elements can be done with two or more solo, or with many other climbers simultaneously. All high elements are dynamic relays where participants hold the rope for one another.

For more information about experiential learning at The National, call 800-640-2684.

#### **About The National Conference Center**

Located in Northern Virginia, 12 miles from Dulles International Airport and 35 miles from Washington, D.C., [The National Conference Center](#) is one of the largest and most comprehensive conference centers in the nation. With 917 guest rooms and over 265,000 square feet of meeting and group function space, including the West Belmont Place catering and special events complex with its 16,552 square foot ballroom, The National has become the nation’s headquarters for productive meetings and West Belmont Place the hub for Loudoun County and surrounding area social functions and special events.

West Belmont Place was named 2013 Best Venue by the International Special Events Society. The National Conference Center is also on the GSA schedule. The National is owned by NCC PS Enterprises LLC, a venture between PCCP, LLC and Stoneleigh Capital, LLC., which retained [LaKota Hotels & Resorts](#) to oversee all aspects of the day-to-day operations. For information call 800-640-2684 or visit [www.conferencecenter.com](http://www.conferencecenter.com) and [www.westbelmontplace.com](http://www.westbelmontplace.com)

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