



NEWS

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The National Conference Center Provides Ten Reasons Why Environment is Important for Successful Training Meetings

LEESBURG, Va., March 31, 2015—The National Conference Center is one of the nation’s largest training and meeting facilities. As experts on training meetings, The National suggests that anyone planning a training meeting should consider the following:

- **Setting** – Not only is the interior building layout important but so is the exterior. Training meetings can be intense and it’s important that your selected site has outdoor areas where attendees can get outside, stretch their legs, take in a park or natural landscaped areas and recharge.
- **Distraction- Free**—Holding a meeting in an area where there are inside or outside temptations and distractions can be difficult in maintaining attendee focus and ensuring that attendees arrive at training sessions on time. Training facilities located near food courts, entertainment and shopping often provide distractions. When holding training meetings, it’s important that attendees are able to stay focused on learning and collaboration. Proper environment is essential to ensuring training success.
- **Brain food**—Studies have shown that eating properly keeps up energy, brainpower and focus. Pick a location that understands the value of healthy food and snacks. A white paper produced by The National Conference Center in 2011, *The Science of Food for Thought: Enhancing Meetings Through Food* (<http://bit.ly/h6w0ZH>), provides insight into the importance of reaching for fruit or nuts as a snack as opposed to sugary sweets. While sugar will lead to an eventual energy drop, healthy snacks will conversely refuel brainpower and provide attendees with greater focus and better thinking.
- **Top Technology**—There’s nothing worse than holding a meeting and having an equipment failure. It distracts and detracts from the focus of the meeting. Make sure the training location has great AV people who are on-site, will check the equipment prior and be there to make sure everything goes off without a hitch. Also, make sure that the meeting location provides good wi-fi in all of its rooms, including meeting rooms and not just the lobby. If attendees have to go to another location to check email, it will break everyone’s concentration. While you don’t want attendees to be constantly looking at their phones, it’s important that when email breaks are scheduled, your attendees don’t have to disperse all over the property to check on their email, text and phone messages.
- **Workout facilities**— Sitting through meetings all day makes many attendees feel cooped up and in need of physical activity. Having a workout facility is essential. Having outdoor areas where there are walking and running trails is a good bonus and provides attendees with good physical activity options.

- **On-site business center**—Saving time is critical, especially when a document is suddenly needed or attendees need the use of a computer, copier or printer. Having to venture down the street or across town is not an efficient use of time or resources. It's essential to have an on-site business center.
- **On-site food**—Food is an essential part of training meetings. As mentioned above, having healthy snack choices is vital to good brain function. Being able to provide good meals throughout the day is also important. Trainees often do not have the luxury of time to go off site and many organizations holding training meetings are looking at keeping employees together to expand collaboration, encourage networking and team building. Make sure the site you select has an executive chef that will meet with you and go over menus and special items. To make meals more interesting, you might want to ask that the chef and/or someone from his team will attend special meals and explain the ingredients in the dishes. As a fun meeting break, you might also consider holding an evening cooking class with the chef and/or a special wine tasting.
- **Encourage attendees to network**— When training is over for the day, it's great team building to encourage attendees to network. Hold a fun evening event that gets attendees engaged and networking. When weather permits, plan outdoor events that get attendees outside for a barbecue or special farm-to-table dinner. Or, turn a meeting room into a nightclub or casino. Dinners that are not sit-down and have food stations also encourage attendees to walk around and get to know one another.
- **Take regular breaks**— Training attendees can only be expected to sit through so many hours of meetings before just sitting becomes tedious. Take regular phone/email breaks but also look at incorporating at least one outdoor walk or activity break. Even if everyone gets up and walks around indoors, it will increase blood flow and improve thinking. And everyone will return to the meeting ready to focus again.
- **Be creative**—Work with the on-site contact to make the meeting(s) memorable. Creative room set-ups; changes in venue; creative breaks, receptions, and meals can all add to the energy level and engagement of participants. Select a cost-effective site location and these add-ons will make for a memorable experience without a huge cost.

The National Conference Center has hosted thousands of training meetings over the years and has perfected the experience and defined the requirements for the most effective and efficient training meetings. In addition, The National has produced a variety of white papers on meeting trends, requirements and meeting needs. Having been originally built as a national training center for Xerox, the property provides the perfect environment for distraction-free training meetings. Now under new ownership and having received rejuvenation and renovation, The National provides even better facilities in addition to a highly creative and experienced staff. There are a variety of extra-curricular programs available that include chef's table dinners, wine tasting dinners and events, trips to local wineries, and a host of outdoor activities including team building events. For more information, visit www.ConferenceCenter.com, or call 800-640-2684.

More 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 250,000 square feet of meeting and group function space, including the West Belmont Place catering complex with its 16,500 square foot ballroom, the National Conference has become the Nation's headquarters for productive meetings and West Belmont Place the hub for Loudoun County and surrounding area social functions. West Belmont Place was named 2013 Best Venue by the International Special Events Society. The National Conference Center is also on the GSA schedule. NCC was recently acquired 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.