

SECRETS OF AN ACTUALIZING EVENT

The seeds of success are in the preparation. Kendall would like to share some "lessons" and "best practices" to promote interaction and participation. Of course, with more participation, we can generate higher retention and more full integration of key skills and content.

As your venue allows, consider some of the following recommendations in preparation for your special event:

1. **Prepare your audience** for the presentation, event, or workshop. Have each participant be responsible for bringing back at least two ideas to increase either their personal effectiveness or the overall effectiveness of the team/department/organization.
2. **There is power in proximity.** When possible, it is advantageous (to the speaker and the audience) to be close to each other in order to pick up on facial expressions and gestures. As in many relationships, distance can be a killer.
3. **Music does more than set the mood; it opens the mind.** Consider using music to announce the start and end of breaks and downtime. Music can be your secret weapon for success.
4. **Room configuration.** If the room is rectangular, set the stage area in the middle of the long wall -- not on the short end. It is better to have an audience wide than deep. Please see our [room diagram](#).
5. **Illuminate Your Investment.** Spotlights will help to keep the attention on the speaker and helps to increase focus and retention.
6. **Imaging Technology.** Large venues would benefit from utilizing redundancy presentation methods, i.e. large screens, "Jumbo-trons", or other large monitors.
7. **Audio Systems.** While the internal speaker systems at hotels and conference centers are perfect for mellow background tunes, they often fail miserably as a PA system for a keynoter or trainer. If the sound system isn't well matched to the type of presentation, the audience will soon tune out.
8. **Auxiliary Audio Speaker Placement.** The placement of the audio speakers is crucially important. The strategy is to bathe the audience in sound from as many angles as possible. Don't forget about the people in the back and up in the balcony as you calibrate your sound system.

9. **Have a back-up plan.** Make sure the sound tech has a back-up plan? "We've never had any trouble before." is not very comforting with 160 - 1600 people straining to hear the speaker's message.
10. **Live Recording.** The best live recordings capture the "buzz" of the audience. Dedicate one channel for audience reaction, comments, and laughter. (See [audio/video taping agreement](#) for details.)
11. **Establish a Buddy-Plan.** Before the session begins, have a plan to prevent the annoying and embracing "sound off" of phones and other sounding devices. One suggestion is to ask each participant to check with the person on either side of them to make sure their "gadgets" have been silenced.