

"THINK IN TERMS OF SIMPLICITY. . . . THE LESS TO GO WRONG,
THE BETTER. THEN THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU WILL DO
WHEN THOSE THINGS THAT CAN'T FAIL, DO!"

A MANAGER'S GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS

Editor's Note: The following guide was assembled by the Sales Promotion Department, Safety Razor Division, The Gillette Co.

Besides being a leader of people, developer of talent, recruiter of people, and a giant of business, there are times in each manager's life when he or she must become a producer of sales meetings. Little in one's business career can prepare a manager for this duty. Usually, after attending various meetings, you find yourself running one with very little to go on.

There are books by professionals on the subject, so this checklist is not intended to supplant the literature; but, rather, to supply a few hints on how we might like to run our meetings if we had our say. The checklist covers some of the questions you might ask yourself as you work up the program.

The basics are these:

- A carefully developed plan
- Date and facility selection
- The right room
- An active program and theme
- Attention to detail
- Set-up and rehearsal

- Execution of the plan

- Follow-up

Begin by committing to writing exactly what you want to accomplish as a result of your meeting. The more detailed the better. Think in terms of the end result. What will be able to be done after the meeting that couldn't have been done before? Can it be measured? How will I know if the meeting's objectives have been met? Mentally walk through the entire sequence from an attendee's point of view. From *each* attendee's view actually, because individual transportation is a factor for each person. As you do this, note everything that must be planned for. The more detailed your walk through, the better your meeting. Add your own items to the list we provide.

Next, make an on-site inspection of guest rooms and your meeting room. Think in terms of your objectives and tentative program, and how it will fit in that particular room. Have the house man set up a few tables so you can see how much room you will have. Check the ceiling height for size of screen. See if a chandelier or any

other obstruction will get in the way.

In other words, walk the ground well in advance of your gathering, not the night before, but weeks ahead. Lead time is important! Establish face-to-face contact with the facility people so that you can establish a working relationship. Almost anything can be planned for, if you have the lead time. Find out what your problems will be well in advance. You may decide to select another site. Whatever the case, don't cut corners on an actual visit. Surprises have a way of ruining the best of plans. Make a detailed list just as we have done. Write down each item you will need and where it will be acquired, by when, and by whom.

Think in terms of simplicity. The less to go wrong, the better. Then think about what you will do when those things that can't fail, *do*. Arrive early, set up and rehearse. Try everything in sequence and completely. Finally, relax and do your thing. Schedules, like rules, are meant to be flexible. To hurry, cut short, or cut our parts of your program for schedule's sake is not in line with your objectives. Put in

optional items and then back them out if necessary. Stay flexible.

Have you thought of:

The Place

Are options available at a secondary location?
Will you use theme material in guest rooms?
Is the activity board correctly posted?
Have direct billing arrangements been set up with outside restaurants?
Has a rooming list been provided?
How accessible?
What travel time by whom?
The price range?
Who else will be there? (what other group)
What is in season?
How old is it?
How well maintained?
What about the weather?
How good is the service?
Will your contact be on call?
Can you have space for rehearsal and set-up?
Is it on a flight path?
Is there evening entertainment?
Will you use the recreational facilities?
How is the food?
What else is nearby?
Can you cancel?
Can you add reservations?
What do you have to guarantee?
By when?
Are there preordered menus?
Is lunch light?
Can liquor be brought in?
Can mixers be brought in?
Are hors d'oeuvres ordered?
Is breakfast optional?
Is a continental breakfast available?
Is wine ordered?
Is liquor included at lunch?
Are after-dinner drinks planned?
Is a cookout planned?
Will all charges be itemized?
Will all personal charges be audited?
Will your budget be reconciled to charges?
Will the facility provide A/V support?
Is a bartender required?
Is there a corkage charge?
Where is ice available?
Can soft drinks be ordered?
Can the room be cleaned on breaks?

Are ice water and glasses provided?

The Room

How many square feet per person?
How high is the ceiling?
Where is the light control?
Is there an exhaust fan?
How effective is the environmental control system?
Who controls the heat and/or air conditioning?
Is it soundproof?
Will you eat in the same room?
Can the room be securely locked if you eat elsewhere?
How many entrances and exits does it have?
Is there a view?
Can the room be darkened?
Where are the electrical outlets?
How long is the projection through?
Is there a white wall?
Can you move furniture? (in or out)
What setups are possible?
Is there a rug?
Can you hang things on the walls?
What is the decor?
Is there a sound system?
How are the acoustics?
Are the restrooms outside?
Can you use rear projectors?
Is there a stage?
Is there a projection booth?
Can you break into the sound system?
Is there a foyer?
Is there a telephone?
Can it be shut off during presentations?
Is there a fire escape?
Is there a fire extinguisher?
Is the room secure overnight?

The People

Are they preregistered?
Are rooms assigned in the same area?
Do they have a welcome letter?
Do they have a premeeting agenda?
Do they have an assignment?
Do they need name badges?
Do they expect recreation time?
When should they arrive?
When should they check out?
What should they wear?
Wear they told the objective of the meeting in advance?
Do they know each other?
Do they know the guests?
Do the guests know the attendees?
Is free time provided?
Do the attendees know what to bring?

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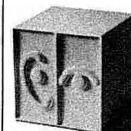
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Do you need company cars?
(cleaned out trunks)
Are there new people?
What entertainment is planned?
What entertainment is permitted?
What alternatives for entertainment are provided?
Are private meetings planned?
What is the head count?
Have room assignments been made?
Will they all arrive at once?
Who departs when?
Should they have a meal en route?
Should they plan to eat after departure?
Were they asked what they needed?
Were they asked how the meeting went?
Were they given any options?
Were they kept busy?
Were they asked to participate?
Were they asked to contribute?
Were they worked too hard?
Were they given breaks?
Were the expense policies clear?
Did it cost them to come to the meeting?
Are there nonsmokers in the group?

Are there nondrinkers in the group?
Are there assigned seats?
Are ethnic or religious holidays involved?
Are there dietary restrictions?
Are there health problems?
Is a doctor or dentist available?
Is emergency cash on hand?
Are spouses considered?
Can personal trips be taken?
Can phone calls be taken or made?

Outside Speakers and Guests

Did they make their own travel arrangements?
Can you reach them at the last minute?
Can they reach you at the last minute?
Are special accommodations required?
Is a special welcome letter prepared?
Is special pick-up set up?
Do they know the group?
Does the group know them?
How are expenses set up?
Is a fee paid? When?
Is their appearance guaranteed?
What if they can't come?
What about an unexpected visitor?
Are name tags necessary?
Is biographical data distributed?
Are they properly introduced?
Is a follow-up letter sent?
Are all arrangements and instructions in writing?
Are photos necessary?
Will guests speak?
Will guests rehearse? Where and when?
Are visuals required?
Will they bring their own equipment?
Do you know their requirements?
Will they have handouts?
Will they have copies of their remarks?
Do they have all the information the attendees have?
What are their specific travel plans?
Will they require private meeting time?
Will they attend the entire program?
Are there security problems?
Will they receive all handouts?
Will they be part of the recreation program?
Do they need a car?
Do they need help with equipment?

What did they come to see?

The Program

Is there too much in it?
Is it set up by the clock?
How flexible is the schedule?
How much participation?
Is it rehearsed?
Have you provided all visuals?
Are there enough breaks?
Is there variety?
Is it all lecture?
Is it all slides?
Are there buzz groups?
Are there practical exercises?
Are there active Q & A periods?
Is it scripted?
What happens if a speaker can't make it?
What happens if a film isn't there?
What is the objective?
How will you know you have achieved it?
Who is responsible for physical arrangements?
Is the program timed?
Can you stretch some parts?
Can you cut some parts?
Is there a theme?
Are there pre-meeting mailings?
Are there follow-up mailings?
Is there an upbeat after lunch?
Are the evenings programmed?
Are any parts optional?
Are the breaks at logical program divisions?
Are there summary handouts?
Do the participants know the objectives?
Does the program take advantage of the facilities?
Are there assignments?
Is there competition?
Is everything illustrated to appeal to multi-senses?
Is there a spouse program?
Equipment and Arrangements
Do you have a qualified operator?
Is back-up equipment available?
Is the screen big enough?
Is front-to-back projection best?
Are all visuals scripted?
Has everything been run in sequence?
Is sound equipment adjustable? (feedback-proof?)
Are coffee breaks outside the meeting room?
Are light controls accessible?
Can the room be darkened?
Are the projector throws above the heads of the audience?
Are all cords taped?
Is small auxiliary lighting available? (Continued on page 16)

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- Do podium lights wash out visuals?
- Do you have 3-plug adapters?
- Do you have basic tools?
- Do you have spare bulbs?
- Can you change bulbs under fire?
- Can you work around defective equipment?
- Do you have small extension cords?
- Do you have an electrical function box?
- Can you rewind films on breaks?
- Do you have to make slide tray changes?
- Can the sound be heard clearly?
- Can the visuals be seen clearly?
- Do the visuals fill the entire screen?
- Is one person responsible for all A/V?
- Is there a local supplier for back-up equipment?
- Is all video equipment compatible?
- Will the A/V get in the way of the message?
- Do you have good general lighting?
- Do you have good sound control?
- Is outside light a factor?
- Is outside sound a factor?
- Is your film in lip sync?
- Can you thread your projector in the dark?
- Are all films and tapes cued for start points?
- Are all projectors pre-focused?
- Are overhead keystones compensated for?
- Are visuals duplicated in handouts?
- Is audio available on tape for reference?
- Are you recording the meeting?
- Will your shipped-in visuals be there?
- Do you know how they're being shipped — B/L#s?
- Who is the facility electrician and engineer?
- Are extra pads available for flip charts?
- Do you have your own chalk and "El Markos"?
- Do you have your own blackboard eraser?
- Is there an extra bulb inside the overhead projector?
- Do you have a spare exciter bulb for your 16mm sound projector?
- Are there special fuses in any of your equipment?
- If using a dissolve unit, do you have an extra set of single tray slides?

- Do you have extra black slides?
 - Do you have masking and electrical tape?
 - Do you have a clock?
 - Do you have a flashlight?
 - Do you have patch cords for the local sound system?
 - Do you have a film splicer?
 - Do you have a tape splicer?
 - Do you have a leader tape and/or film?
 - Do you have a head cleaner cassette both audio and video?
 - Do you have a lavalier mike with cord and string?
 - What will cause sound system feedback?
 - Can you spotlight the speaker or a flip chart or an exhibit?
 - Are all slides numbered?
 - Are all slide trays labeled?
 - Are all slide trays locked?
 - Are duplicate slides available?
 - Are you using master slides?
 - Are overhead transparencies numbered?
 - Do all overhead transparencies have frames?
 - Are presentation notes written on O/H frames?
 - Do your marking pens write on O/H frames?
 - Are meeting notes penciled in on flip charts?
 - Do you have a master set of chart originals?
 - Does your O/H projector have a registration jig?
 - Can your visuals be read from the back of the room?
 - Can all visuals be seen and read from all seats?
 - Do you have a pointer?
 - Do you have a coffee-break music tape?
 - Do you have a lead-in music tape?
 - Are pencils, pens and note pads pre-ordered?
 - Is there a Muzak shutoff?
 - Is there a paging system shutoff?
 - Is there a telephone bell control?
 - Are costumes or props necessary?
 - Will you take candid photos of the meeting?
 - Are buses needed?
 - Are directions provided for drivers?
- If everything works, say thanks in writing with copies to the top. If you have problems, don't cry over spilt milk, but try and learn the lesson.