

Haunted Meetings

Scenario # 1

Projection equipment failed during VIP presentation.

Key Challenges:

Upset VIP

Participants waiting to hear

Resolution:

Check hotel AV

CSM – call to see if they have

Switch agenda – a.m. to a p.m. speaker

Ways to Avoid:

Double check equipment

Have speaker bring handouts of talk

Have extra equipment in car

Speaker ready-room to test equipment

Haunted Meetings Scenario # 2

As the meal is served, the participants inform the meeting planner that there are not enough vegetarian lunches.

Key Challenges:

Quickly provide more lunch

Get more vegetarian lunches to provide all participants with appropriate meal

Dietary requirements

Special Needs

Resolution:

Communication to address special requests

Improvise – lunches do not have to be the same

Check other functions

Banquet manager

Speak to Chef

Ways to Avoid:

Make sure to provide opportunities to address special meal requests

Registration checklist

Ask again at the registration table

Cards at place settings

Haunted Meetings Scenario # 3

Group had contract with major hotel chain for a meeting in Orlando. The hotel closed. No one called to let the meeting planner know, just found out by accident. Meeting planner had to find another venue 3 months out from program date.

Key Challenges:

*New location within proximity
Contact participants
Cost
Find new venue
Publicize change*

Resolution:

*Contact local Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)
Contact hotel chains main office
Use 2 hotels instead of one
Use Internet to contact participants
Use SGMP contacts
Get with regional office of hotel chain*

Ways to Avoid:

*Become familiar with back-up hotels in area
Keep close contact with hotel
Communicate
Stay in touch with hotel*

Haunted Meetings Scenario # 4

Meeting planner learns that the guest speaker is having flight problems and will not make it to the conference.

Key Challenges:

How to get speaker there

Resolution:

Charter a private plane

Have a back up speaker

Could shift timeline to later in day or next day

Use video/tele-conferencing

Rearrange agenda

Know your speakers itinerary

Ways to Avoid:

Have speaker arrive a day early

Haunted Meetings Scenario # 5

Program had major problem with food service. Food wasn't being delivered on time. They were about 1 hour late. I received the response that they were on the way. Finally, I was informed that the driver was in an accident and he was okay, but had to return to get another driver to bring the food.

Key Challenges:

*Everyone is hungry
The schedule is completely messed up
There is no food*

Resolution:

*Contact facility coordinator or use the phone book to find another local restaurant to bring food
Ask the current vendor if they can help
Maybe go to a local grocer for inexpensive food options
Or, we could wait for the food to arrive and change the meeting schedule
Create distraction*

Ways to Avoid:

*Have a back up plan with catering company
Have caterer come earlier than necessary
Always have beverages and snacks on hand*

Haunted Meetings Scenario # 6

HURRICANES! Even though the hurricane was not projected to hit the conference location, some participants and speakers unable to make it. How do you plan for hurricanes?

Key Challenges:

Decision to cancel or go with conference

Travel

Notifying attendees

Safety

Resolution:

Present a back up date for rescheduling

Email addresses on registration form for communication

Ways to Avoid:

Hotel will never say "do not book"

Visit Florida Insurance

Haunted Meetings Scenario # 7

A motivational group with loud music, clapping and shouting was placed next to my intense educational training class. Aka "Do Sound-proof walls really work?"

Key Challenges:

*Getting your group to focus on your event
Focus of education participant*

Resolution:

*Contact hotel staff & ask them to make contact with the other group & let them know they need to tone it down
Join in with the clapping 😊
Ask ahead of time
Rearrange schedule*

Ways to Avoid:

*Know who is next to you or in the hotel at the same time as you
Let hotel/convention staff know your needs ahead of time
Advance communication & information*

Haunted Meetings Scenario # 8

A hot water main broke on the 10th floor in the middle of the night destroying all sleeping rooms in that tower - displacing 80 conference participants!

Key Challenges:

Transportation

Notification to participants

Resolution:

Bus participants to host hotel

Schedule events at the re-location site

Ways to Avoid:

Have a plan in place for these types of happenings