



Tips for Innovative Meetings and Events (T.I.M.E.)
Topic: Green Meetings
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Written and Published by Sue Tinnish, 847.394.9857,
stinnish@ameritech.net
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Welcome

In early May, General Electric Co. announced a new company-wide environmental initiative, pledging to decrease pollution from its products and to double research and development spending on cleaner technologies. Their plan calls for increased spending to develop new technologies such as wind-power generation, diesel-electric hybrid locomotives, more-efficient aircraft engines and appliances, and advanced water-treatment systems.

GE is the biggest addition to a growing list of corporations seeking to be seen as "green". GE joins BP, Exxon Mobil, General Motors, Ford Motor and other big companies with ecology initiatives. When these large companies display corporate wide in renovation, you can bet on this trend continuing.

Other organizations, like associations, are focused on the issue. The American Institute of Architects recognizes a new branch of architecture called 'sustainable design' or 'green development.' Although this new architecture is difficult to describe in a sentence or two, its overall goal is to produce buildings that take less from the earth and give more to people. In January, the National Association of Home Builders unveiled new voluntary guidelines to help home builders to incorporate environmental practices into every phase of the home building process while putting a priority on housing affordability.

And the greening of meetings has been discussed for almost a decade. Greening and sustainability is here to stay!

This issue of Tips for Innovative Meetings and Events looks at the topic of green meetings. My thanks to Amy Spattisano, CMP of Meeting Strategies Worldwide and the Green Meeting Industry Council for her additional help and guidance on this important topic. You can contact Amy at amy@meetingstrategiesworldwide.com or click here [Amy](#).

Sue
[Sue Tinnish](#)

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Green Means Go

According to the Green Meeting Industry Council (www.greenmeetings.info) a green meeting incorporates environmental considerations throughout all stages of the meeting in order to minimize the negative impact on the environment. What makes a meeting green?

Green Meetings can focus on:

- Reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs)
- Reducing landfill waste
- Recycling or reusing
- Refusing or reviewing what you do
- Using sustainable "ingredients" whether in food or other materials

The Green Meeting Industry Council explodes the following myths on their website (www.greenmeetings.info or [Green Meeting Industry Council](#)):

Myth: Green meetings are a hassle

Myth: Green meetings are expensive

Myth: Green meetings reduce the quality of the meeting experience

Being green can very often mean:

- Holding down costs for your meetings
- Savings money
- Creating or enhancing competitive advantage and reputation
- Supporting overall organizational objectives

So whether you work for an environmentally conscious corporation or association or are looking to create a competitive advantage, do think Green and read on.

Unearthing Green

The best time to ask questions is upfront -- before you have made any decisions. If you are interested in pursuing environmentally friendly policies, you are more likely to secure the cooperation if you are able to communicate your priorities and policies up front. What are the questions to ask when planning a green meeting?

For any of your suppliers:

- Do you have an environmental program? If so, what does that program entail?
- Will you work with us to minimize packaging and waste? What have you done in the past? What will you do for our meeting?

For Hotels:

- Can guests choose not to have towels or sheets changed daily?
- Are there waste containers for recyclable materials?
- Does the bathroom have low-flow shower heads and amenity dispensers with 100 percent natural soap and shampoo?
- Do you regularly purchase recycled products or products that can be recycled?
- Is there an in-house recycling program? If yes, what materials are included?
- Will you provide recycling bins and commit to seeing that the items are actually recycled?
- Can we avoid using disposables such as Styrofoam, plastic, and individual creamer and sugar packets for F&B events?
- Do you purchase and serve beverages in returnable, refillable containers?
- Do you donate leftover food to a local organization?
- Do you employ solid waste minimization and/or energy reduction programs?
- Have you upgraded to energy-efficient lighting?
- Do you generate any energy from alternative sources?
- Are you doing anything to conserve water?
- Are the hotel dishwashers energy efficient (demonstrated by EnerGuide) or ENERGY STAR? qualified?
- Are you doing anything to reduce dry cleaning and laundry chemicals?
- How do you minimize chemical treatments and energy use in swimming pools and water features?
- Do you use pest management practices to minimize chemical use and/or water management practices to minimize irrigation?
- Do you use native plant species in landscaping?
- Do you use composting practices to enrich soils?
- Will you distribute leftover meeting materials to a local charity?
- Do you offer double-sided copying?
- Do you offer programs or proposals for attendees to leave a positive legacy of their stay in the local community?

To help you unearth "green" hotels, utilize the Meeting Planner's Questionnaire for "Green" Lodging Establishments. This questionnaire from www.greenhotels.com asks 43 pertinent questions which will reveal the greenness of a hotel, lodging establishment or convention center. [Green Hotel's Meeting Planner's Questionnaire](#)

Areas covered by the questionnaire include recycling, purchasing of recycled or

recyclable items, food and beverage service, bottle deposits, leftover food, meeting materials, guestroom amenities, guestroom linens, water and energy conservation. Each question may be answered Yes or No and examples or further information may be inserted. It's easy to use and easy for potential venues to complete.

Utilizing the Meeting Planner's Questionnaire on the Green Hotels website or using a some of the questions listed above can be incorporated into your existing procedures. Don't think of it as something else to do; rather, incorporate "greening" into your existing sight inspection process and checklist. In that way, "greening" your meeting becomes more of a mindset than another to do.

Green Tips

Tips abound on many of the websites listed in the Resource section. While it can seem overwhelming to start "greening" your meetings, start by picking one thing and doing it well, then add to it each meeting. The reality is that changing just one thing can make a difference.

Here is a list of suggestions for you to consider:

Pre-Event/RFP Stage

- Establish an environmental statement or policy for the meeting, and get buy in for it from the meeting host organization's management. Share the policy with suppliers, delegates and speakers.
- Include a clause in the contract with the vendor/property that states their commitment to comply with the event organizer's environmental requests.
- Consider incorporating incentives into contracts, such as sharing profits from the sale of recyclables
- Select sites with natural light
- Select a site offering comprehensive recycling collection and mass transit services

Transportation

- Encourage participants to use bus transportation in lieu of renting vehicles
- Publicize mass transportation options
- Provide shuttle service from mass transit stops or hotels to the event site
- Have maps of walking trails and local parks available and be ready to suggest off-site events and tours that involve event attendees in the area's natural environment with minimal impact

Meeting Materials

- Use new media and electronic technology to cut down your paper use

- Encourage participants to register online and to review session materials online
- Print all materials on recycled paper, using vegetable-based inks, and on both sides of the page
- Encourage attendees to recycle with visible signs, written announcements, and opening remarks
- Post the speakers' notes electronically along with conference proceedings

Meal Times

- Create eco-friendly centerpieces; for example create them from edible herbs or choose reusable centerpieces and decorations such as living plants or silk flowers
- Minimize disposables by using china, glass, and cloth napkins where feasible
- Conserve water and eliminate unnecessary dishwashing by making water available to dining room guests upon request only
- Maximize use of fresh produce, which means less packaging waste
- Give your delegates reusable coffee mugs at the start of the conference
- Request fresh, locally grown, organic foods be served rather than pre-packaged foods at all meals. Offer vegetarian meal selections; vegetables consume less land base and energy to produce. If possible, compost all of the left over food waste.
- Ensure food and beverage packaging is recyclable, and that it will be recycled
- Request reusable glasses, cups, dishware and cutlery. Use cloth napkins rather than paper ones.

Venues

- Request basic recycling (paper, plastic, glass, and cans) and visible bins at hotels and convention centers
- Require a linen and towel reuse program at contracted hotels and encourage attendees to use it

Why Green = Innovative

There are many resources to help you plan green meetings. I've listed many of the resources in the section below. And there are numerous people far more knowledgeable about green meetings than me.

Beyond the logistics of setting up a green meeting (the details contained in this newsletter and the resources I have compiled will set you up for a greener meeting), why would you want to host a green meeting?

What does being green have to do with innovative meetings? Green meetings can

change the "character" of your meeting and improve the meeting. Here are 6 ways I see green meetings helping the overall meeting message and objectives:

- **Pre-planning is important**
Being green encourages people to pre-plan. Downloading information from a website, reviewing a program on a CD ROM, self-selecting the materials that are important to me -- all those activities encourage people to think about the meeting before they arrive.

If necessity dictates that I review information prior to arrival, instead of arriving at a conference or meeting with little or no pre-thought to how I will spend my time, I am more likely to consider how to spend my time, what interests me and how I can maximize my investment in the meeting.

- **Interaction Promoted**
If paper handouts are not de rigueur, sessions may actually involve dialogue between the speaker and the participants. If nothing else, you can minimize the waste on session materials. Interested participants can visit a website or have handouts electronically provided to them. You can extend the reach of the meeting by giving people a reason to visit the website or connect after the meeting.
- **New Networking Opportunities**
A green meeting gives people something to talk about! It is a change of pace from the usual meeting. People can bond on mass transit options. People now have options to meet at the recycling bin and at the bar.
- **Halo Effect**
People generally respond well to green initiatives. People appreciate the opportunity to have small ways to be more environmentally sensitive. People can adapt measures they experience in the meeting. People will feel good. What a nice side effect from your meeting.
- **Partnerships**
Putting on a green meeting creates a great team between suppliers, the people executing the meeting, the people leading the meeting and the participants. And teamwork is what is necessary for great meeting. Just as everyone can contribute to the "greening" of a meeting, so can everyone contribute to the purpose of the meeting. It's everyone's responsibility to recycle, reuse and it's everyone's responsibility to get the "message", the purpose of the meeting.
- **Sustainability/Legacy**
Greening is just the beginning. While much is left to accomplish throughout meetings (and all of society) to be more green, a far more lofty goal is achieve sustainability. How can we insure that resources can sustain future generations? Amy Sparrisano put it in perspective for me when she referenced the old camping adage about leaving your campsite better than when you arrived.

If meetings can leave a venue or a city better than before it arrived, then we moving toward sustainability.

Many organizations plan networking or teambuilding events or sessions to help build relationships, rapport and morale. These events can have an eco-bent to them. Giving back to the community, supporting cottage industries in developing areas or participating in a ecology-related project are all examples of teambuilding activities that will leave a legacy after your meeting concludes.

Call me to help you organize a teambuilding event with a local bent or look at the Voluntourism website at www.voluntourism.org

Green Resources

BlueGreen Meetings

BlueGreen Meetings was created in 1996 as an environmental charitable organization with the mandate of conserving coastal environments through environmentally responsible tourism. It is the first charity in North America to focus on developing environmental 'best practices' for all sectors of the tourism industry. <http://www.bluegreenmeetings.org>

Cleaner and Greener Event Certification

You can register on their website for help to host a Cleaner and Greener Certified event. Organizations that register their event with Cleaner and Greener Event Certification make a commitment to reduce emissions.

www.cleanerandgreener.org/certification/event.htm [lastpage.htm](#)

EPA: Green Meetings

On this site you can access information that can assist you in organizing your conference to be "greener." whether you are a meeting planner, supplier of meeting services, meeting host who contracts with meeting planners or attendee of meetings. <http://www.epa.gov/oppt/greenmeetings>

It's Easy Being Green: A Guide To Planning And Conducting Environmentally Aware Meetings And Events

A great guide from the EPA at

<http://www.getf.org/file/toolmanager/O16F2392.pdf>

Green Meeting Industry Council

<http://www.greenmeetings.info>

Green Meetings - Environment Canada

<http://www.ns.ec.gc.ca/greenman/help.html>

Recycling for Festivals and Special Events

<http://www.uni.edu/ceee/Recycling/index.html>

Recycling Advocates: Event Recycling

<http://recyclingadvocates.org/pubs.htm#events>

Hotel Resources:

Benchmark.com

This tool has been designed specifically to help hotels improve environmental performance and make cost savings. It will help you to improve performance in the areas of energy management, fresh water consumption, waste minimization, waste water quality and purchasing programs. <http://www.benchmarkhotel.com/>

EPA: Energy Star for Hospitality

ENERGY STAR is a government-backed program helping businesses and individuals protect the environment through superior energy efficiency.

http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=hospitality.bus_hospitality

Kermit and Who Else is Green

Kermit the Frog from Sesame Street is Green. What other organizations have shown a commitment to being green? Some organizations hosting Green Meetings include:

- National Recycling Coalition check out their green meeting policy at <http://www.nrc-recycle.org/resources/library/nrcgreenmtgsguide.pdf>
- U. S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) Greenbuild International Conference & Expo
- 2004 Olympics
- World Summit on Sustainable Development
- The Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Conventions (CERC) worked with the 2004 US Democratic and Republican national Conventions
- Worldwide Exhibition for Incentive Travel, Meetings and Events (IMEX) in Frankfurt, Germany
- Ecological Society of America
- Aveda Corporation

Objective, independent third-parties help assess whether hotels (and other suppliers) are being green. Some sources include:

- The Green Hotels Association also lists its member properties on its website at <http://www.greenhotels.com/members.htm>
- Green Seal is an independent, non-profit organization that strives to achieve a healthier and cleaner environment by identifying and promoting products and services that cause less toxic pollution and waste, conserve resources and habitats, and minimize global warming and ozone depletion. Green Seal lists the properties that have earned their green seal certification at <http://www.greenseal.org/certproducts.htm#lodging>
- GreenStop.net lists travel-related companies that are developing or employing environmentally and socially responsible policies. All hotels and

travel companies are graded from one to three "greenstops",
<http://www.greenstop.net>

- Green Leaf Eco Rating Program is managed jointly through TerraChoice Environmental Marketing and Audubon International. The site offers a program to enable hotels to succeed with their eco-efficiency savings and environmental commitment. The site also provides the professional and leisure traveler verified environmentally responsible options.
<http://www.terrachoice.ca/hotelwebsite/indexcanada.htm>

Hotels receiving some recent Green press:

- Airlie Conference Center in conjunction with its Foundation holds itself responsible for the environmental impact of all aspects of its operation.
- Fairmont Hotels and Resorts offers a series of ideas, Eco-Meet tips, to help planners make their meetings more ecologically sound. Montreal's Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth donates unplated meals and baked goods to the Salvation Army and Old Brewery Mission.
- Intercontinental Hotels are listed on the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes. Launched in 1999, the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes are the first global indexes tracking the financial performance of the leading sustainability-driven companies worldwide.

Green convention centers include:

- David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh - the first LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design administered by the US Green Building Council) Gold Certified convention center.
- Oregon Convention Center in Portland, OR is the first existing building to receive the LEED rating.

The Green Afterglow

General Electric believes its green initiatives will lead to more products and revenue. Jeff Immelt, the company's CEO, said GE aims to double the revenue goal over that period for products that provide better environmental performance, to \$20 billion a year, and expects more than half of its product revenue to come from such products by 2015.

Going green also positions GE as progressive, environmentally sensitive and a (better) corporate citizen.

All organizations can benefit from the afterglow of going green. When executing a

green meeting, like all meetings, insure that you monitor and evaluate the results. This will enable you to:

- Document and track problems, successes, and failures of event initiatives.
- Quantify results and measure the effectiveness of initiatives.
- Prepare press releases highlighting the environmental results of your event and promote the environmental achievements of the event.
- Plan for the next green meeting.

If you want to learn more, plan to attend the 2005 Greening the Hospitality Industry Conference, October 5-7, 2005 in the metro Washington DC area at The Inn and Conference Center, University of Maryland University College Campus.

You can register by clicking here [Greening the Hospitality Industry Conference](#) or go to <http://www.greenmeetings.info/upcoming.htm>.

The conference will help you achieve that "green" afterglow whether you're new to planning meetings using green practices or you've been incorporating green meeting planning into your events for some time now. The conference agenda has more details including session schedule and topics.

Freebies: Contract Language

Freebies: Contract Language

For sample contract language that you can use go to:

The EPA Office of Pollution and Toxics Green Conference Sample Contract Agreement at

<http://yosemite1.epa.gov/oppt/epstand2.nsf/ContLang/D70B0588CA8B661F8525696C0068C310?Open&EPA%20Office%20of%20Pollution%20Prevention%20and%20Toxics&Specialty%20Store&Conferences&Green%20Conferences>

Or review Tyr Hilliard's green contract clause for hotels which originally appear in Corporate Meetings & Incentives, December 2004:

http://cmi.meetingsnet.com/ar/meetings_making_green_contract/index.htm

Please remember: I am not a lawyer. I am providing these links as a resource. Check with your own counsel.

More Freebies: I have a list of additional website for eco-travel. If you travel or plan incentives trips, you should have these additional resources. Email me at stinnish@ameritech.net or click here [Eco-travel Websites](#).

Future T.I.M.E.

I will speaking at [Affordable Meetings](#) - on September 7 from 1:45 - 3:00 in Washington DC. Come see me if you will be at that show.

I will also be at the [Meeting Planner's Forum, September 23, 2005](#) You can register for this event at www.cce.umn.edu/conferencecenter/resources.html or click here [Register](#). Sponsored by the University of Minnesota, Continuing Education and Conference Center, 1890 Buford Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108; 888-501-2268.

I will be on a panel at the [International Association of Corporate Entertainment Producers' Mid-year Members Meeting](#) in Chicago on Monday, September 26. Check out details for this event at www.iacep.com or register at <http://www.iacep.com/conregform.shtml>. My input on the panel will be to discuss the link between attention, learning, education and entertainment. It will be the melding of science, brain waves and entertainment! Watch for the October issue of Tips for Innovative Meetings and Events on the subject of entertainment. Dick Smith, President of the International Association of Corporate Entertainment Producers, will be a featured guest.

I will presenting 180+ Ways to Transform Your Meeting at [EMC Venues' Meeting and Event Planners Education Forum/Tradeshow](#) program on November 17, 2005 at The Palace at Somerset Park, Somerset, NJ.

I love to see familiar faces in the audience. Please come and see me!

Off the subject of innovative meetings, I am assembling a group of innovative women to attend [Wicked in Chicago on Wednesday, November 16](#). Our seats are in the first rows of the regular balcony, rows E and F. Tickets for this section are normally \$67.30 per ticket. (\$55.50 per ticket + \$9.30 handling charge + \$2.50 facility charge + \$4.50 per order = \$67.30 not including the one-time order fee.) I have a few tickets still available for the bargain price of \$60.00. Join a group of creative, fun business women. Please email me if you are interested at: stinnish@ameritech.net or click here [Wicked Tickets](#)

Finally, my subscriber base only grows through word of mouth of my subscribers. I would really appreciate it if you would forward T.I.M.E. onto your colleagues, associates, and clients. Just press the forward button at the end of the newsletter.

T.I.M.E. Gone By

If you are interested in past issues, please e-mail us with the month and topic and we will send you a copy of that newsletter. Here's what is included in past issues [Back Issue Request](#):

May 2000: [Teambuilding](#) and (Freebie) New York Times Reprint On Teambuilding
June 2000: [Green Meetings](#) and (Freebie) Resource List Of Exercises
July 2000: [Values](#) and (Freebie) Meeting Analysis
August 2000: [Minimum/Minimal Meetings](#) and (Freebie) Web Winners
October 2000: [Evaluations](#) and (Freebie) Sample Evaluation Questions
November 2000: [Politics](#)
December 2000: [Toys](#) and (Freebie) Brainstorming Ideas

January 2001: [Sales, Award Presentations](#) and (Freebie) Sales Tips
February 2001: [Change](#) and Communicating Change and (Freebie) Change Bombs
March 2001: [Open Space Technology](#)
April 2001: [Adult Learning Styles](#) and (Freebie) Learning Style Questionnaire
May 2001: [Trade Shows](#) and (Freebie) Trade Show Timeline
June 2001: [Emotional Intelligence](#) and (Freebie) EI Quiz
July 2001: [Presentation Tips](#) and (Freebie) Speaker Introductions
August 2001: [Ice Breakers](#) and (Freebie) Resource List
September 2001: [Facilitation](#) and (Freebie) Problem Personalities In A Meeting
October 2001: [Humor](#) and (Freebie) The Benefits Of Laughter
November 2001: [Customer Care](#) and (Freebie) Complaints
December 2001: [Slack](#) and (Freebie) Quiet Time

January 2002: [Teambuilding Options](#) and (Freebie)
February 2002: [Promotional Products](#) and (Freebie) Case Study
March 2002: [Multicultural Communication](#) and (Freebie) Multicultural Meeting Tips
April 2002: [Outdoor Learning](#) and (Freebie) Justification Checklist
May 2002: [Budgets, June, June, and ROK](#) and (Freebie) Budgeting Beyond Excel
June 2002: [Creativity](#) and (Freebie) Building the Case for Creativity
July 2002: [High Touch Technology](#) and (Freebie) Personal Technology Tools
August 2002: [Economic and Business Cycles](#) and (Freebie) Investment Strategies for meetings
September 2002: [Successful Environmental Factors/Conference Centers](#) and (Freebie) Learning Environments
October 2002: [Return on Investment](#) and (Freebie) Balanced Scorecard
November 2002: [Incentive Meetings](#) and (Freebie) Forum Synopsis
December 2002: [Resource Recap](#) and (Freebie) Resource Lists

January 2003: [Everyday Meetings](#) and (Freebie) Meeting Quiz
February 2003: [Diversity](#) and (Freebie) Survey Results
March 2003: [Problem Solving](#) and (Freebie) Techniques Illustrated
April 2003: [Marketing: Pre- and Post- Event](#) and (Freebie) Blogs
May 2003: [Entertainment](#) and (Freebie) Storytelling
June 2003: [Balance in Meetings and child caret](#) with (Freebie) Child Care at Meetings Tips
July 2003: [Mobile Events](#) with (Freebie) Sponsorship
August 2003: [Last Minute Ideas](#) with (Freebie) Audience Participation
September 2003: [Training Meetings](#) with (Freebie) Kirkpatrick Challenge
October 2003: [Unique Venues](#) with (Freebie) Experiential Checklist
November 2003: [Data, Information and Number Crunching](#) with (Freebie) European Privacy
December 2003: [Deja View](#)

January 2004: [Branding](#) with (Freebie) Identity vs. Brand
February 2004: [Audio Visuals](#) with (Freebie) Speaker Guidelines
March 2004: [Networking](#) with (Freebie) Networking Ideas
April 2004: [Strategic Budgeting](#) with (Freebie) Budgeting Ideas
May 2004: [Sensory Meetings](#) with (Freebie) Music's Impact
June 2004: [Board Meetings](#) with (Freebie) Litmus Test
July 2004: [Leadership](#) with (Freebie) Best Meeting Leadership Behaviors
August 2004: [Barrier-free Meetings](#) with (Freebie) Avoiding the Digital Divide

September 2004: [Time Management & Meetings](#) with (Freebie) More Timely Tips
October 2004: [The Travel Experience & Stress](#) with (Freebie) International Travel Tips
November 2004: [Voting Techniques](#) with (Freebie) Political Pitfalls
December 2004: [Deja View II](#)

January 2005: [New Year's Resolutions](#)with (Freebie) Best Business Books
February 2005: [Brainy Side of F&B](#) with(Freebie) Cooking Metaphors for Meetings
March 2005: [Sarbanes-Oaxley and Meetings](#)
April 2005: [Visual Aids](#) and (Freebie) PowerPoint Countdown
May 2005: [Experiential Teambuilding](#) and (Freebie) Template
June 2005: [Emotional Meetings](#) and (Freebie) Brain Books
July 2005: [Press Conferences](#) and (Freebie) PR Resource List

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