



## Tips for Innovative Meetings and Events (T.I.M.E.)

Topic: New Year's Resolutions

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### Welcome

Happy New Year. It is still January a month named after Janus the Roman god of beginnings and endings and gateways and doors. He is depicted as a double-faced head, each looking in opposite directions.

No surprise then, that we use January as a time of new beginnings and a time of New Year's Resolutions.

A study published in the Journal of Clinical Psychology finds that almost 30% of all people abandon their resolutions by the end of the second week in January. That would suggest by now, the end of the month, that many of us have long forgotten our personal resolutions.

- Use this issue of Tips for Innovative Meetings and Events to re-group. This issue is a call to adopt a professional New Year's Resolutions. This issue of Tips for Innovative Meetings and Events is filled with ideas for New Year's Resolutions you can make (and a few tips on keeping them) to insure that your meetings are truly innovative, productive and valuable. -

As Janus also represents transitions -- for example, between primitive life and civilization, between the countryside and the city, peace and war, this issue offers some ideas to help you transition into a more strategic employee in your organization.

So despite the passing of December 31, use this issue to spur you to make a few additional resolutions for 2005.

Sue

[Sue Tinnish](#)

PS By June, another 24% of the population will have left their resolve by the wayside, only 46% of us keep our resolutions longer.

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## Be You Resolved

Consider tackling one or more of these professional New Year's Resolutions:

1. Move up the Value Chain
2. Reputation Building
3. Mangle the People and the Meeting
4. Use It or Don't Ask
5. Reinvent Yourself
6. Don't be an Order Taker

"You must choose the thoughts and actions that will lead you on to success." - R.C. Allen

I've provided some thoughts, it's up to you to provide the action!

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## Move Up the Value Chain

I have been familiar and used Donald Kirkpatrick's 4 Levels of Evaluation in my training and meeting work (see my past issue on Evaluations from October 2000). Recently, while completing the Phillips Return on Investment (ROI) Methodology Certification, I was introduced to a formal methodology of measuring ROI. During the certification process, Jack Phillips talks about the "value chain".

Building upon Kirkpatrick's work, Phillips advocates that meetings move up the value chain.

Most meetings are evaluated at the satisfaction level. How was the food & beverage? Did you enjoy the speaker? Was the room set-up comfortable?

This information is interesting but more valuable is to evaluate at a higher level -- assessing a higher level of value.

So move from Satisfaction to

- Learning
- Application
- Business Impact
- Return on Investment

I encourage you to be resolved to move up the value chain. You will be drilling to get information that is more useful for your stakeholders, more meaningful to your participants and more beneficial to you.

I have authored an article on ROI that is slated to appear in the April issue of The Meeting Professional magazine. Watch for it or also consider past issue of TIME written on the topic of ROI.

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## Reputation Building

Every year in March, Fortune Magazine identifies the most admired companies and it ranks them within their industry. What a great list to be on. Fortune considers 8 key attributes for a corporate reputation including:

1. Innovation
2. Financial Soundness
3. Employee Talent
4. Quality of Management
5. Use of Corporate Assets
6. Long-term Investment
7. Social Responsibility
8. Quality of Products/Services

Whether you are a company, department or one-person show, how do you rate on these criteria?

On which attributes are you building your reputation?

Reputations, like your brand, are built daily. Ronald S. Burt, a Professor at the University of Chicago's Graduate School of Business, has done extensive work on the building business reputations. His experience is that it is not enough to do good work. He cites that people who are networked with contacts across groups receive higher compensation, better performance evaluations and promotions, and their ideas are judged to be better than people whose contacts are limited to one clique.

You can read more from Hobart in the September 2004 issue of American Journal of Sociology or the book Network and Markets in a chapter called Bandwidth and Echo: Trust, Information and Gossip in Social Networks.

Hobart's work says that you must do good work and you must be connected with others in the organization. Doing good work alone will not build your reputation.

Use this research as a call to be resolved to manage both your job and your career. It will increase your reputation and your value.

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## Manage the People and the Meeting

When you manage a meeting, you are inherently managing the people that participate

in that meeting.

And bringing out the best in the people of an organization is a critical, strategic and important role.

Meetings offer the opportunity to produce an increase in overall business performance. This is the hidden treasure of meetings. When you plan meetings, your agendas can:

- Identify areas where human capital processes and capabilities are currently weakest. These are areas ripe for the biggest jumps in improvement.
- Target areas of competitive advantage. Utilize meetings to build upon your competitive strengths whether it be customer service, product or delivery.
- Motivate and improve the knowledge base of the people of your organization.

It makes good sense to maximize the performance, knowledge and motivation of people. New research from the Forum for People Performance Management and Measurement at Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., has found a direct link between employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction and a company's financial performance. The study sheds light on how employee satisfaction and engagement drive an organization's bottom-line success, even if those employees have no direct contact with customers. You can request the complete study, "The Impact of Employee Attitudes on Market Response and Financial Performance," by e-mailing [info@performanceforum.org](mailto:info@performanceforum.org). [Forum for People Performance Management and Measurement](#)

For 2005, consider being resolved to manage the people, the meeting process and the logistics of the meeting.

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### Use It or Don't Ask

A combination of Use it or Lose It and Don't Ask/Don't Tell, I would encourage you to be resolved to use all the information that you ask.

If you are asking information of your participants before/ during/after a meeting, please be sure to use it. Surveys, audience response systems, questionnaires, or focus groups are all valuable tools. Don't waste anyone's time asking questions that will be not utilized.

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### Reinvent Yourself

Who could argue that Starbucks is successful? Consumers spent \$3.5 billion at 7,225 Starbucks locations in the fiscal year ending September 2004.

I was reading in 1to1 magazine (November/December) issue about Starbucks move to expand its food service division. This means new brands, new products and new channel partners for Starbucks. Here's what struck me: As Starbucks has to keep moving to keep Wall Street investors happy, we too have to keep growing and

changing.

One way to do that is to read.

Be resolved to read and to read beyond industry publications. Trade journals serve a great purpose. And reading information outside of your normal scope serves to stretch you, make you more creative, and expose you to new ideas and approaches.

I understand that we are all pressed for time. However, the long term benefits that you will incur are exponential compared to the time you will spend.

Here are some suggestions from Strategy+Business, a publication published by Booz Allen Hamilton. This is their annual list of best business books of the year:

- For the strategy enthusiast: "Confronting Reality: Doing What Matters to Get Things Right," by Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan
- For change managers: "Building the Bridge as You Walk on It: A Guide for Leading Change," by Robert E. Quinn
- For the management maven: "A Bias for Action: How Effective Managers Harness Their Willpower, Achieve Results, and Stop Wasting Time," by Heike Bruch and Sumantra Ghoshal
- For office behaviorists: "The Company of Strangers: A Natural History of Economic Life," by Paul Seabright
- For the governance guru: "Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets to Creating Lasting Value," by Bill George

And this is what I read over my Christmas Holidays:

The 80/20 Principle recommended by one of my subscribers, Dick Smith of Communivisions. A great read if you own your own business, liked the T.I.M.E. issue on time management (September 2004) or simply want to become more productive. Thanks Dick!

Confidence by Rosabeth Moss Kanter. Inspired part of this newsletter and was a gift from a friend.

On the lighter side, I read three Jon Talton mysteries set in Phoenix, Arizona where I spent some time. [Jon Talton](#)

Thanks for reading this issue. Links to these books are below.

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### Don't be an Order Taker

Use two way communication and don't function simply as an order taker about the meeting requirements. Here are some of my favorite questions to promote informative

dialogue:

1. What are we trying to accomplish?
2. How will we know that we have achieved our objectives?
3. What are the obstacles to achieving the objectives?
4. What options do we have to accomplish our objectives (besides a meeting)?
5. Why is a meeting the most optimal delivery method?
6. How does the achievement of our objectives impact our business?
7. How does it tie to overall strategy?

Here's another tip for developing meaningful dialogue. In developing on-line training, people often rely on the Guerra Scale to determine the amount of interaction required between the person being trained and the material. The scale ranges from simply reading to application and simulation. See <http://www.learningcircuits.org/2004/mar2004/guerra.htm> for more information.

You could develop your own scale to define the range of possibilities for a meeting. Creating this scale allows you to have consistent dialogue about expectations.

No matter how you accomplish it, make a resolution to avoid order taking for the next meeting.

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Freebies

### FREEBIES: Lasting Changes

Stephen R. Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* and *The 8th Habit: From Effectiveness to Greatness*, suggests the following tips to help bring about lasting change.

- Spend some time by yourself, contemplating what really matters most to you in both your personal and professional life.
- Instead of writing or thinking about a list of goals or changes you wish to make in your life, commit to just one.
- Consider creating a support base by sharing those commitments.
- Never make a promise or commitment to yourself or others that you do not intend to (or know you cannot) keep. Resolve to start making and keeping promises to yourself.
- Start with small, doable things that are very meaningful to you.

Covey's bottom line: Focus on making one important goal rather than making a long list of unattainable goals.

**More FREEBIES** For the complete list of the Best Business Books of 2004, click here [Best Business Books](#) or send an email to [stinnish@ameritech.net](mailto:stinnish@ameritech.net).

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Future T.I.M.E.

I will be speaking at the following conferences:

[Minneapolis Chapter of Meeting Professionals International, February 16, 2005](#)

[South Florida Chapter of Meeting Professionals International, February 22, 2005](#)

[Affordable Meetings, Chicago, April 6-7, 2005](#)

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

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.

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### 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](#) & (Freebie) New York Times Reprint On Teambuilding

June 2000: [Green Meetings](#) & (Freebie) Resource List Of Exercises

July 2000: [Values](#) & (Freebie) Meeting Analysis

August 2000: [Minimum/Minimal Meetings](#) & (Freebie) Web Winners

October 2000: [Evaluations](#) & (Freebie) Sample Evaluation Questions

November 2000: [Politics](#)

December 2000: [Toys](#) & (Freebie) Brainstorming Ideas

January 2001: [Sales, Award Presentations](#) & (Freebie) Sales Tips

February 2001: [Change](#) and Communicating Change & (Freebie) Change Bombs

March 2001: [Open Space Technology](#)

April 2001: [Adult Learning Styles](#) & (Freebie) Learning Style Questionnaire

May 2001: [Trade Shows](#) & (Freebie) Trade Show Timeline

June 2001: [Emotional Intelligence](#) & (Freebie) EI Quiz

July 2001: [Presentation Tips](#) & (Freebie) Speaker Introductions

August 2001: [Ice Breakers](#) & (Freebie) Resource List

September 2001: [Facilitation](#) & (Freebie) Problem Personalities in a Meeting

October 2001: [Humor](#) & (Freebie) The Benefits Of Laughter

November 2001: [Customer Care](#) & (Freebie) Complaints

December 2001: [Slack](#) & (Freebie) Quiet Time

January 2002: [Teambuilding Options](#) & (Freebie)

February 2002: [Promotional Products](#) & (Freebie) Case Study

March 2002: [Multicultural Communication](#) & (Freebie) Multicultural Meeting Tips

April 2002: [Outdoor Learning](#) & (Freebie) Justification Checklist

May 2002: [Budgets, June, June, and ROK](#) & (Freebie) Budgeting Beyond Excel

June 2002: [Creativity](#) & (Freebie) Building the Case for Creativity

July 2002: [High Touch Technology](#) & (Freebie) Personal Technology Tools

August 2002: [Economic and Business Cycles](#) & (Freebie) Investment Strategies for meetings

September 2002: [Successful Environmental Factors/Conference Centers](#) & (Freebie) Learning Environments

October 2002: [Return on Investment](#) & (Freebie) Balanced Scorecard

November 2002: [Incentive Meetings](#) & (Freebie) Forum Synopsis

December 2002: [Resource Recap](#) & (Freebie) Resource Lists

January 2003: [Everyday Meetings](#) & (Freebie) Meeting Quiz

February 2003: [Diversity](#) & (Freebie) Survey Results

March 2003: [Problem Solving](#) & (Freebie) Techniques Illustrated

April 2003: [Marketing: Pre- and Post- Event](#) & (Freebie) Blogs

May 2003: [Entertainment](#) & (Freebie) Storytelling

June 2003: [Balance in Meetings and child caret](#) & (Freebie) Child Care at Meetings Tips

July 2003: [Mobile Events](#) & (Freebie) Sponsorship

August 2003: [Last Minute Ideas](#) & (Freebie) Audience Participation

September 2003: [Training Meetings](#) & (Freebie) Kirkpatrick Challenge

October 2003: [Unique Venues](#) & (Freebie) Experiential Checklist

November 2003: [Data, Information and Number Crunching](#) & (Freebie) European Privacy

December 2003: [Deja View](#)

January 2004: [Branding](#) & (Freebie) Identity vs. Brand

February 2004: [Audio Visuals](#) & (Freebie) Speaker Guidelines

March 2004: [Networking](#) & (Freebie) Networking Ideas

April 2004: [Strategic Budgeting](#) & (Freebie) Budgeting Ideas

May 2004: [Sensory Meetings](#) & (Freebie) Music's Impact

June 2004: [Board Meetings](#) & (Freebie) Litmus Test

July 2004: [Leadership](#) & (Freebie) Best Meeting Leadership Behaviors

August 2004: [Barrier-free Meetings](#) & (Freebie) Avoiding the Digital Divide

September 2004: [Time Management & Meetings](#) & (Freebie) More Timely Tips

October 2004: [The Travel Experience & Stress](#) & (Freebie) International Travel Tips

November 2004: [Voting Techniques](#) & (Freebie) Political Pitfalls

December 2004: [Deja View II](#)

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