

# SUCCESSFUL SITE INSPECTION TIPS

Site inspections, for a planner at least, is where a venue can win or lose the business. Much can be at risk. Anticipation is high. Pressure can be paramount.



Here are a few suggestions that might help make the site inspection more successful, less painful and a "win-win" situation for hotel and planner alike:

# 1 Do Your Homework

Be prepared. Know your group. Master the group's history. What is it about your group that makes it attractive to the venue? What venues and activities outside the venue would be most popular? Would the attendees choose to return? Is this a logical location? Cost of flight, room, etc. What are the needs and expectations of the group? What are the must have's? Anticipate how the attendee will share their experiences. Where did the group experience its very best meeting and why? Worst meeting? What worked well, what did not?

## 2 Who Attends?

This maybe a surprise, but in most of all my meeting site selections, I have never been accompanied by a client. In others, less than 15 percent, the client chose to go. Be prepared for surprises. Sometimes, without notice, the client will decide to go. Communicate this with the venues being sited. They don't like surprises either. This is a business function, and while it might be nice to have an additional set of eyes, make sure that this is a legitimate experience and not just wanting to have a wonderful experience at the cost of venue. Site selection inspections are normally scheduled far in advance but they could occur as quickly as within a week. Always let the venue know the attending person's name and title.

# 3 Think Like a Venue Sales Person

It's always a good idea to put yourself in the shoes of the other side (and her/his party). Time of day you will arrive? Will the venue, pick you up at the airport, do they understand how many hours it took you to get there? Be honest, let them know how many hotels and possible venues you hope to visit on this site inspection. Will you be staying at this venue? How many nights will you be in town? Advise what your priorities are, don't be shy. What part or event at the venue are you eager to see and experience most? Let the venue know of any assistance that you will need. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner – a combination or none of the above. Be honest with yourself and with them. Time is critical and you are the client, so make sure that you can do all you want to. No answer is the wrong answer. While Sales people will show you the suites, ask to see the least attractive room available. If that passes, then move on.

# 4 Customize

Before going to contract, so much is at risk. If there are concerns, state them, and ask them to acknowledge them during your site. If meeting and function space remain an issue in the decision making, be sure to have them preset the ballroom, or preset the conference or breakout rooms to your specifications (schoolroom, u-shape, conference or theater style). Advise them that you need the visual for your client and for yourself.

# 5 Day Of

This is the time to showcase your client and the reason the venue wants to have them come. Site inspections can highlight that you as a planner know your stuff. Showcase your knowledge, tell them this would be perfect for the client because, or this presents some opportunities.

Stand out, know your client and remember the client is the reason you are there. Don't be persuaded by the room, or the meals. In the end – will it work or not?

# 6 Prepare the Team

If not doing the site inspections alone, please ensure that everyone knows the itinerary. Provide some knowledge on the venues being sites. Put photos in place for all site selection committee members to see. Include the "hot buttons", Dazzle and new may get to some member, when in reality the meeting room layout just will not work. Do whatever necessary to stress the importance of the reason of the site inspection itself. And remember, too, everyone needs to put their best foot forward here. Nothing turns off a venue faster than observing a real disconnect.

## Takeaways

Don't forget to record digital camera highlights of the visit delivered to the site selection team that could not make it. Ask the hotel for them, if you didn't take a camera.





***Creativity and customization have always been the hallmarks of our business. We want to be your complete events solution, so reach out today to make your meeting shine.***



# MEET OUR PRESIDENT & OWNER, POLLY ROSSI, CMP-HC, CMM

When she founded Meeting Achievements in 2003, Polly Rossi envisioned high-quality, seamless event planning that would deepen one-on-one connections. Since then, Meeting Achievements has become a global organization, planning more than 1,000 successful events of all sizes.

With a keen business sense and expertise in contract negotiation, site selection, and meeting strategy, Polly and her team ensure a high return on investment for each event.



Polly is one of 800 Certified Meeting Managers (CMM) worldwide, as awarded by Meeting Professionals International (MPI). Her years of leadership in the travel and accounting industries give Polly a unique perspective on the value of events.

Further, as one of only 55 Certified Meeting Planners specializing in Healthcare Compliance, Polly is uniquely qualified to plan conferences, symposia, and workshops within the industry, including events offering Continuing Medical Education (CME) hours.

In recognition of her achievements, Polly has been nominated for the 2015 Northwest Indiana Influential Woman of the Year Award and Indiana Meeting Professionals' 2016 IMPRESS Award. Further, Meeting Achievements was recognized as Best of Meeting & Event Planning Services for Valparaiso, Indiana in 2015.





**To learn how we can best serve you,  
reach out today and schedule a consultation.**

Meeting Achievements  
232 E. 500 North. Valparaiso, IN 46383  
219.465.1115  
polly@meetingachievements.com  
www.meetingachievements.com

