

SUCCESSFUL

MEETINGS START HERE



38 Ways to Create Healthy Meetings in 2017

What planners need to know about event program design, food and beverage, travel best practices, and meeting environments to create events that promote health and wellness among attendees.



Brought to you by:



SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS START HERE

Table of Contents

Forward	2
Healthy program design	3
Healthy F&B	5
Dealing with major health risks	7
Pre-event risk management	7
On-site risk management	8
Common health risks	8
Travel healthy	9

SPECIAL BONUS FEATURE

10

Healthy meetings expert and professional trainer **Andrea Sullivan**, shares menu recommendations for meal and break functions, as well as general tips for providing F&B that will keep attendees alert and engaged at meetings.

Forward

“It is important to keep employees healthy and engaged not only at work, but at meetings and conferences as well,” says Dr. Mehmet Oz, cardiothoracic surgeon, best-selling author, and host of the nationally syndicated Dr. Oz Show. “Company updates and networking are all important functions of meetings, but so is demonstrating meaningful change that can be made in one’s life.”

A meeting presents a unique opportunity to instill wisdom that can lead to real change in peoples lives, says Dr. Oz. “When people are out of their normal environment, they are very receptive to new ideas if they are presented properly,” he notes. “Preaching is not the answer, but finding an emotional hook is.”

Here is a compendium of best practices from the pages of *Successful Meetings* to introduce healthy living habits at meetings, initiatives that attendees will continue to practice long after the event is over.

Healthy Program Design

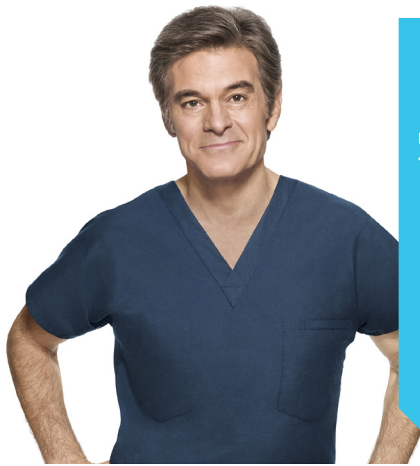
1 GAMIFY FITNESS

Last fall, national retailer Target Corp. kicked off its annual meeting in Minneapolis with a thoughtful gift for the 13,000 attendees (as well as all 365,000 employees company-wide) — Fitbit fitness trackers. This was the perfect vehicle to communicate Target's new focus on wellness, an initiative aimed at promoting healthy eating and active living among its employees.

Kat Bolin, a Charlotte, NC-based corporate events manager, recently planned a meeting for a client in the retail industry at the Hyatt Regency Orlando, used gamification to get her 1,400 attendees moving. Similar to Target, all were given Fitbits.

“Not only was this a wellness initiative, but it was a great way to build team camaraderie,” says Bolin. “We split the group into eight teams and had them compete to see which team could compile the most steps while walking. Throughout the conference we sent out push notifications, through our event app, with team rankings to keep it top-of-mind. Activity like this boosts endorphins. It gets people excited and gives them an energy boost during your conference.”

Bolin says that new health challenges are created on a regular basis to keep attendees focused on living healthy and engaged with the device (as well as the sponsor's logo).



2 START LATER

Consider starting your day's events at 9:00 am rather than earlier. This will help your attendees to stay alert and receptive to ideas and information. “The sleep epidemic is the single biggest health problem in America,” says Dr. Oz. “It is contributing to many other health problems.” Meeting planners must leave room in an agenda for attendees to get at least eight hours of shuteye, advises Dr. Oz. “Don't make your attendees feel guilty about this. Remember, if they don't sleep enough, they will not absorb information or be as creative,” he says. “Sleep is a barometer of how you live your life. If you're stressed out and can't slow your mind down to get proper sleep, it may be a good idea to reevaluate your life.”

Plus, lack of sleep drives high blood pressure, cancer rates, and obesity, says Dr. Oz.

3 CREATE EXERCISE EVENTS

Exercise was encouraged throughout Kat Bolin's conference by offering Zumba classes, group-led outdoor runs, personal trainers, and even a flash mob that led an exercise class. “I personally tracked 200,000 steps running this conference,” Bolin says.

Hyatt's own Global Summit, also held recently at the Hyatt Regency Orlando, brought together a group of 800 general managers from 51 countries. Many in attendance were runners, so three early-morning runs of varying distance found Hyatt general managers leading the pack. “Fostering connections is so important, and this was a great, healthy way to do that,” notes Cornelia Jung, senior director of events at the property. Yoga, indoor cycling, and boot-camp classes were also planned for the group.



4 EXERCISE DURING PRESENTATIONS

Having a group exercise briefly during a breakout session can be a good thing. “Blood-flow to our brains starts to decline within ten minutes of sitting still. Any kind of movement you introduce into sessions helps to boost alertness back to the level present when people first sat down,” says Adrian Segar, who designs and facilitates participant-driven/participation-rich meetings and is the author of “Conferences That Work: Creating Events That People Love” and “The Power of Participation: Creating Conferences That Deliver Learning, Connection, Engagement, and Action.”



5 CUSTOMIZE SPA ACTIVITIES

Allowing attendees to customize their time at the spa allows them to walk away with a truly unique experience. “Customization is about allowing the spa-goer to drive the choices available to them, not trying to cookie-cut what they might need,” says Lynne McNees, president of the Lexington, KY-based International Spa Association (ISPA). “Additionally, 71 percent of spas offer treatments of 30 minutes or less to ensure there is something available for everyone, even if they only have 30 minutes.”

In addition, spa-goers increasingly are having the opportunity to create their own scrubs and lotions. The Spa At L'Auberge, situated in the red-rock splendor of Sedona, AZ, features L'Apothecary, where guests can create their own pampering mixes infused with local herbs, flowers, and botanicals, including rosemary, juniper, and Sedona pinion.

6 SPA FOR HEALTH, NOT LUXURY

Many resorts now supplement their traditional massage options, where the goal is to pamper the recipient with treatments and programs that focus on improving health.

Six Senses Hotels Resorts Spas, a hotel and spa-management company, recently introduced “Six Senses Integrated Wellness,” a program that was developed over the last two years by working with doctors and wellness professionals, including Dr. Oz. It involves in-house experts who measure and analyze key physiological biomarkers to provide lifestyle and nutritional advice and design personalized programs of spa treatments, fitness, and wellness activities.

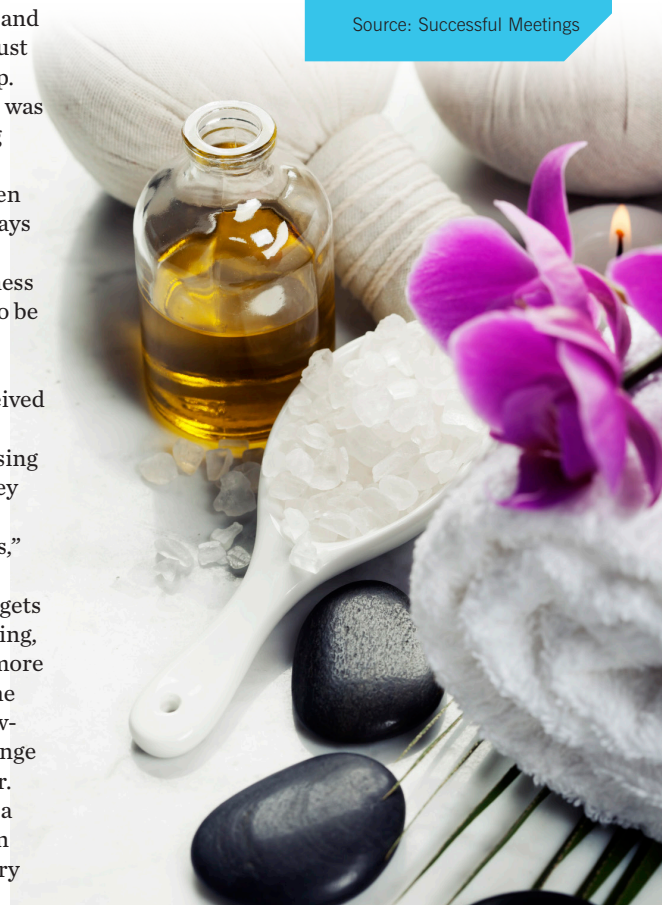
Aimia, a loyalty-management company, recently planned an incentive program at the Calistoga Ranch in California that focused on health and wellness. Aimia reached out to Andrea von Behren, R.D., owner of the Body Language Fitness & Yoga Center in Commerce, MI, to lead the group in yoga and Zumba each morning. Her ability to offer a holistic approach to wellness through her training as a registered

dietitian, certified yoga teacher, and certified fitness instructor was just what Aimia wanted for the group.

“Participation in these events was outstanding, further illustrating that health and wellness should continue to be a top priority when planning incentive programs,” says Tina Gaccetta, vice president of client services for Aimia. “Wellness and balance at work continues to be a growing trend.”

This healthy addition to the incentive program was well received by the attendees. “Participants voiced a desire to continue focusing more on their wellness when they headed back home as a result of their positive experience with us,” notes von Behren.

The more a meeting program gets attendees to practice healthy living, the greater chance they will be more productive employees back in the office. “A meeting provides a powerful platform to help instill change in the lives of attendees,” says Dr. Oz. “It isn’t complicated. Living a healthy life defines the core of an individual, and that touches every part of his or her life.”



42

percent of association planners offer spa options at meetings

67

percent of corporate planners offer spa options at meetings

33

percent of planners are seeing more men choosing the spa over other activities

Source: Successful Meetings

Serve Healthy F&B

7 CURB BACK THE SUGAR

Studies have shown that sugar can raise the risk of cold and flu. Healthy food and beverage choices have become a must. “Many times when you go to meetings all that is available is bagels, pizza, cookies, candy, and soda. Eating too much of this leads to susceptibility to catching colds. So I like to put out bags of nuts, fruit trays, veggies, and some cheese and meat platters so that attendees can eat as much or as little as they like while still being able to get protein and nutrients into their system,” says Laura Petersen, chief operating officer of Student-Tutor, a Phoenix-based company that works with students around the country. “I also make sure water is available at all times. A nice touch is to serve water with cucumber, orange, or mint in it.”

“I used to joke that I’d go trolling for patients at the food tables at meetings and conferences,” says Dr. Oz. “This isn’t the case today. When I go to conferences more often than not I see that high-protein options have replaced sugary, empty-calorie offerings.”

Dr. Oz says that granola bars should be the sweetest item offered during a meeting break. Warm lemon juice, which gets the gastric juices and intestines flowing, is the best way to start the day, he says. Save the coffee for about an hour later. And he thinks breakfast should be protein-packed. “I don’t know why more protein shakes aren’t offered during meetings,” he laments. “Eggs or Greek yogurt provide good options.”

Dark chocolate that contains at least 70 percent cocoa counts as a health food, says Dr. Oz. Pass on milk chocolate, though. And feel free to go nuts, as they are rich in nutrients and help reduce hunger. (Remember, peanuts are actually legumes.)

8 MAKE ATTENDEES BEVERAGE-CONSCIOUS

It’s important that attendees be mindful of what they drink at meetings. Dr. Oz recommends bypassing alcohol. “Many people will drink more at meetings, especially trade shows and conventions, but it’s important to remind them that they are there to meet people and gather information,” he says. “Don’t be a two-fisted eater and drinker. Keep one hand free to shake hands.”

Dr. Oz also warns that changes in diet and normal daily routine can lead to constipation. “Alcohol only makes that worse, so attendees should supplement their diets with fiber and drink plenty of water.”



84

percent of planners would consider incorporating locally grown produce and meats into their F&B offerings

74

percent of planners have considered making healthy nutrition a culinary theme at their events

88

percent of planners offer gluten-free cuisine at their events

Source: Successful Meetings





9 DIAL UP SUPER FOODS

Superfoods – This category of food that is calorie sparse and nutrient dense is finding its way onto an increasing number of meeting menus. Superfoods have high levels of antioxidants and include fruits and vegetables like broccoli, blueberries, and spinach.

The Radisson Blu brand focuses on food that strengthens sharpness and creativity during meetings

When planners talk about wanting “healthy food” for their attendees, usually they mean F&B that promotes physical health. Increasingly, they may also be taking into account ingredients that enhance mental acuity, too. That’s the thinking behind “Brain Food” from the Radisson Blu hotel brand, part of its larger brand-wide Experience

Meetings initiative.

The F&B program, created by a team of chefs and nutritionists, provides groups with a series of meal and break menus tailored to helping attendees think with sharpness and creativity.

“It’s so common to hear the first speaker after lunch say something like, ‘hope you can all stay with me for this,’” says Gordon Taylor, director of sales and marketing for the Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel Chicago, which introduced the Brain Food program earlier this year. “But with Brain Food, it’s a change of perspective -- you feel refreshed, alert, and mentally healthy. It’s about supplying food that puts you in the optimal frame of mind.”

Not surprisingly, food that’s good for a brain is also good for a body. Brain Food menus emphasize fresh, locally

sourced ingredients with as little as possible processing. Whole-grain products, fruits, vegetables, and fish predominate, while meat, fats, and sugars are minimized. Think hummus and vegetable trays rather than cookies and brownies; mineral water and herbal tea rather than soda.

For breaks, groups can consider Happy Trails, a build-your-own trail mix bar with mixed nuts, yogurt-covered raisins, and dried blueberries and apricots; or Fruit Frenzy, with watermelon and peach smoothies, homemade protein bars, and pita chips with peach-mango salsa. For more substantial meals, there’s everything from steamed black cod with organic beet salad to braised lamb ossobuco with steamed asparagus and plum tomatoes.

Dealing with Health Risks

Here are some key best practices for prevention and risk management in the effort to keep attendees healthy at conferences.

10 BE PROACTIVE, NOT REACTIVE

When dealing with health scares and meetings and conferences, industry experts all agree it is important to be practical – not fearful. Facts about prevention and risk controls should be readily available so attendees understand how to respond to an outbreak.

Dr. Robert Quigley, senior vice president of medical assistance, International SOS, lays out the following scenario: A Chicago-based company is having an annual meeting in the Caribbean. Before Zika, the fact there are many mosquito-borne viruses in this part of the world is never mentioned. A mistake. What if someone has a heart attack or moped accident, he asks. “It’s imperative that proper planning includes participant risk mitigation,” he says. He recommends companies require eLearning or webinars about risk mitigation that employees must take before meetings and events. For example, TravelTracker is a product that not only helps organizations act immediately during critical events by identifying travelers at risk but also shows who has participated in preparatory webinars and who has not.

All companies should have a Duty of Care, a moral and legal obligation to protect their employees from risks and threats, says Dr. Quigley. “When employees travel internationally, fulfilling this sometimes unknown obligation can be complex. Meeting planners—as well as those who make decisions to send employees to these events—play a critical role in safeguarding travelers and other VIPs,” says Dr. Quigley.



Pre-Event Risk Management Tips

The best practices for keeping attendees healthy, safe, and secure when planning and executing a meeting courtesy of Dr. Robert Quigley, senior vice president of medical assistance, International SOS.

11 INCREASE AWARENESS

Communicate with internal stakeholders and employees to ensure all parties understand the company’s duty-of-care obligations and each employee’s responsibility to act in a safe and prudent manner (duty of loyalty).

12 PLAN WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Reach out to security, human resources, and legal teams within your organization to map out each group’s role in the duty-of-care process. Using a known risk scenario, conduct a planning session in which protocol, responsibilities, and desired actions are discussed.

13 EXPAND POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Examine existing guidelines and consider adding additional policies or procedures that specifically address risks associated with the meeting or event at hand.

14 TRACK TRAVELING EMPLOYEES AT ALL TIMES

Many companies today use travel agency data or input travel itinerary information into an online tracking solution, so they can track, monitor, and evaluate employee travel plans via e-mail or text message. Savvy companies embed this solution with their medical and security assistance provider, so the company can prepare and react with 24/7 support.

15 COMMUNICATE, EDUCATE, AND TRAIN

Clearly express expectations, guidelines, and resources to all participating employees. Let them know what assistance is available to them in case of an emergency. This can be done during pre-event communications, such as brochures, e-mail, or web-based training. Have employees complete security briefings before booking travel.

16 ASSESS RISK PRIOR TO EVERY TRIP

Engage your company’s security team or security assistance partner to conduct a thorough review of potential threats in and around the meeting or event location. Consider identifying employees with health risks prior to travel and have a protocol in place.

17 IMPLEMENT AN EMPLOYEE EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM

Understand your company’s process for contacting employees and their families following an emergency, to ensure their safety. Be sure to have an emergency medical response plan in place to manage a trauma or illness at the event.

18 CONDUCT DUE DILIGENCE

Make sure that duty-of-care practices are standard operating procedure for all vendors, subcontractors, and partners.

On-Site Risk Management Tips

Yvonne Szikla, founder and president of San Diego-based Affairs with Flair, a full-service event planning firm, offers these best practices to help event planners be prepared for an on-site health emergency.

- 19** Know the location and phone numbers for ambulance service, urgent care centers, emergency rooms, and hospitals close to your event.
- 20** Have a list of taxi and other transportation companies' numbers on hand with hours of operation. Don't assume taxis operate all night - situations vary by city and country and it is worth checking. In some instances, it might be better to have a town car company informed of your event and on standby as a town car is more upscale and generally provides a more comfortable ride.
- 21** Know your attendee demographics and if possible collect an emergency medical information card with pertinent information. Be aware of any special needs they may have such as a wheelchair before they arrive.
- 22** Depending on the size, demographics, and location of the event, consider having a nurse or EMT on site. At the very least, have a first aid kit with basics such as Band-Aids, sunscreen, and aspirin. It is not uncommon at overseas events to have an ambulance on hand when certain attendees or executives have health conditions such as heart issues, which could be fatal.
- 23** Provide signage at food stations noting ingredients in dishes. Allergies, gluten, and lactose intolerance are common issues today and can cause severe reactions needing immediate attention. If a dish has nuts in it, indicate this.

- 24** Alcohol. Make sure bartenders are certified. Certification provides bartenders with training to handle and cut off intoxicated guests. Many a client has been relieved to know that they won't have to be the one to confront and deal with an intoxicated guest. Have your staff and vendors also keep an eye out during the event for general problems.
- 25** Outdoor events. Keep attendees informed on weather and appropriate attire needed to be comfortable. (Szikla provides a basket of flip-flops, towels, shawls, sunscreen, parasols, hats, and other amenities for outdoor events.) "There is nothing worse to mar an outdoor event than feeling cold from an unexpected breeze or forgetting to bring a hat. And no one wants a sprained ankle from navigating stilettos on sand or soft grass," she says.
- 26** Have a chain of command for communicating issues. Discuss all of the above points with your client and how each item will be handled.
- 27** Gather your vendors and staff and make sure they are all well briefed on what to do and who to go to with any concerns during the event.
- 28** Communicate closely with the venue and keep them abreast of possible needs and concerns before and during the event. Keeping them in the loop should be part of your strategy for a successful event.

Common Health Risks

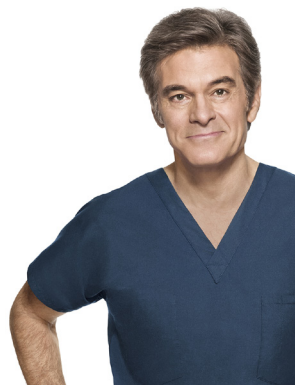
Most health risks are not of epidemic proportions. Most planners have their own strategies for keeping attendees healthy. A common theme is having hand sanitizer and bacterial wipes on hand. Packets of Emergen-C and Airborne are also popular.

Carol Galle, CMP, president/CEO, Ferndale, MI-Special D Events, a meeting/conference/event planning firm, says health is a focus at her company. "It's part of our people/planet/profit mission," she says. A few things Special D does on a regular basis includes:

- 29** Survey attendees regarding their dietary and special needs during the registration process.
- 30** Offer hand sanitizer at the registration desks.
- 31** Survey attendees to see if they are interested in pre-meeting workout sessions/yoga/runs.
- 32** For multi-day events with out of town attendees (particularly those in dry climates), provide sample-sized bottles of lip balm and/or eye drops
- 33** Bring basic first aid kits and incident report forms to every event

Travel Healthy

Dr. Mehmet Oz, cardiothoracic surgeon, host of the nationally syndicated Dr. Oz Show, and best-selling author offers these tips to keeping healthy while flying to a meeting.



TIPS FOR FLYING HEALTHY

From Dr. Oz



34 POP AN ASPIRIN BEFORE A LONG FLIGHT

Long periods of sitting put more people at risk for pulmonary embolism. Dr. Oz pops an aspirin before a flight to help prevent this.

35 TAKE A SUPPLEMENT BEFORE A FLIGHT

A vitamin supplement will help your immune system cope with the re-circulated air. "It's not the person sitting next to you that is the problem. Due to the airflow on an airplane, the person diagonally in front of you can infect you," says Dr. Oz.

36 HAVE A JET LAG STRATEGY

Melatonin, a natural, non-addicting hormone supplement, will help with jet lag, shifting the brain to the new time zone. Use light as your ally. If you expose yourself to light first thing in the morning, it will set your circadian rhythm. Stay up for the next 14 to 16 hours and you will soon be back in rhythm.

37 PACK A SCARF

"I use it to shelter my nose and face on flights," he divulges.

38 SANITIZE YOUR HANDS

Pack an alcohol-based hand sanitizer and use it often. "I use it before I am going to be shaking a lot of hands," explains Dr. Oz..



Get Brain Food On The Menu

Andrea Sullivan, speaker, trainer, and president of BrainStrength Systems, says food is an excellent tool to help produce effective meetings. Her focus is “brain food,” that helps attendees focus, stay on task, and stay energized throughout the day. Some of her menu suggestions to accomplish this all day long include:



BREAKFAST

Minimize white flours and sugars at breakfast that will play havoc with blood glucose levels throughout the day. Instead, provide complex carbohydrates, low fat, low glycemic-index foods, with plenty of protein options, and wholesome sugars like honey.



LUNCH

Keep it light. If meeting objectives require alertness and clear thinking, stimulate the brain with a high protein/low carb balance. Serve chicken, fish, vegetables, and fruit. If the meeting objectives are for teambuilding or social networking or if the meeting may be stressful, serve complex carbs to relax the brain. Whole grain pasta or brown rice casseroles work well to comfort while providing sustainable energy.



DINNER

Now is the time for comfort foods that relax the brain. Red meats, turkey, bananas, whole grains, beans, and dark chocolate are some options.

Basic Rules for Breaks

Sullivan advises keeping both morning and afternoon breaks low-glycemic, while providing healthy treats with complex carbs, fruit, and some protein such as cheese or nuts. But she emphasizes the importance of taking extra care with afternoon breaks. This is the time of day when attendees will be tiring and losing concentration. Sullivan recommends lots of fruit and some protein to help counteract afternoon brain drain and mental fatigue.

Don't Forget to FLOSS

Sullivan offers this simple acronym to help planners follow a healthy F&B strategy:

FRESH **L**OCAL **O**RGANIC **S**USTAINABLE **S**EASONAL

+ Other Tips From Sullivan

DRINK ME! Include a sign like this on your water containers, as hydration is essential for a healthy brain.

LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES. Always ask, “Where can I add protein and smart fats?” Serving oatmeal cookies? Add honey and walnuts. Sprinkle ground flax seeds on other offerings.

STAY HIGH ON OMEGA 3. Omega 3 reverses memory loss and eases depression.

NO COFFEE! Coffee makes you crash. Mix in tea and dark chocolate to limit those negative effects.