

# Better Business Bytes

Experts answering questions to help grow your business.



## Taking the Stress out of Meeting Planning By Mike Reem, Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge

Recent research conducted with actual Meeting Planners, representing over 15,000 room nights, revealed the top six concerns for them as they decide on a conference center for their meeting. The most important was the actual meeting facilities, followed by quality of service, quality of product, location, cleanliness, and quality of food and beverage. We have put together an information piece called "*Stress Free Meeting Success Guide*" and it covers all six areas of concern. In this article, I have chosen to discuss **only one of the six issues (room temperature)** in the meeting facilities area. If you would like the entire guide, please contact me. (Note my contact information below.) It makes perfect sense that the meeting room is a very high priority since the attendees spend the bulk of the waking hours in the meeting room.

**Q: How important is the meeting room temperature?**

A: Meeting room temperature is one of the industry's largest complaints. Research proves that if you are comfortable, you retain more information. The problem is that people react differently to the same room temperatures. You can have three people in the same room. One is too hot, one is too cold and the third is comfortable. The problem is not the temperature, it the different tolerance levels of the people! Our metabolic rate, the amount of rest we have had and our food intake all help determine our body temperature (*The Physics Fact Book*).

**Q: What can be done to help all your attendees be more comfortable in the meeting room?**

A: We can *target* the room temperature. Research tells us the acceptable room temperature range should be 68-74 degrees and the ideal target is 72 degrees. Since we are cooler in the morning hours (less physical activity and food intake), the room temperature should be closer to 74 degrees. In the afternoon, we are warmer so the room temperature should be closer to 68 degrees. If you are going to error, error on the side of keeping the room cooler and encourage your attendees to bring another piece of clothing if their history dictates the need. **An idea that works is to build the cost of a resort/hotel sweatshirt into the package so each attendee has both a "solution" and a "souvenir"**. We suggest that the hotel staff check the temperature once per hour to be proactive in keeping the temperature in the target range.

**Q: What else can we do?**

A: Since our body temperature is directly related to our metabolic rate, we encourage meeting planners to encourage mini-breaks to stand up and stretch every hour. Providing smaller meals and adding more food to the breaks also will help metabolism. It is like having 4-6 small meals a day and it keeps the body humming. The kinds of food your attendees are provided with will also help with their body temperature. More lean and high protein foods, along with salads are great. Avoid high sugar snacks and encourage several glasses of water per day.



The MRCC B2B group provides information in a different area of expertise each issue of the Business Briefing. **For more information on how to take the stress out of planning your group's meetings**, contact Mike Reem at [mike@ruttgers.com](mailto:mike@ruttgers.com). All published articles in this column will be archived on the B2B page of the MRCC website.

**If you have a question for the B2B group, please email it to [b2b@minneapolischamber.org](mailto:b2b@minneapolischamber.org).** You will receive an email reply by the appropriate expert within 5 business days. Selected questions may appear in future issues of the "Business Briefing" magazine.