What Makes a Great Conference: Keeping It Trendy and Current

Laura Childs, PMP
Senior Manager, Education & Training

Deana Gissendanner
Director, Conferences & Events Management

Susan Merther, CPP, BCES
Director, WEFTEC Education and Associate Director, Water Science & Engineering Center

Sarah Evans Moretti
Manager, Exhibition Sales

Stefanie Walter, CEM
Senior Manager, Exhibition Operations
Purposeful Meetings Model

Five Core Areas:
• Behavioral Science
• Health & Wellbeing
• Event Design
• Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Legacy & Impact
• Technology

Adapting Content to Audience: Technical Program

How does your audience like to learn?

*Traditional sessions, workshops, tours: you need these, but how do you spice it up?*

👩‍💻 Mobile Sessions
👩‍💻 Interactive Knowledge Exchange (IKE)
👩‍💻 Operator-focused programming and trainings
👩‍💻 “Deep Dives” or small facilitated breakout groups
Adapting Content to Audience: Attendee Engagement

• Cooperating organizations: non-financial agreements with competitors and friends

• Volunteer management: knowledge share among committees

• Informal networking events: beers with Speakers, WEF Chats

• Low-cost networking opportunities: free one evening? Join the committee (or fellow YPs) at the lobby restaurant
Exhibition Design and Experience

How to set up your floor plan for success?

Engagement = Win, Win for Exhibitors and Attendees Alike

• **Booth layout:** traditional aisles to open concept, no carpet

• **Seating and food functions on exhibit floor:** standard luncheon rounds to high boys and cocktails tables

• **Mobile sessions and poster boards:** dedicated show hours, no overlapping education

• **Association identity – branded or sponsored environments:** WEF Plaza, games, sponsored meeting nooks
Exhibition Design and Experience

- Booth location and layout
- Seating and food functions
- Mobile sessions and poster boards
- Association identity – branded or sponsored environments
Exhibitor Engagement

- **Retain Exhibitors:** offering onsite sales with discounted rate
- **Reward Exhibitors:** priority point system / advance round of sales
CSR, Legacy & Impact

Connects events and participants to the community or a cause to deepen their connection to an event.

Brings participants together and leaves them with a deep, lasting impression of the event.

CSR, Legacy & Impact

WEF Community Service Project
CSR, Legacy & Impact

#MyWaterLegacy Wall at WEFTEC
CSR, Legacy & Impact

- Core Values
- Mission
- Audience
- Passion
- Simplicity
- Interactivity
- Longevity (“Stickiness”)
- Support
Peer-to-Peer Knowledge Exchange

• Seven topics, each assigned to a table with WEF staff facilitators.
• Opportunity to engage in two 30-minute topical conversations.
• Change topics after the first 30-minutes or stay if you’re engrossed in conversation.
Knowledge Exchange Topics

Content Curation & Delivery
Laura Childs & Susan Merther

Corporate Social Responsibility, Legacy, & Impact
Megan Livak & Stefanie Walter

Event Design & Experience
Deana Gissendanner, Brittany Salazar, & Ronnetta Zack-Williams

Exhibition Design & Experience
Sarah Evans Moretti

Incorporating Health & Wellbeing
Jessica LaFever

Marketing & Social Media
Brian Hartlove & Rahkia Nance

Registration
Kristen Martin & Tangie Williams