



Tel 0116 240 2330
e. info@hi2events.co.uk
www.hi2events.co.uk

NEVER MAKE ASSUMPTIONS

Whether you're planning an afternoon meeting or a five-day conference, you need to make sure that your venue is properly arranged. There's nothing more disconcerting than entering a meeting room five minutes before the workshop is scheduled and discovering that there's an overhead projector at the front of the room rather than a slide projector at the back of the room.

From electronic equipment to seating arrangements, it's up to you to ensure that the set-up of your room is exactly as the client requested.

Be prepared

The best way to avoid last-minute problems is to know which space you'll be utilizing, to minimize turnaround of room set-up, and to effectively communicate your needs to the venue staff.

For large conferences, the first step is knowing which ballrooms and breakout rooms you'll be using during your event. In a hotel venue, it's not uncommon for the sales staff to book additional business in the space you thought you had and for conference services staff to pull last-minute changes in room assignments.

This can wreak havoc on your event, especially if you've listed meeting room names in your conference program. The key to avoiding eleventh hour room changes is to block out specific ballrooms and breakout rooms in your hotel contract.

If the conference services comes to you later and asks that you switch spaces, you can either refuse or ask for some type of compensation - perhaps a complimentary coffee break or an extra complimentary sleeping room.

Plan ahead

You can reduce the potential for mistakes in room arrangements by planning ahead. Group your breakouts by the type of seating required and the type of equipment needed. If you have four breakouts in the morning and four in the afternoon, for example, schedule the morning breakout that requires classroom seating in the same room as the afternoon breakout that requires classroom seating.

Conference services will only need to refresh the room in the middle of the day, rather than transforming it from classroom to theatre seating., or vice versa. This level of planning will not only lessen the chance

of mistakes being made, but it will also endear you to the conference services manager - which is always a good thing!

Never assume

Finally, and most importantly, you need to write crystal clear banquet event orders. Never assume that the workers know what you need in your meeting room.

Having one aisle down the centre of the room may be a no-brainer to you, but unless you communicate that to the staff, they won't know to do it. Detail the set-up of the room, the AV equipment needed, and where it should be placed. Note how high the riser should be and where the podium should be located.

If you want a water station, be sure to note that in your BEOs. If you anticipate that the workshop will be emotional, ask for boxes of tissues to be placed around the room. Literally draw them a picture of the way you want the room set up, if you think that will clarify your wishes and result in fewer last-minute surprises.

Communicating your set-up needs to the venue staff will ensure that your event runs smoothly and that you can spend your time seeing to the needs of your client instead of rearranging chairs.