

## 39 Off-Beat Ideas to Shake Up Conferences

Margo Pierce

Every show manager wants to make the conference experience better, and tips on how to do that are everywhere. [The Appliance of Science: 39 Ways to Improve Your Meetings](#), published by the [Meetology Group](#) and the [PCMA \(Professional Convention Management Association\) Education Foundation](#), has some unusual suggestions.

“Why think that information should just be presented in an hour to an audience who sits down?” says Jonathan Bradshaw, CEO of the Meetology Group. “There’s so many ways of changing that. Why do you do what you do? Why is it three days long? If it’s because you’ve always done it, now’s the time to take a fresh look.”

Here are a few of the more unusual suggestions Bradshaw’s view of science has for refreshing your next event.

- It Smells Like a Good Conference. The unconscious mind nudges human perception and behavior: “If you leave a scent of cleaning fluid in a meeting space, your show participants are more likely to clean up after themselves.”
- Meet On the Floor. Scientists have found that laying down changes our blood flow, affecting the part of the brain that improves problem solving and creativity. Can’t stand the idea of no chairs? Try beanbag chairs, exercise balls, couches or large pillows on the floor.
- Encourage Doodling. Researchers noted a rise in the recall levels of doodlers. Provide notepads, colored pencils or markers to encourage it.
- Who Do You Love? A psychologist has found that, when we think of the ones we love, we can become more creative. Suggest that your presenters keep this in mind and ask session participants to visualize their true loves to get their minds ready to create.
- Choose an “emotionally stimulating” place to host your meeting. Holding it in, for instance, a mountaintop resort or amusement park “may lead to better connection between attendees.”

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