

The Dirty Dozen Rules for Green Meetings

- 1 **Create Electronic Attendees**
 - Use online registration
 - Offer an option for attendees to receive only digital conference materials
 - Go opt-in year one, opt-out year two, fully electronic year three.
- 2 **Find Green Sponsors**
 - Secure internal executive sponsorship for a green meeting (incremental \$)
 - Offer event partners a presenting opportunity (this meeting was greened by...).
- 3 **Integrate Event Miles Into All Conference Planning**
 - Calculate based on total distance from home to hotel to venue and back
 - Do this calculation for attendees, presenters and exhibitors
 - Integrate this into your site and accommodations selection process.
- 4 **Measure**
 - Use event calculators to measure your event's footprint (meetgreen.com)
 - Benchmark your event against other conferences.
- 5 **Reduce the Footprint of the Meeting**
 - Eliminate the use of virgin paper or materials (use recycled whenever possible)
 - Deliver handouts via email or via reusable thumb drives
 - When printing, always print on both sides of the page
 - Weigh the waste related to every session and meal and report it to attendees.
- 6 **Require**
 - Hotels to provide information about their eco-efficiency and how they can improve it during your events by light, water and waste management
 - Vendors to supply organic, local or fair trade products whenever possible
 - Exhibitors to reduce or eliminate printed handouts or disposable gimme-items
 - Presenters to reduce or eliminate printed handouts
 - Caterers or hotels to use bulk containers for condiments and sundries
 - All parties to use ground transportation instead of air shipping
 - All parties to pay offsets (carbonfund.org) for their carbon emissions.
- 8 **Reuse Whenever Possible**
 - Send unused and edible foods to local food banks in host communities
 - Distribute unused hotel room amenities and trade show gimmies to local shelters
 - Signage, placards and badge holders (make them generic for multiple event use)
 - Have host hotels automatically reuse linens for the conference (towels if one day event).
- 9 **Eliminate Disposable Event Items**
 - Replace bottled water with reusable water bottles and filtered water containers
 - Use dishes, fabric napkins and silverware instead paper or plastic ones
 - Never use dated signage, badges or physical conference material.
- 10 **Recycle**
 - Place conspicuous recycling bins through the conference commons
 - Use announcements to ask attendees to participate in recycling
 - Close the loop by collecting all unused materials at trade shows and rooms for recycling.
- 11 **Give Back**
 - Purchase offsets for all carbon emissions related to an event
 - Stage an event in the host community, where conference attendees provide a contribution to a local cause; make it an experience that engages and teaches the attendees too.
- 12 **Report**
 - Assemble a post-conference report that tracks the event's footprint, best practices and areas for future improvement
 - Send follow up messages to conference attendees and green-sponsors, documenting the positive impact of the green efforts
 - Give a green exhibitor award and hand out trophies or credits for next year's conference.

Continually improve: never consider your job done; there are always areas for improvement. Make green meetings an area of excellence in your career: research developments in the area, read books, and talk to your colleagues about what they are doing. Always find one area where you could have done better, and make a commitment to improve in it at your next event.