

designing more innovative and effective conferences



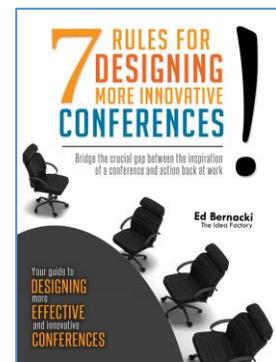
Why do people go to conferences, take notes
and never look at them again?

With the growing impact of technology, conferences which bring people face-to-face must create value or plan for the day when people will no longer show up. The Idea Factory offers *Conference Design* services. Ed Bernacki works with teams to shape conference design strategies based on his book, *Seven Rules for Designing More Innovative Conferences*. The focus is on learning, collaboration and innovation.

Why Seven Rules?

Seven Rules for Designing More Innovative Conferences is a 90-page book of ideas, strategies and case studies. The concept of *seven rules* started when Ed defined important conversations executives should have about conferences. His strategic expertise helped him shape these rules:

1. The experts at your conference are in the audience, not on the stage.
2. Think *return on investment*, even though it is hard to measure.
3. Design your conference based on logistics and learning.
4. Learning drives all the objectives and design of your content.
5. Always use the brainpower of an audience to create something.
6. Put structure into your networking and mingling opportunities.
7. Assume that your conference participants have weak skills for participating in a conference.



Who should be involved with a Conference Design Idea Factory workshop?

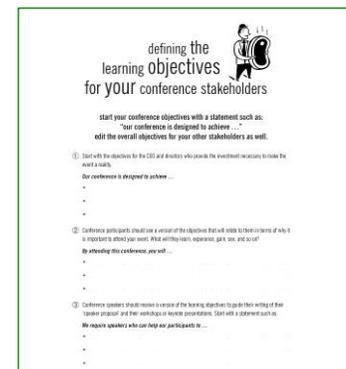
- People who have a stake in the success of a conference in terms of learning, collaboration and collaboration.

Benefits of the Conference Design Idea Factory workshop

- A management team that is energised about the potential for an event.
- A clear strategy for the conference
- More effective use of speakers and other resources.
- A more compelling theme and design to interest participants.

Workshops options

The Conference Design idea factory is designed for a minimum of three hours. It is part training, part brainstorming and part planning workshop. Ed Bernacki will provide participants with his book plus planning case studies and related materials.



For details, email info@InnovativeConferences.com or call 040 1919 127

Consulting and Advisory Services

Ed Bernacki has worked with conference organizers in a variety of countries.

- The *Canadian Public Service Alliance* hosts 15 conferences yearly for members. District planners came together for a conference on *designing conferences*. The event developed the skills of participants to design conferences cross Canada.
- The Ireland National Federation Conference: *Innovation in Services & Supports for People with Intellectual Disability* hosted 300 people. The plan included eight three-hour workshops. Ed suggested eight 'idea factories' instead. Each was designed to solve a problem important for those across the country. Each workshop had a writer who captured notes, ideas and recommendations. This led to an 80-page book of solutions and insights distributed to participants and members nationally.

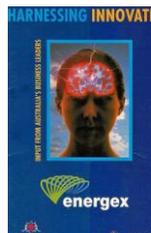
Training and workshops

Ed Bernacki has delivered workshops on conference design to groups such as:

- American Society of Association Executives – USA
- Meeting Professionals International – USA, Canada
- PCO Australia.
- Meetings Events Australia

Walking the conference design talk

When The Institution of Engineers, Australia (Brisbane) asked Ed Bernacki to be the fifth of five innovation speakers at an event, he said no. Instead he had 230 executives self organise 'idea factories' at each table to contribute ideas for *harnessing innovation inside their organisation*. Participants later received, *Harnessing Innovation*, this guide of ideas for innovation that had they created. *This is Rule #5 in action.*



The Conference Design Idea Factory

Innovation warm up – working like an idea factory

Part 1: The Facts from the Past

- What is conference effectiveness?
- Review of feedback and internal research.
- Tool one and tool two (from the book)

Part 2: Using the Seven Rules to prompt new ideas

1. Who are the experts in the audience?
2. Thinking of the return...who are the stakeholders? What is at stake for each?
 - Review of business strategies linked to the need for the event(s).
3. Defining...what needs to be 'learned'?
 - MPI research framework discussion
4. Creating the event...putting in place the basic design parameters.
5. Create value: What ideas can be created during the conference? How can people collaborate?
 - Case studies to prompt new ideas.
6. Networking ...who needs to meet? Why? How?
7. Do participants need to learn new skills? .

Part 3: Putting everything together:

Work towards:

- Defining a thorough description of the conference and a theme.
- Defining the learning objectives for the event, and for stakeholders and speakers.
- Shaping the conference – putting a conference plan or agenda together.

This Idea Factory workshop ends with a learning strategy, the foundation for the logistical and management details to deliver the event.

One of Canada's Top Management Books of 2007

Canada's *Globe and Mail's* Harvey Schachter gave *Seven Rules* an *Honorable Mention* on his list of the Top Management Books in Canada for 2007. He said....

"Most of us take the conventional format of conferences for granted. Mr. Bernacki has offered some challenging questions and alternative routes that will get all of us – planners and participants alike – to rethink how to gain the most from those we attend. Seven Rules for Designing More Innovative Conferences is a short, simple and plain book that offers some terrific and long-needed ideas for improving conferences."

