



What's common to these companies?

have fun, they forget about their position in relation to everybody else. That opens them up. I think that frees them in their thinking and carries over to their interpersonal relationships at work and attitudes towards work."

Improv workshops are a subtle way to deliver information. Instead of listening to a lecture, participants learn by doing, by playing games. Beth Beutell, senior meeting planner for Boston Scientific Scimed, finds this approach refreshing. "Too many facilitators

come in and their agenda is too obvious and it's not what the group needs to hear."

Minnesota Timberwolves Human Resource Manager Chris Johnson found the improv workshop was the highlight of a two-day manager's meeting. "Everybody had a good time," Johnson says. "Everybody participated in it. It really energized our management team. And I've had no less than three separate managers come up to me afterwards to inquire how to get in touch with [the theater] to do

something with their individual departments. That energy ... they just want to spread it to the rest of our staff."

For more information, contact local improv theaters and see what they have in the way of corporate services. Some will only provide interactive entertainment. Some will have highly developed corporate divisions that can do everything from training and team building to creating customized sketches, scavenger hunts, themed weekend events and spoof industrial videos. **ff**

13. BEST OF THE FEST



Local festivals create colorful backdrops for meetings and events. They provide built-in entertainment and local color. If you tie your theme into the festival, then the festival itself can reinforce your meeting's message.

BONDING WITH A BEAT

"You were inspirational, made people happy, made them cry ... the abiding memory from the two days for the 1,800 people will be the drumming. Our chairman left saying we should never run another event without you, thank you for the magic you worked." The sentiments alone make this an impressive thank-you letter for corporate services rendered. It's even more impressive that the writer is Prince Charles, HRH Prince of Wales.

What form of corporate entertainment did Prince Charles find so inspirational? A drumming workshop led by The Drum Café, a South-African-based company that has led workshops at more than 1,800 events in 16 countries and now has branches in Africa, Australia, England and the United States.

The Drum Café can work with groups of 10 to 10,000 people. Each person is given a traditional African drum and taught how to play and listen to one another. Director of the Atlanta branch Jo-Ann Radus believes this strengthens bonds between co-workers and energizes meetings in a truly unique way.

"Teamwork is made up of components of individual parts," Radus says. "And we compare that to music. You have small components, but when you put them together, it creates something powerful."

"Everyone feels really energized. It's really useful at a break to bring the focus of a group back together in an experiential way. It's not intellectual. It's a physical expression of what it means to be together as a group."

For more information, visit www.drumcafe.com.

—Kristi Casey



The rhythm's gonna get ya: Old Mutual employees bond at a Drum Café workshop.