

# Productive, Focused, Energizing Off-Site Meetings

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Off-Site meetings, while valuable, can be tedious, not relevant to the most important matters, and in many cases lacking real substance and interest to participants. In today's environment, to step away from business both literally and figuratively, off-sites must be worth taking the time.

While a leadership or management team is expected to know how to manage its business, it can't be expected to know how to design, organize and orchestrate meaningful and creative discussions. Successfully bringing together strong personalities, people whose commitment has not yet been harnessed, and those of diverse backgrounds and interests is a speciality in itself.

Off-sites help a leadership or management team refocus attention on what is most important and stretch itself where the status quo needs to be challenged.

Off-sites should occur on a regular basis (at least once and ideally four times a year).

Off-sites that are thoughtfully designed, skillfully facilitated, and well-documented make it easier for all participants to engage and produce meaningful, relevant outcomes.

## Imagine an off-site characterized by the following:

- Considering everyone's valuable time, investigative work is conducted prior to the off-site. Participants take part in a third-party interview survey to gather interests, concerns, ideas, and the "elephants under the table." This information helps shape the agenda and is presented non-attributed and discussed in length during the off-site, providing access to information the team otherwise would not have.
- The agenda is designed around topics of greatest importance.
- Difficult and controversial issues are addressed and dealt with effectively.
- Everyone engages in ways that are meaningful and that contribute.
- Discussions are energizing. Stronger bond develop among team members.
- The written report provides a record of information to help the team carry ideas forward.



**Laurel Boucher, PE, ME**  
*Helping different organizations work together with strength and effectiveness*

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With over 20 years helping people of different experiences, perspectives, and strengths work effectively with one another, Laurel helps organizations plan and conduct off-site meetings people **want** to attend, off-sites that produce tangible and exciting results.