

Industry & People News

# How mindfulness is changing meetings

By **Kim Benjamin**

03 Apr 2017



Mindfulness—the practice of paying more attention to the present moment—is increasingly being incorporated into meetings and events.

Software business Salesforce is one example of a company doing this, with its **2016 Dreamforce** event including meditation and mindful eating sessions led by Buddhist monks.

Michelle Mainwaring, marketing and PR manager at UK-based **BE Vivid** says that clients are turning to mindfulness as they recognise the need to support their employees' happiness levels and mental health wellbeing.

"We recently created a 6am yoga session with meditation and mindfulness practice for 110 of our client's employees, prior to a full day of team-building and panel discussion sessions held at the Grand Hotel Brighton," she says.

So how can planners best embrace mindfulness? Mainwaring suggests holding meetings somewhere soothing, opting for a calming, peaceful setting where delegates can be "very present" and "in the moment" for their discussions.

Selene Chin, managing director at digital studio **Pico Pixel**, says that mindfulness can be used to build momentum, make decisions, move things forward and set priorities.

"If the meetings we are in actually accomplish something, we often feel that this has been a rewarding use of our time," she says. "The meeting chair has a responsibility to not let a meeting drift into inaction or drone on about matters that only a couple of people in the room are interested in."

Chin adds that having a structure can help to better incorporate mindfulness. "It's easier to stay present in a meeting when you know what to expect and how you will be contributing to the discussion. Having a structure doesn't mean that you have to restrict yourself to the topics to be discussed, it just means you define the areas you want to cover—timelines, challenges or resources, for example."