

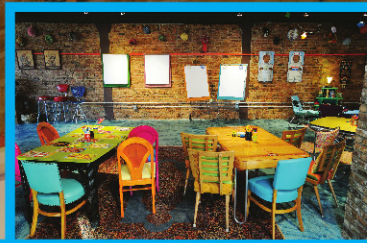
Meetings

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"With a creative environment, your meetings rise to heights unimagined."

Creativity



Catalyst Ranch, in Chicago's West Loop, has taken the offsite meeting experience to creative new levels. For more than 10 years, they have focused on corporate meetings and events in unique and innovative ways. The atmosphere at Catalyst Ranch inspires creativity and imagination and fosters collaboration.

"From the moment you walk in, you notice a different energy that automatically gets people thinking differently," said Miranda Baker, Director, Qualitative, TNS Global. "We're able to be strategic with our ideation sessions, but also fun and creative allowing us to come away with some breakthrough ideas."

It's not just the atmosphere that makes this place so unique. Planning a meeting at Catalyst Ranch pairs you with one of two Client Services Managers, dedicated professionals that will help you ensure your attendees get the most out of their meeting. And that's not just making sure you are in the right size room and that you have all your pens, notebooks and nametags. Of course, all those traditional supplies are available; they're included in the room rental. It's the supplies you didn't know you needed that make the meeting experience at Catalyst Ranch so unique. Stickers, Play-Doh and board games are just a few of the quirky things available to your participants because Catalyst Ranch knows that working in a fun, eclectic environment can make everyone more productive. "The staff is phenomenal, always eager to help and very accommodating with the materials we need," said Baker.

Each meeting comes with a complimentary energizer or icebreaker, led by trained professionals that really know how to get a group engaged and focused. Who's up for PowerPoint Karaoke?

The ranch hands at Catalyst Ranch will also help brainstorm room setups and additional activities. And they have a number of suggestions for dinners and post-meeting entertainment in the neighborhood. In addition, Catalyst Ranch has referrals

for various types of facilitation including: meeting facilitation, strategic planning, leadership development, creativity coaching, product ideation and more.

Getting your meeting out of the conventional boardroom allows your participants the opportunity to really focus on the meeting. "Getting into a new space really keeps everyone focused and at Catalyst Ranch there are so many things to interact with," said Baker. "There are no desks to get back to with emails and calls to distract participants. Everyone is able to think more creatively."

Unfortunately, not every meeting can be taken out of the boardroom and not everyone can get their group to Chicago. While Catalyst Ranch can't be found across the country just yet, there are some other groups that share the same vision and can be found in New York City, Ohio, Kentucky, North Carolina, Georgia and Texas.

A wealth of ideas and information for bringing creativity into the boardroom can be found on Catalyst Ranch's website. They suggest bringing physical activity into your meeting through energizers and icebreakers, something that has been known to make sessions more productive. Try writing random questions on the stripes of a beach ball; toss the ball around the room and have participants answer the question under their left thumb. Another activity involves writing the name of people or animals on name tags and placing them on the backs of each participant. By asking only Yes or No questions such as "Am I famous?" or "Do I have four legs?" participants must guess what is on their back. Attendees are encouraged to think creatively which will lead to more creative thinking once you get down to business.

Whether it's hosting your next meeting at Catalyst Ranch or finding energizers for your next onsite meeting, attendees are sure to get more out of the meeting when creative elements are incorporated.

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