LARGE SCALE MEETING EXPERIENCES: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the key differences of managing a very large audience (say 100 people or more) versus a more normal training group size (e.g. 25 people)?
Insight Experience uses process, technology and staff to deliver an experiential exercise to groups of 100 or more. The agenda that is broken into activities that are no longer than 30 minutes (15 is preferable) so that we don't lose participants or get too far behind. The two key pieces of technology we recommend are live polling software (e.g. PollEverywhere) and an on-line stopwatch projected onto the large screen. Both of these tools allow participants to self-monitor, stay engaged, and deliver on-time. Finally, we staff the meeting with enough people to roam around the tables so that participants can easily ask questions or be re-directed to the task at hand. You can bring any exercise from a small training group to a large meeting by incorporating these process and technology ideas.

Can you provide low-tech or no-tech options for engaging participants?
Most attendees at a large business meeting will have a laptop or other device with Internet access. However, if a lower (or no) tech option is preferred, mobile phones can be used for live polling and other apps, and paper submission forms can be collected for a decision entry team to process.

What's the value of custom vs generic coaching situations?
While custom coaching situations can be designed to reflect unique challenges in your organization, often generic situations can be equally effective in helping leaders develop skills. The test is whether a scenario presents leaders with a realistic business scenario in which they might find themselves every day. They can bring their own experience to the conversation and also learn new approaches for a challenge they likely face on a regular basis.

How do you preemptively "show the impact" of choices that haven't been made yet? Is there a sim or algorithm you are using?
Insight Experience models show the future impact of choices in different ways. First, we can help leaders understand the short- and long-term trade-offs they are making by showing trends in business results over time. For example, when a decision is made that cuts costs and time at the expense of customer satisfaction, we show the short-term positive financial impact to reflect that choice. However, we also share longer term data that illustrates the more gradual decline in the customer experience and how that reduces financial results. We can also show the impact of choices that are interdependent. During the webinar, we showed the impact of making an execution decision, and then the shift in those results after making a choice to manage the risks associated with that execution decision. This approach enables leaders to understand that their operating choices are just one step; communication, risk management, coaching and other leadership behaviors make the difference in the impact they have on the organization.

How do you manage role-playing in a large group setting?
We create small groups within the large audience prior to the start of the session, and seat them together at tables in the meeting room. During the session, we alternate between large group presentation and small group work. We highly recommend breaking the agenda into manageable tasks and continuously guiding the participants through the steps in the process. The variation in activity is one reason this approach keeps large groups engaged and improves the "stickiness" of the message.

Does the whole room see the individual's feedback?
We share results by team only and keep the discussion focused on learning rather than the decisions or performance of one individual team. An individual's feedback report is delivered just to that person, and he or she decides whether to share the information.

Would the "cascade" meetings use the same technology and scenarios?
There is a range of options for cascading the messages from one large meeting throughout the organization. It is possible to leverage the same technology and scenarios from one meeting to another. It's important to ensure the content and messages are appropriate for the next level audience. We work to tailor the scenarios for a new audience, while keeping the key messages consistent. By maintaining as much of the original experience as possible, the leaders who are responsible for cascading the message will be able to deliver the session and ensure a consistent message through the organization.

What is the decision making process you use for this - is leadership taking these "decisions/input" into account or is it by consensus?
While participating in a simulation experience during a large scale meeting, participants have an opportunity to make both team-based and individual decisions. Teams work together to make consensus decisions across a multitude of issues: leadership, business and operating. This process enhances their understanding of the business by examining issues from multiple perspectives. Decisions about the approach and key messages during coaching practice are individual decisions, and participants receive feedback from their peers and get an individual impact report to help them assess those decisions.