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# HOW TO ACHIEVE MEMORABLE EVENTS?

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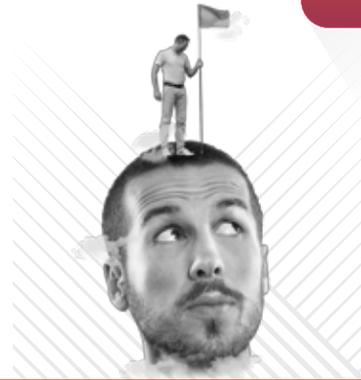


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# ¿CÓMO LOGRAR EVENTOS MEMORABLES?



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of a major marketing agency in Latin America, I have had the opportunity to produce hundreds of events for large companies and brands in our region. The fundamental purpose of any event is to communicate and educate, in our experience, the focus of the client's preparation has always been on the aesthetic and technical aspects of the function. Planning this way causes content to fall by the wayside. If the purpose of the event is to achieve an objective or influence behavior by communicating new information, then we should then pay more attention to how the content is structured. A focused content approach like this leads to a more significant impact.

Human beings learn through three mechanisms: Construction, Cognition, and Community. Edgar Dale's Cone of Learning represents these three elements. The Code of Learning assigns retention percentages based on what the participant does during the learning process. The cone progresses from reading and hearing at the lowest rate while engaging in purposeful experience related to the topic has the best retention rate. In the best cases, events planned by typical companies generate a 50% information retention rate. This article will show you how to reach retention levels of 90% making your events memorable and most of all a catalyst for change and progress.

## A VIEW FROM THE PRODUCER'S PERSPECTIVE

Effective events are elaborate and expensive. At the onset of most projects, the emphasis is on structure and logistics. Organizers aim to have a stunning look & feel making use of new technologies. Those responsible for the event spend endless hours working with travel agencies, hotels, transporters, doing preproduction, approving renders, modifying the concept and key visuals.

Finally the day before the event, the hosts make sure that the screens work, and run a sound check. They observe the lighting and double check that the microphones are plugged in. It's 11 pm, and the event starts bright and early the next day. After the final preparations, most presenters begin to arrive to get the lay of the land and to deliver a draft of their presentations. Yes, just a draft, because late tonight they plan to make some changes.

So how does the presenter's draft look? Almost all presenters have slides to support their presentation. A few have videos. The most advanced have public participation schemes or demonstrations. But in our experience, the percentages of these groups would be: slides - 80%, video - 15%, demonstration - 3% and participation - 2%.

The scenario above is how most of our clients report they ran events before us. In the 18 years that our agency has been working with the most prominent brands in our region, we have helped execute more than 8,000 projects for our clients. Nearly half of these projects were events where clients sought to impact their organization.

Each project has hoped to communicate a clear message whether it's a brand trait, a value promise, a new strategy or something more. The almost 4,000 events we've helped our clients with have ranged from training their teams to hosting conventions. Other events we've help fun have been teaching others, hosting public forums, or running workshops.

## WHY DON'T WE SEE THE IMPACT WE EXPECT?

The problem arises after companies spend large sums of money on these events without seeing the expected results in their organization.

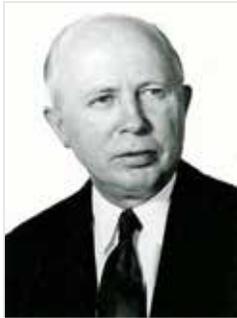
The reliable measure of communication is not the information that's said but what people do with the given knowledge. However, if the presentation is not memorable and the participant does not absorb the conversation then how can they take action on the new information? Let alone take action on it.





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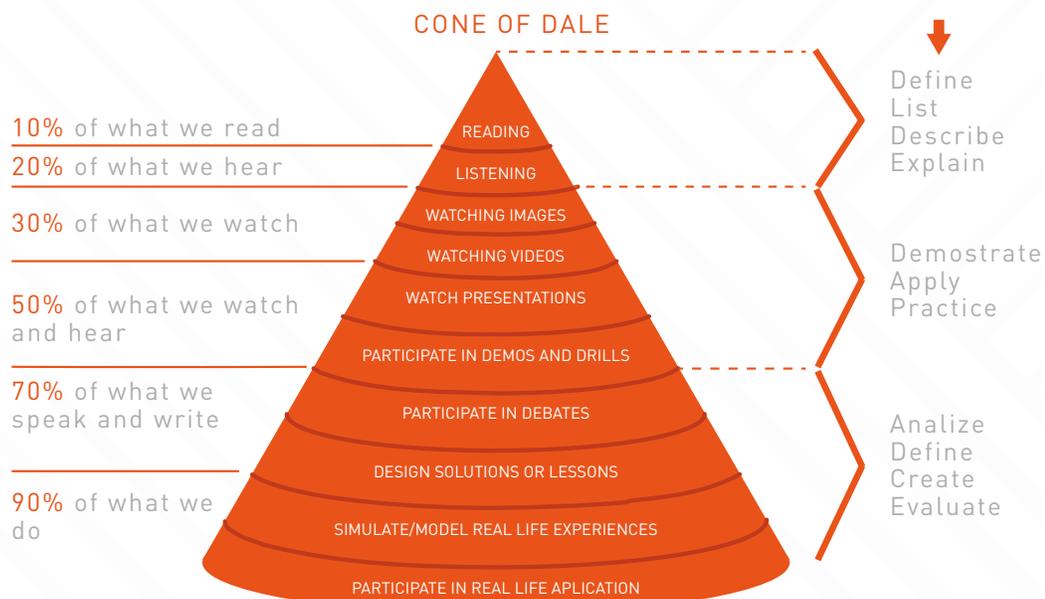


Edgar Dale was an American professor at Ohio State University from 1929 to 1970 when he retired. His most significant contribution was his development of the Cone of Experience. This diagram shows the relationship between different types of experiences and the learning experience. The purpose of the Cone of Experience is to show how learning improves as more senses are involved.



Cone of Experience · Edgar Dale · Autor: Jgaray [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cono\\_de\\_la\\_Experiencia.svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cono_de_la_Experiencia.svg)

Audio and visual inputs are at the tip of the cone. The base of the cone involves the other sensations such as smell, taste, and touch. Demonstrations are what engage these senses the most. Demonstrations can include simulated exercises or even first-hand experiences. As Dr. Dale continued his work on the Cone of Experience, he attributed percentages of concept absorption to each level of the cone.





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These percentages, while not based on scientific research, are commonly accepted as a frame of reference for designing engaging learning experiences. More importantly, modern approaches to education validate the fact that humans need to be more than a passive spectator of audiovisual material to retain knowledge.

According to Adam Lupu, Vice President of Learning at Andela, there are three pillars of knowledge and research. The three pillars are Construction, Cognition, and Community and they are adding new insights into our learning process.

**Construction:** Building things with our hands creates memories. Memories help retain information. When making anything we engage many mental processes. These processes are recollection, evaluation, analogies, extrapolation, and synthesis. All these processes allow the individual to manipulate the information and transform it into something new and useful.

**Cognition:** Critically thinking about something also ingrains new knowledge in our minds. Humans do not even need to know the purpose of the information. Simply creating a desire to know the answer is enough to form lasting memories. When humans seek knowledge, they acquire it through observation, and interaction with the environment. We observe and interact through experimentation, formulation, and validating theories.

**Community:** Being a part of a community also instills memories. One of the most influential forms of learning is imitation.

## TIPS TO ACHIEVE THE TRANSFORMATION THROUGH THE CONTENTS

If we want to generate changes in the behaviors and culture of our organizations, we must make sure that we present the content in a way that produces a memorable learning experience.

While some companies are migrating to Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), physical events still have fantastic potential. In person events have the most engaging experience and must remain a part of any successful training strategy.

abajo, Physical events generate a community which facilitates learning. When a person receives an invitation, the person feels recognized and valued. These

conferences are the perfect scenarios to deepen the bonds between teams. On top of delivering focused information efficiently, events also create community in an organization. This community improves learning and generates pride and belonging.

To host memorable events organizers must recognize that it is critical to have a leader, a budget, and a structure.

A couple of years ago, we began working with a consultant who focused on strategic communication. His role was to enhance the impact of presentations. He achieved this with simple initiatives such as unifying the presentation template for all presenters. He also implemented more complicated efforts such as focusing dozens of presenters and their presentations around a structured message.

Our recommendation for companies is that their teams separate the responsibilities for the content of the event from the logistics of the event.

It is true that we gain nothing from spectacular content if people can not get to the event because they did not have a plane reservation. Rooms that are a disaster and have technical problems are memorable and can derail an event. For these reasons logistics are essential.

It is necessary to continue dedicating time and effort to the logistical and technical aspects of events. However, we encourage our clients to put as much effort into the content of the event. Content cannot be the sole responsibility of the presenter. If it is there will not be a clear focused message, then the hard work invested in the logistics is worth nothing. Regardless of how brilliant or senior the presenter may be in the organization.

Almost all presenters at corporate events are comprised of individuals who are not professional presenters. These people are likely amazingly dedicated to their area expertise inside the company. They are probably the most knowledgeable person on the topic, but this does not mean they have the adequate methodology to teach the subject efficiently.

Second, since PowerPoint presentations and videos only involve two senses, we must understand that this limits the learning experience. In the best of cases, we are getting the participants to retain 50% of the information presented to them.

It is important to work with the presenters in a scheduled manner and with time, so that they incorporate other types of experiences within their presentations that lead the participants to think and build.



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We must understand that the learning process should not be limited to the time of the presentation. We believe in the value of self-managed materials. Jean Piaget, founder of Constructivism, raised the responsibility of the student as an active actor in the experience. Self-managed materials are modules that participants must complete by their own means, before arriving at the presentation of the information. The investment of time and effort that the participant invests in preparing these materials, provides a solid foundation from the pedagogical and psychological for the absorption of knowledge.

It is essential to work with the presenters ahead of time so that they incorporate other types of experiences in their presentations that encourage the participants to think and build. By engaging these senses their presentation and your event can have a lasting impact.

Additionally, we must understand that the learning process should not be limited to the presentation. We believe in the value of self-managed materials. Jean Piaget, the founder of Constructivism, raised the responsibility of his attendees from student to active actors in the experience. Self-managed materials enable attendees to complete the worksheet on their own ahead of time. The participant's investment of time and effort preparing these materials provides a foundation for the retention of the lecture.

On the other hand, there are many opportunities where a participant does not need the information until long after receiving the training. The adult brain gives priority to the information it needs to survive. In these cases, it is essential to think about what will happen after the event. When they eventually need the notes from the event, how will they reaccess it?

During the event, we should think about incorporating new experiences into the PowerPoint and the videos. Some ideas are to provide success stories, encourage questions or debate, and host co-creation challenges.

I have participated in presentations where the goal was to present a new tool or software quickly to the company. At the end of the talk, they mention, off hand, that the program was successful in nearby countries. The result of this is that nobody remembers what the application does, but everyone remembers which country it worked in. We learn through a sense of community. What would have happened if they used the presentation to explain in depth why the tool was successful in another market? A team convinced of the benefits

of the tool will find a way to train on the subject.

In most corporate events there are two wireless microphones to pass to the person who wants to ask a question. This is not a good idea. The number one fear among humans is speaking in public, so valuable questions don't get asked. These insightful comments and questions remain locked in the minds of people who attend the event. Alternatively, presenters can use technology to enable attendees to participate in the discussion. Today there are mobile and web platforms that allow us to capture questions, make quick surveys and evaluations and measure sentiment in real time during events.

Three years ago our agency developed a platform to generate this type of interaction in the presentations, and the results are much better. In addition to capturing the public's questions, their responses and their feedback generate data that opens the doors to better future discussions.

One of the functionalities that our content tool has is that of co-creation. The amazing thing is that after three years of using the program with our clients, none of them have used this module. Co-creation is a topic that generates distrust within the leadership levels of the companies. It almost feels like a loss of control. However, the co-creation processes in which the information acquired is used to solve real problems in the work environment is the most potent tool to achieve knowledge absorption and induction of behaviors. Co-creation processes generate thought processes, which, as we saw earlier, deepen learning.

Finally, organizations that are taking advantage of the power of the community move their co-creation processes into a prototype level. In other words, they create products or initiatives that the company can then support within an entrepreneurial environment. This creation connects directly to the Cone of Experience. Not all organizations are ready for this type of participation, but those that have tried it generated profound innovations in their performance and products.

This level of engagement requires additional effort from the presenter and the organization. This extra effort is rewarded disproportionately. The teams making prototypes and designing systems are taking actions on the lessons presented. Using their new knowledge, they will remember the event's message and create new value for the company.



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## LIVENT, AN INTEGRAL SOLUTION TO ACHIEVE MEMORABLE EVENTS

All this sounds thrilling, but how do you achieve it within the company. It's especially difficult if your company has no expert presenters. This is the reason we developed our LIVENT platform. LIVENT is a multi-screen platform that allows events and their presentation to go beyond the stage and PowerPoint presentations.

Our platform is made up of four primary modules and many additional modules that allow us to generate different knowledge experiences.

Since logistics are essential, LIVENT has a module where we can centralize all the logistical aspects of the event. In this menu, participants will find their airline tickets, hotel vouchers, booking codes, reference maps, and any other critical information. With this information at their fingertips, they can reach the presentation room organized and ready to wow their audience.

In the agenda menu, LIVENT allows us to communicate the agenda of the event, by day and by presentation. Each one of the presentations has an individual window where we can show a presenter's review, a brief description of the presenter and the reference material. Most importantly, LIVENT can deliver content at different times during the event. Using this module LIVENT can provide self-managed materials or evaluations before the event. We can give the reference materials during the presentation. We can even segment who receives what and we can activate the contents according to a specific schedule. This gives your full digital control of your event's message.

The co-creation menu allows the presenter to generate challenges for the participants, segment them, activate them according to the time of the event. This module guides the teams in a creative process using the design thinking methodology as a frame of reference to create their prototypes or systems. The tool allows groups to upload photos of their prototypes, along with links to videos or articles. Additionally, it enables all participants in the event to read the contributions of other teams and engage with them.

The last screen is the community module. On this screen, we have created a space for people to share their experiences, thoughts and suggestions. Participants can upload photos, make comments, and like to other posts.

Apart from these four beginner modules, the platform has additional modules such as:

**Training module:** This module allows users to create a file of the information that teams need after the event. It enables presenters to send additional training modules with evaluations and all the other functionalities of the tool.

**Directory module:** Allows the organizer to generate

an easy-to-use contact directory. This module enables participants of an event to share their contact info in a simplistic and secure way.

**Digital Card Module:** Allows event attendees to share a digital business card with other team members or clients from their phone using text messages, WhatsApp, or other digital platforms.

**Game module:** Allows presenters to use games to generate an additional learning experience or make non-subjective measurements of participant preferences.

The platform also has two modes.

**Presenter mode:**

Allows the presenter to take control of the screens of the attendees' cell phone, tablet, or computer. Presenter mode enables the presenter to ask questions of the audience, privately. LIVENT displays the questions on their screen and stores them in a database for future reference.

Presenter mode also allows the presenter to conduct quick surveys of the participants. This breaks the fourth wall and captures the responses of the audience in real time. This survey is also stored in a database for future reference.

This mode allows the presenter to measure the audience's feelings and engagement. These surveys allow him to understand how the audience feels about a particular topic during his presentation.

Additionally presenter mode can administer assessments and visualize the responses in real time.

**Participant mode:**

Participant mode allows attendees to view the reference material on their computer, tablet, or phone. This frees them from depending on far away screens that don't always have the best definition.

Participant mode also allows them to ask questions, answer quick surveys or evaluations, and share their sentiments with the presenter.

## THE BENEFITS

The purpose of putting on an event is to deepen the learning experience of your participants. These learning experiences should fulfill the objectives of the company running it. An informed and empowered team is the best asset an organization has to succeed in their market.

Additionally, an engaging learning experience has the following benefits:

Attracts the best talent.

Retains the best talent.

Integrates new employees quicker.

Creates an agile team.

Increases employee satisfaction and participation.