THE LOCATION AND SURROUNDINGS of a convening have far more effect on the group's productivity than most people realize. The qualities of a space determine the options you have for what activities you can create for the group. Here is a checklist of qualities you may want to consider beyond the usual basics of location, size, and cost:

**ALWAYS VALUABLE**
- **EASE OF TRAVEL**—Whether centrally located or remote, so participants have a smooth, non-stressful arrival and departure
- **NATURAL LIGHT**—To provide physical and mental energy
- **GOOD SIZE AND ACOUSTICS**—To promote sound projection so that everyone can be heard given the size of the group

**CAN OPEN UP MORE OPTIONS FOR YOUR DESIGN**
- **MULTIPLE ROOMS**—For breakout groups or parallel sessions
- **MOVABLE CHAIRS AND TABLES**—For easy setting and resetting of the space, such as from a single circle to small groups
- **MULTIPLE SEATING OPTIONS**—To promote an informal and open group conversation (e.g., sofas, high chairs, or café tables)
- **THE OPPORTUNITY FOR LEISURE**—Walks, entertainment, and other outings can promote connection within the group
- **SUBSTANTIAL FLAT WALL SPACE**—For graphic recording and working with flipcharts. (Alternatively, use a pair of easels and large foamcore as a surface.)

**NICE TO HAVE**
- **ACCESS TO THE OUTSIDE**—To provide the opportunity for more refreshing breaks
- **OFF-SITE AND PERHAPS FAR AWAY**—To maintain focus, separate participants from everyday concerns, and allow for deep conversation
- **OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY**—To aid in inspiration, relaxation, and reflection
- **THEMATIC CONNECTION TO THE PURPOSE**—Such as being in the home country of key participants, or the topic’s global hotspot
- **UNIQUENESS**—To help the experience stand out in a way participants will appreciate, in the moment and in recollection

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“MEETINGS AT CONVENTION CENTERS AND HOTELS SEEM EASIER TO PLAN AND GET TO BUT MAKE IT HARDER TO SQUEEZE SOMETHING GOOD OUT OF THE GATHERING.”
—CONVENCING DESIGNER

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**WORKSHEET**

**VENUE**

Finding the Right