

The Delegate Experience FAQ

What's it like being a delegate at a Richmond ship-based event?

Assumptions:

1. You've decided to attend.
2. You've worked out your objectives.
3. You've selected those suppliers you want to meet and the conference options you'd like to attend, using the RE selection website approx. 8 weeks before the event.
4. You've received your provisional itinerary about 10 days out showing whom you will meet on board, where you will be sitting in the restaurants, and which conference sessions you will attend – all based on choices you have made from the selection site 8 weeks out.
5. For the companies you have chosen to meet, you've (hopefully) checked the supplier profiles provided by RE and maybe visited their websites.
6. You've received an e-ticket, telling you where the ship is berthed, how to get there, and your cabin number on board. And you've remembered to pack your passport!

Q. How do I get there?

A. By car to Southampton, hand over your car at the embarkation hall to be valet parked. Or by train to Southampton, met by shuttle buses. By coach from Heathrow/Gatwick, if flying in from further afield. By taxi from Southampton airport.

Q. When?

A. Embarkation is normally 14.00-17.00. Ship sails around 19.30, after the Opening Address.

Q. What's next?

A. You check in, much like at an airport, then board the ship. A steward will show you to your cabin. You might unpack a bit, then stroll round the ship to familiarise yourself with where you'll be working over the next two days, using the P&O pocket guide. You might stop in the Crow's Nest (top deck bar/lounge) for a cup of tea and a sandwich, before returning to your cabin, where you'll find your badge and final itinerary, which will show any changes from the provisional one you received 10 days earlier, together with other useful information. Any queries, you'll find your way to the Richmond Events help desk.

Q. How much money should I take with me?

A. Minimal, just to cover your travel to and from the ship. Everything on board is free of charge, except drinks in the bars, any shopping or laundry. At check-in, your credit card will be swiped and you will be given a cruise card (like a credit card) which you use for all transactions on board. All purchases will be charged against your credit card and you will receive an onboard statement. Your credit card will be debited within the two weeks following the forum.



The Delegate Experience FAQ

Q. Next?

A. Emergency drill at 17.15 – a legal requirement. At 18.00 you go to the main theatre for the Opening Address, usually by a well known industry figure or personality in the headlines. Out by 19.00. Off to Speed Meetings, where you will spend a few minutes with up to 6 suppliers you have asked to meet. It's just a quick opportunity to exchange business cards over a drink and determine if you have enough common ground to meet again later or back at the office. But you can opt out of attending speed meetings and just have a quiet drink in one of the bars or return to your cabin to relax and freshen up before dinner.

Q. Do I have to change for dinner?

A. Not on the first night. 2nd and 3rd nights: dinner jacket or cocktail dress. Daytime dress code is business casual.

Q. Where and when do I have dinner?

A. In one of the restaurants, at 20.30. The location and table number will be on your itinerary. You will dine with a supplier, one who has most likely requested to meet you. After dinner you may meet a friend for a drink in one of several bars on board, or go to the entertainment lounge to watch a show. Early (ish) bed on the first night advised!

Q. When's breakfast?

A. Normally at 7.45. Might be with a supplier who has requested to meet you, might be with other delegates, but check your itinerary. The ship will be moored by now, usually off the coast of Guernsey.

Q. Tell me how my first full day goes

A. A mixture of conference sessions and half hour supplier meetings, based on choices you will have made when deciding what you wanted to do on board.

Lunch at 13.15 usually, followed by a similar programme of meetings and conference sessions. The last one of the day could be an informal wine tasting. Some of the sessions you will have chosen might focus on personal development issues such as leadership, team building or how to sell to the board. Free time is allowed for too.

Q. I'm exhausted! Any chance of a break?

A. Of course! You might meet someone for a drink, have a spa break, visit the gym or play football on the top deck, or just relax in your cabin before changing for dinner. (Some enjoy the running track on the top deck too!). There are shops on board in case you want to buy a present for someone.

Q. What's the food like?

A. Excellent, and plenty of it! You will be dining with a supplier before going to the show in the entertainment lounge, or joining friends for a drink.

The Delegate Experience FAQ

Q. And Day 2?

A. Much like Day 1. The conference sessions are very varied: one could be a debate with voting on the central issue; another could be a team game where small groups spend an hour thrashing out solutions to a relevant business problem. Particularly in the workshops, the emphasis is on interactivity and participation by everyone. Presenters and moderators are discouraged from hogging the floor to allow the maximum learning opportunity delegate-to-delegate. Research over 20 years tells us delegates learn as much or more from each other as from experts who deliver talks. All speakers are urged to focus on good 'takeaways', to provide practical advice and solutions for immediate implementation.

Q. How does the trip end?

A. Sometimes a farewell cocktail party before a black tie dinner in one of the restaurants followed by a show, a drink or early bed! By wake-up time the next morning the ship is usually berthed back at Southampton. You can disembark from 6.30 as a rule, having breakfasted informally in one of the restaurants. Assuming you've charged your cruise card to your credit card, and you're happy with your onboard statement, you can disembark immediately without any formalities to go through. You will be directed to the car park or shuttle buses, and that's it, apart from the research questionnaire we ask you to complete, either paper or online.

Q. How would you summarise the benefits of attending?

A. You will have:

- Seen most of the suppliers you need for a full year and arranged to see several of them again on land
- Met other delegates with the same issues with whom you'll stay in touch
- Found something that will give you real competitive advantage
- Attended some thought-provoking conference sessions where the emphasis is on immediate deliverables you can take back to the organisation to implement
- Found a bit of 'away time' to consider the organisation's overall strategy – and your role in contributing to that
- Got enough out of the leadership & personal development sessions to give your team a real lift when you get back
- Decided the event is a 'must-do' for next year
- Had a lot of fun too!

Updated as of 31st October 2008