

# **Don't Take the Wind out of Your Sale**

Understanding Planner Supplier Relationships



Presented by: Brett J. Sterenson

# Today's Agenda:

- Absorbing the RFP Process
- Communication Methods
- Enhancing Negotiation Techniques
- Increasing Mutual Returns on Investment
- Handling and Avoiding Delicate Situations
- Understanding External Influences Affecting Buy Process



# Absorbing the RFP Process

## SUPPLIER PET PEEVES

- Receiving RFPs which could not fit at supplier venue
- Receiving RFPs which are out of realistic rate range at supplier venue
- Unrealistic due dates
- Cumbersome forms
- Inability to contact for more information

## PLANNER PET PEEVES

- Not reading RFP thoroughly
- Forcing square pegs into round holes
- Not respecting due dates
- Not respecting preferred means of communication
- Sloppy proposals



# Communication Methods

## IN PERSON MEETING

- PROS: Rapport is instantaneous, body language readable
- CONS: Difficult to schedule, most time consuming

## E-MAIL CONTACT

- PROS: Written record, delivery instantaneous, convenient response
- CONS: Tone is absent, response not immediate, feels impersonal

## TELEPHONE CONTACT

- PROS: Sometimes simpler to speak through things
- CONS: Unless scheduled feels interruptive, multitask distractions  
no written record



# Enhancing Negotiation Techniques

- Remember that both parties are selling
  - Why does planner want to hold meeting at this venue?
  - What does supplier want this meeting at his or her venue?
- Both parties should know in what areas negotiations can take place
- Planners should double and triple check their own flexibilities
  - Can dates shift by one day or another week be considered?
  - Can fewer breakout rooms be used or general session reused?
  - Can a separate meal room be avoided?
- Planners should understand supply and demand of desired locations
- Suppliers should understand business model of their clients
- How to navigate around attrition and cancellation
- What is and what isn't an incentive?
- Grants and Assistance



# Increasing Mutual ROI

- Supplier can offer deeper discounts on multi-year agreements
- Supplier can offer assistance in other locations
- Planner can offer referrals to additional customers
- Planner can offer testimonials to assist supplier in closing business



# Helpful Tools for CVBs

- Grants and Assistance
- Convention Calendars
- Multi-Hotel Site Inspections
- Education Events
- Sponsorship Opportunities



# Engaging With Customers

- Tradeshows and Exhibitions
  - Traditional Tradeshow
  - Reverse Tradeshow / Appointments
  - Hosted Buyer Events
- FAM Tours
- CVB Events / Speaker Programs





# Handling/Avoiding Delicate Situations

- Do Your Homework
- Proofread
- Avoid RFP Saturation
- Solicitation
- How to handle when it's not the right fit
- How to best communicate that a property is not up to par
- Negotiate with your top choice first
- Concessions
- Handling the exchange of gifts



# Who's Helping Your Customers

- Getting Help
  - Using a Convention & Visitors Bureau
  - Using a National Sales Office
  - Using a Marketing Representative
  - Using a Third Party
- On-line rates, group rates, discounted rates
- How to use TripAdvisor



# Questions, Comments?



**BRETT J. STERENSON  
HOTEL LOBBYISTS  
PO BOX 33875  
WASHINGTON, DC 20005**

**[brett@hotel-lobbyists.com](mailto:brett@hotel-lobbyists.com)**  
**[www.hotel-lobbyists.com](http://www.hotel-lobbyists.com)**

**p. 202-641-5580  
f. 301-576-3619**

