

NETWORKING

for

Florida Association of Public Procurement
Officials (**FAPPO**)

Creating Opportunities for Agencies and Subcontractors to be
Victorious!

November 17, 2023

Mrs. Katrina House, NIGP-CPP, CPPB, PPA

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “NETWORK”



An extended group of people with similar interests or concerns who interact for mutual assistance or support



The subcontracting community is an extension of our agencies. They provide the much-needed goods and services needed for municipalities to run effectively.



If we (agencies) expect more out of our subcontracting community, we need to provide opportunities to garner their mutual support and assistance

TRUE OR FALSE

Networking on any level is easy?

False.

Networking is a learned skill. It takes time and practice to develop your personal style and to find comfort in engaging in conversations with introverts and knowing when to pull back with extroverts.

WHY PROVIDE
NETWORKING
OPPORTUNITIES

Provides an avenue for subcontractors to advance within their field while obtaining optimum guidance from subject matter experts within the agency.

Allows the subcontractors to save on the initial investment of “registration” without fear of missing out on a day’s pay while instilling the value of participating in future events that may require payments to gain connectivity to other agencies, talents, contractors and more!

OBTAIN BUY-IN
FROM THE
ADMINISTRATION

Receive

Before you can receive buy-in from the administration, you must first believe in your networking event. You must be the first cheerleader, motivator and dedicated person to see the vision come to fruition.

Have

Have faith, confidence and trust in the event will ease levels of anxiety.

Work

Work with other members of your organization/department who can see the value in providing services to the community. Invest in your subcontracting community now, for favorable participation return later.

IDENTIFY TARGET AUDIENCE

DO YOU HAVE A GOAL

- Is there a specific task or skill lacking within your vendor pool to provide more areas of competition?

- Have you started a diversity study?
- Is your agency actively meeting and/or exceeding participation goals?

GET PREPARED

- *Do your research, what task/skill/trade needs to increase within your agency?
- *Promote networking event to those who are newly certified and/or certified but have not provided goods and services to the agency. Advertise in the local newspaper, social sites, and agency websites, etc.
- *Bring copies of awarded solicitations to assist when speaking with event participants; your “how to do business” guide and general insurance requirements.



WHAT TO EXPECT

Professional Networkers

- Attend all networking events
- Prepared with capability statements, brochures and business cards
- Sample questions from closed solicitations they did not win

Novice-Networkers

- New to an event, not sure who to talk to; where to start
- No information about their company-no knowledge of becoming certified
- Afraid to engage in conversation

START THE CONVERSATION

- You should be the center of attention! Allow the pressure of the networking event to rest upon your shoulders. Keep the smile and enthusiasm in your voice!
- Open the gates of a friendly conversation with a warm demeanor to allow others to come to you with questions.
- This will provide an opportunity for others to feel more relaxed and at ease when either you approach them or they approach you.



WHAT TO DO AT YOUR EVENT



Be present

Be approachable

Be knowledgeable about the event and the SME's on hand to assist

Utilize SME's and other volunteers at the event

WHAT NOT TO DO AT YOUR EVENT

- Do Not Disappear!
- Do Not be unaware of who is being represented at your event!
- Do Not be rude and inconsiderate!

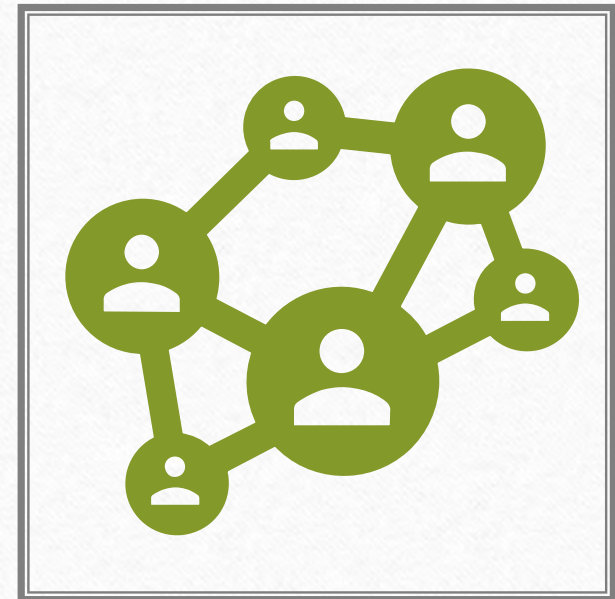
ENCOURAGE DIALOGUE WITH YOUR PARTICIPANTS

Provide the Reason(s) Why You are Having the Event

- Carve out time during the event to have an FYI session
- Provide space for participants to speak with someone one-on-one
- Provide information for participants to “follow up” should they need additional assistance with doing business with your agency.

INVITE AN ELECTED OFFICIAL OR BOARD MEMBER

- Invite an elected official, board member or someone from your management team that believes in the benefit of the networking event.





FIND WAYS TO BE OF SERVICE

- Do something—even if you are a greeter at the door, help with signing in, walk around and assist with locating the SME for a participant’s particular commodity.
- Introduce the speakers, SME’s, honored guests, etc. or let them know where to find you if needed...be present in some way...don’t just “hide away”.

- Do plan in advance
- Do solicit SME's for the event
- Invite a colleague to work with you when planning/executing/promoting the event
- Invite other agencies to assist with networking event that provide services your agency does not
- Don't stop working on perfecting your event-every event is different.
- Don't forget to follow up with SME's and participants-reminder emails/meeting invitations help
- Don't forget to obtain approvals, buy-in and to select a location that is advantageous to small companies

DO's AND DON'T's

FOCUS ON
QUALITY
NOT
QUANTITY

Start by providing small networking sessions that focus on a particular task/skill/trade.

Smaller networking events are easier to facilitate than larger events which may provide a multitude of trades, skills and or tasks within the industry.

WAYS TO NETWORK

Different ways to network

- In Person
- Virtually
- Social Media

PETER GOURRI'S “WORK THE ROOM”



PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR SURROUNDINGS,
WATCH PEOPLE'S BODY LANGUAGE, THEIR
EYES AND THEIR MOUTHS.



LISTEN TO WHAT IS BEING
SAID AND ENGAGE IN
CONVERSATION.



SPEAK TO PEOPLE. THEY
WANT TO ENGAGE.

“LITTLE” SOMETHING ABOUT YOU



- *Provide a brief statement about who you are. This statement could include your job title, position, number of years in the industry and what ties you to your event.
- *Be confident in your statement; this could be the first and only impression of you and your entity that you may be able to provide.

PROVIDE WAYS TO CONNECT... WITH YOU



PROVIDE WAYS FOR PARTICIPANTS TO CONNECT WITH YOU AFTER THE EVENT.



THROUGH SOCIAL SITES, OFFICE PHONE AND/OR EMAIL.



SCHEDULE MEETINGS TO PROVIDE IN-DEPTH INFORMATION



FOLLOW UP! IF YOU SAY YOU WILL FOLLOW UP, DO IT!

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