

MPI North Florida January 2020 Luncheon

1. RFPs:

- Realistic ballpark with history to back it up
- RFP vs. add ons
- Bottom line: can we meet this budget: save time
- Range allows to upsell
- Range allows creativity from supplier

2. Networking:

- Schmoozing
 - Use the time to get to know people/share but don't sell
 - OK to approach the 1st time
 - Open to new suppliers; build a relationship before selling
 - We work with repeat suppliers but are open to new ideas, location, supplier service providers
- Cold calling: outdated, email instead

3. Inside Scoop/Pet Peeves:

- Need good information and realistic expectations
- Planners pet peeves with suppliers:
 - Answer the RFP, don't call
- Suppliers pet peeves with planners:
 - Changing program
 - Loyalty
 - Planning with a budget
 - Not waiting until the last minute for AV, transportation

4. Problems Occur:

- If deadline is established, but not yet reached, supplier doesn't need to repeatedly check in with planner (overcommunication).
- Mistake: own it, communicate immediately, call your client, make a concession if you can.
- Communication error: depends on scale of error, timeline, customer wants to be involved in correcting but but proposed solutions are helpful too.
- Ask questions and then provide info. Don't just "spit" out tons of info that might not be used.
- Admit problem with a fix in mind.
- When you make a mistake, how you do communicate?
 - Quickly
 - Own it
 - Make it right
 - No sugar coating

- Learn
- Do something extra
- Vicky's outlook thick to not make a mistake

5. Honest conversation:

- Wish suppliers knew/understood RFP details before calling/met RFP deadlines
- Budgets are helpful
- Realistic expectations RFPs: too many details or not enough
- If you mention problems/issues before the event, we can fix it rather than wait for bad reviews.

6. Communication and Sales:

- Notify: yes
- Important information from supplier: bid anyway/list any space constraints
- Notifying not picked
- Professionalism
- Most important info: hard costs/budgets; knowing requirements/conditions needed to be provided.
- Deal breakers:
 - Payment
 - Timely communication
 - Respect/just be nice
 - Cost (willing to pay/quote)
 - Customer service/confident in event success

7. Things you really want to say:

- Need more money to do what you are asking
- Return my emails
- We (planner) cannot provide meeting specs 30 (or 60) days out
- Planner to work with vendor for timing details for set up/break down (venue)
- Venue to supply all costs that may be involved for event (planner)
- More detailed list of contracted suppliers, if applicable (planner)
- Better detailed room layout/space made available