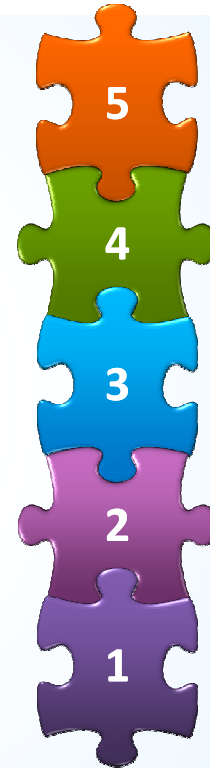




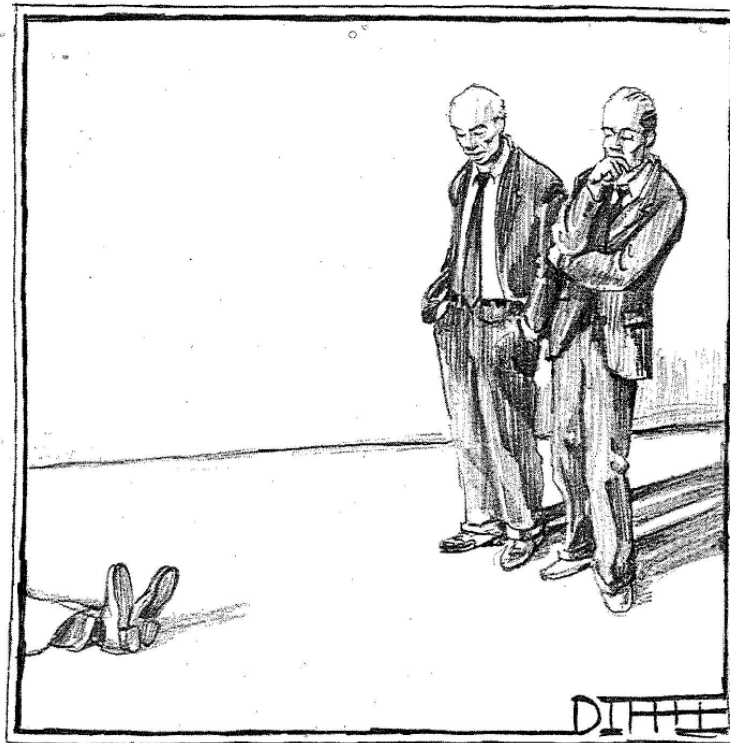
WORKING WITH CONSULTANTS



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*"From the violent nature of the multiple stab wounds,
I'd say the victim was probably a consultant."*

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- Purpose
- Logistics
- Presenters
- Format



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WORKING WITH CONSULTANTS

Learning from Each Experience

Don't lose your hard-earned knowledge!

What to do When Something Goes Wrong

Anticipate and Act!

Managing Your Project Successfully

How to do more than survive!

How to Interview, Hire, and Negotiate

Pick the right consultant!

How to Solicit for Services

Plan for success!

5

4

3

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1



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DILBERT

DOGBERT CONSULTS

I SAVED SOME
MONEY BY BUYING
A USED CONSULTING
REPORT.



What Do You Think Are The 5 Most Important Considerations For An RFP?

- Contracting requirements
- Availability
- Competence/expertise
- Experience
- References
- Fees
- Certifications
- Team composition
- Budget
- Project understanding
- Schedule
- Approach (scope)
- Organization
- Expectations of staff
- Length of response
- Other?

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STEP ONE

- What Do You Want to Do? What Is the Project?
- What is Your Budget?
- What is Your Timeframe?
- How Flexible Can You Be? (Process, Project, Timeline)

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STEP TWO

- Sole Source or Competitive Bid?
- Who Hires?
- Working with Purchasing

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STEP THREE

- Selecting the Selection Committee
- RFQ, SOI, RFP: What's the Difference?
- Where to Advertise?

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STEP FOUR

- Develop a Communications Strategy
- Decide Who will Run Your Solicitation Process
- How Many Copies Do You Really Need?

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STEP FIVE

- Who Will Write the Request?
- Who Will Answer Questions?
- Who Will Collect Responses?
- Who Will Coordinate Selection?
- Will There Be a Preproposal Conference?
 - Required or Not Required?

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Use 21st Century Practices (Not 1970s)

- Electronic Solicitation
- Electronic Management
- Electronic Submission
- Electronic Meetings
- Electronic Signatures

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WORKING WITH CONSULTANTS

Why Do Consultants Charge So Much?

Total Annual Work Hours (federal)— 2,087

Total Annual Salary (Gross) — \$70,000

Benefits, Taxes, and Overhead Multiplier — 2.5

Effective Annual Labor Cost — \$175,000

Hourly Rate (Gross) — \$84

Hourly Rate Net Billable — \$168

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Average Proposal Costs

Total Labor Costs (\$168/hr x 40 hrs) — **6,720**

Average Printing (10 copies) — **\$140**

Average Postage (10 copies) — **\$50**

Total Interview Expenses (4 people) — **\$2,600**

Total Interview Labor (4 people @ \$168/hr) — **\$5,376**

Total Consultant Costs — \$14,886

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SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (5 MINUTES)

Your manager has approved your request to hire a consultant to update your comprehensive plan. Should you use an RFQ or an RFP process? What factors did you consider in making your decision?

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What Were Your 5 Most Important Considerations? Have They Changed?

- Contracting requirements
- Availability
- Competence/expertise
- Experience
- References
- Fees
- Certifications
- Team composition
- Budget
- Project understanding
- Schedule
- Approach (scope)
- Organization
- Expectations of staff
- Length of response
- Other?

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APA RESOURCES

<https://www.planning.org/consultants>

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DOs and DON'TS:

- *DO look at and use APA resources*
- *DO publish a budget*
- *DON'T provide a detailed scope (usually)*
- *DO call 3 – 5 consultants to get a range of costs; DON'T issue a formal RFP for that*
- *DO understand and let purchasing know that planning is not engineering*

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DOs and DON'TS:

- *DO make sure that everyone is on board*
- *DO make sure the RFP drafter, selection committee, managing staff, and council are all on the same page*
- *DO question anything added to the RFP*

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How to Interview, Hire, and Negotiate

Pick the right consultant!



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WORKING WITH CONSULTANTS

Considering the Process from Different Views.....

1. Things Consultants Like
2. Things Consultants Hate
3. What the City Manager Might Need
4. What the Purchasing Agent Might Need

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Things Consultants Like in the Process

1. A short short list.
2. Knowing how many other firms are interviewing.
3. Knowing what other firms are interviewing.
4. Time to prepare for the interview.
5. Using PowerPoint, or not.

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Things Consultants Like in the Process - continued

6. Getting to know each other.
7. Communities that check references.
8. Set questions + free form discussion at the interview.
9. Knowing who will be at the interview.
10. Open ended time and materials contracts.

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Things Consultants Hate in the Process

1. Not knowing the community's selection criteria.
2. Providing details that don't matter or won't be used.
3. The cost of proposals and interviews.
4. Unknown competition getting an interview.
5. Interviewing with no chance at the project.
6. Point systems to select firms.

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Things Consultants Hate in the Process - continued

7. Too little or too much time for an interview presentation.
8. Too many meetings in a scope.
9. Hearing they didn't get the job.

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Things consultants hate in the process - continued

10. Not getting Feedback. Share the following :

- *What were strengths of their proposal / interview?*
- *What were weaknesses of their proposal / interview?*
- *What stood out about the successful firm / team?*
- *What might they have done differently to have met community's needs for the assignment?*

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What a Manager May Want From the Process

1. Getting the right consultant.
2. Pick a different subconsultant.
3. Good mix of people at the interview.
4. Changing the scope from the RFP issued.
5. Ask for additional information after proposal review or interviews.

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What a Manager May Want From the Process – Continued

6. Getting the firm to toss in extra tasks.
7. Not changing the original budget.
8. Share their expectations for the project.
9. Short project schedules.

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What Purchasing May Want From the Process.

1. Proposals that are submitted on time.
2. Having the whole contract and contracting process in the RFP.
3. The project being exactly like the proposal scope.
4. Negotiating the contract beyond the proposal scope.

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What Purchasing May Want From the Process – Continued

5. Using the City's standard Contract, not the consultant's.
6. Using the same contract for every City project.
7. Including that liability clause.

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What the Planner wants from this Process

- Discuss at the table – your top five goals for the RFP process.....

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Managing the Contract Managing Relationships

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

What are up to three difficult scenarios you have faced, or questions you have, regarding working with consultants and managing a planning project?

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Elements for Successful Project Management

- Establish Rules of Engagement
- Establish a Road Map for the Process
- Communications Management
- Time Management
- Project Scope Management
- Money Management
- Final Steps

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Rules of Engagement

- For optimal outcomes, set the stage for effective collaboration and then manage relationships.
- *Make sure on the front end that you have the same expectations.*
- Maintain open communication.
- *Close the loop at the end of the process.*

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Road Map for Success

Setting Up the Rules

- Determine Who Does What, How Much, and When?
- What is Your Expectation? Adjust Accordingly.
 - Concept to Completion or Concept to Adoption?
 - Detailed map, or general plan with room for course adjustments?
- What will be the role for Department staff?

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Roadmap for Success

Setting Up the Rules – At First Meeting Establish

- Scope of Effort – Deliverables and Deadlines
- Scope of Involvement: Consultant vs. Staff
- Depth of Involvement: Consultant vs. Staff
- Community Engagement Plan
- Government Engagement Plan

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Managing Time Constraints

- Establish times for regular meetings/conversation for duration of project. Expect to use Multiple Formats.
- *Consultants need your input, but that must be balanced against staff deadlines for regular functions.*
- Expect challenges if changes are requested or new tasks are added.
- *Expect challenges if there are changes in personnel or politics during the process.*

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QUESTIONS?

Any questions regarding the initial steps?

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Managing Communications

- **Establish Initial Timelines** - Functions, activities, documents.
- **Establish Timing Expectations** – Staff response to drafts and concepts, Consultant response regarding delays.
- **Establish Information Expectations** - Staff must inform consultants of any hidden bumps, political flack, or political shifts. Staff must provide time for assessments with consultants after public events.

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Managing Communications

Consultant Driven Projects

- Requires substantial staff time with Consultants to relay evolving local political dynamics.
- *You are their eyes for probable area of resistance and likely political pitfalls. You are their "scouts".*
- Careful staff review of product drafts is critical to be sure they are reflecting local intent.

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Managing Communications

Team Approach

- *Staff manages/arranges public input events, consultants do the presentation.*
- Staff manages public outreach efforts and relays information to consultants.
- *Consultant usually prepares document drafts, staff edits and may write some elements.*

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Managing Communications

Public Events

- Consultants generally provide visuals and lead presentations.
- *Staff should be prepared to answer questions.*
- Staff and Consultants assess community feedback.
- *Staff works with Consultant on publicity efforts.*

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Managing Communications

Coordination with All Affected Parties

- Very important and too easily overlooked until late in the process when harder to change.
- *Set up initial discussions for Consultant.*
- Staff must inform Consultant of "communication gaps" that emerge with other Departments or officials.
- *Staff and Consultant coordinate how to adjust to concerns that arise.*

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Managing Intended Project Scope

- *Beware of Task Creep - impact on timelines and budget.*
- Modifications and changes of direction are not unusual. Consultants are usually flexible for modest adjustment.
- *If more is needed from the Consultant, discuss time and financial implications internally before committing.*
- To save time or money, is there more that staff can do?

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QUESTIONS?

Any questions on management elements?

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Managing Money

- Make sure you understand, from the beginning, the fees/billing process and system.
- *If changes are needed, be prepared to negotiate on time, fees, and personnel needed.*
- Ask, up front, before deciding the amount of time and effort needed for requested changes.

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Managing Money

- Expect monthly billing. Make sure you understand the bill. Ask questions.
- *Pay bills on time. A happy Consultant who has been paid regularly is probably going to be more attentive than one still waiting for payment.*
- Keep a close eye on your budget – especially if you have requested "add-ons".

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Final Project Steps - **Concluding the Contract**

- When final product(s) delivered - review in detail. Find "glitch" and substantive mistakes and get them corrected before final payments.
- *Understand the cost for further corrections over time vs. correcting "glitches".*
- Does everyone involved understand the product? Do you need to budget for tutorials?

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Final Project Steps - Do's and Don't's

- DO see the Consultant as a member of your team and not an outsider.
- *DO include other staff and departments to get their insights and (later) their buy-in.*
- DON'T fail to communicate throughout the project. No surprises.

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TYPICAL PROBLEMS TO DISCUSS

1. As the staff project manager giving a progress report at a staff meeting what sort of questions would you expect from those in other Departments?
2. How would you resolve conflicts found between the Zoning Code and other adopted Codes (Fire/Building/etc.)?
3. How would you manage a request from the elected officials to add more community events and site studies to the project – midway through the established timeline for the project?
4. What would you do about massive opposition arising toward the end of the project from a "NIMBY" neighborhood, to a new zoning district created based on the adopted new Comprehensive Plan?

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What to do When Something Goes Wrong

Anticipate and Act!



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Elements of the Contract

- Control the form
- Sections
 - Parties
 - Legal authority
 - Background
 - Scope of services (incorporated)
 - Payment

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Elements of the Contract (cont'd.)

- Sections (cont'd.)
 - Timing of services
 - Warranties and representations
 - Indemnification and defense expense
 - Insurance
 - Default and remedies
 - Miscellaneous
- Exhibit A – Scope of Services

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Let's consider an unfortunate example.....

As part of a Comprehensive Plan to be done by a consulting firm, three subarea studies are to be prepared: 1) the downtown, 2) a commercial corridor, and 3) an older residential neighborhood. The general locations of the subareas are identified in the scope of services (taken directly from the project proposal) but not specifically mapped. In addition, the level of detail and topics to be addressed in the subarea study are not specified in the scope of services. When the client receives drafts of the subarea studies from the consultant, they find that all the geographies and topics they had expected are not covered, what to do next.....

What to do When Something Goes Wrong

Anticipate and Act!



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Avoiding the Mess – Essentials

1. Need to have a solid contract and scope
 - DO NOT begin the project without them.
2. Good communications throughout the project is a must.
 - If informal contact won't cut it, plan on scheduling regular project meetings

What to do When Something Goes Wrong

Anticipate and Act!



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Figuring out the Problem: One or more of these:

1. Sincere misunderstanding of scope intent
2. Unrealistic expectations by client
3. Lack of performance by consultant

Avoiding the
Need for
Good
plan of

What to do When Something Goes Wrong

Anticipate and Act!



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Gather the Team

1. Clarify Local Needs and Expectations
2. When to tell the City Manager?
3. When to tell the Mayor?
4. Does the City Attorney need to know?
5. Define consensus on what's needed and what to.

What to do When Something Goes Wrong

Anticipate and Act!



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Who calls Whom

1. Don't put this off, it just gets worse
2. Can I just call the consultant myself and work this out?
3. Do I have the City Attorney call or write one of "those" letters?

Avoiding
the
City
Attorney
plan of
action

What to do When Something Goes Wrong

Anticipate and Act!

4



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What is the consultant thinking?

1. Wants to have a satisfied customer
2. Has contractual obligations
3. Has internal financial obligations

Avoiding the
Need for
Good
plan of

What to do When Something Goes Wrong

Anticipate and Act!



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WORKING WITH CONSULTANTS

Moving Forward

1. Work together to strike a compromise – share the effort and pain
2. Hold consultant to contract responsibilities
3. Be willing to support the effort
 - Draft or edit the document
 - If capacity exists, prepare graphics
 - Handle the printing
 - Fund work expected, but not in scope.

What to do When Something Goes Wrong

Anticipate and Act!



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Discussion of Examples.....

Avoiding the
Need for
Good
plan of

What to do When Something Goes Wrong

Anticipate and Act!



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Bob

Learning from Each Experience

Don't lose your hard-earned knowledge!



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