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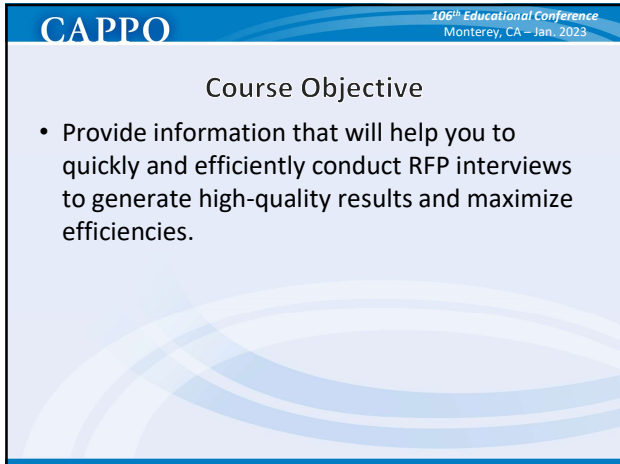
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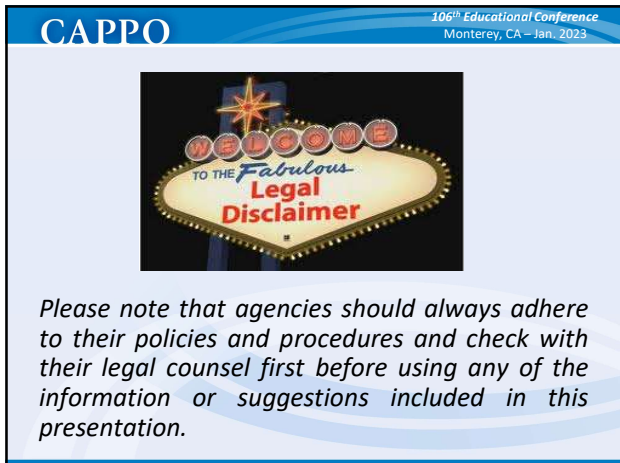
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What are interviews?

- Multi-step RFP process
- Held after initial proposal evaluations
- Variety of interview formats
- Opportunity for evaluators to clarify or obtain additional information
- NOT:
  - negotiation sessions
  - opportunity to modify RFP requirements

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Foundation

- Agency policies/procedures
- RFP document
- Published schedule
- Evaluation criteria



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Tip #1 – Be Prepared

- Clear communication
- Advise short-listed firms of agency's ethics policy
- Interview location/facility/room
- Technology logistics
- Sufficient time between interviews
- Stick to the RFP language

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**Be Prepared**

- Evaluation Panel:
  - Explain roles/responsibilities
  - Confidentiality
  - Conflict of Interest
  - Mandatory attendance
- Interview format/duration



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**Tip #2 – Consider Innovation When  
Developing Interview Questions**

- Different approaches to interview questions
- Evaluation Panel feedback
- Avoid leading questions
- Consider a project/service exercise
  - Discuss major activities with est. timeline
  - Identify the greatest risks and timeline
  - Identify what they need from agency and when

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**Consider Innovation When Developing  
Interview Questions**

- Ask questions about perceived weaknesses / vulnerabilities
- Ask about project unknowns
- What would the vendor recommend to improve the project?
- Are there any innovations or better project solutions?

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**Tip #3 – Short List at the Gap**

- Short lists are typically 3-5 firms
- Generally easier to justify including a firm than excluding it
- Stick to the RFP language
- Agency reserves the right to...



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**Short List at the Gap**

**EXERCISE (MAX 100 PTS):**

82
80
78
72
65
63
50
48

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**Short List at the Gap**

**EXERCISE (MAX 100 PTS):**

82	
80	2.5%
78	2.6%
72	8.3%
65	10.7%
63	3.2%
50	26%
48	4.2%



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**Tip #4 – Rules of Engagement**

- Invite the proposed Project Manager to the interview - keep it to 2-3 key personnel
- All communications go through Procurement
- Check references of short-listed firms before interviews

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**Rules of Engagement**

- Same interview duration for each short-listed firm - stick to the schedule
- Avoid discussing cost during interviews
- Panel members cannot mention proposal content of other short-listed firms
- Carefully consider any requests to attend interviews from non-scoring staff
- Hold questions from short-listed firms until the end of the interview

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**Tip #5 – Use Proposal Content and Interviews for Contract Negotiations**

- What did you learn during interviews that could help your agency during contract negotiations?
- Be prepared to assist with negotiations

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### Use Proposal Content and Interviews for Contract Negotiations

- Things to consider when preparing for contract negotiations:
  - Eliminate unnecessary costs
  - Improve benefits (better quality, deliverables, etc.)
  - Identify alternative solutions
  - Maximize project value

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### RFP Interview “Lessons Learned”

- Firm’s project team bickering amongst each other
- Firms trash talking each other in passing
- Late to interview, demanded full interview time
- More charts and graphs than table space
- Sales/marketing staff at interview – didn’t have clear understanding of our project

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### Sources

- ABA Model Procurement Code for State and Local Government (Section 3-203(6))
- *“Developing & Managing Requests for Proposals in the Public Sector”* by Theresa Bauccio-Teschlog, Dennis Carney, Joyce D. Foster, Ronald King, and Christine Weber
- Center for Procurement Excellence – *“Better RFPs Better Projects”* (virtual training course)
- NIGP Global Best Practices – Request for Proposals (RFP), NIGP

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Questions/Comments



Email: [jon.manning@edcgov.us](mailto:jon.manning@edcgov.us)

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