

Consulting Basics-What Does the Consulting Industry Consider When Evaluating Opportunities ?

Michael J. Lally, P.E., P.G.
Vice President
Olsson Associates

Larry W. Frevert, P.E., PWLF
Senior Consultant
TREKK Design Group, LLC



Who are we?

We are responsible to the firm's shareholders for identifying new business opportunities and making recommendations.

New business development

Client relationships

Project executive responsibilities

Objectives of This Presentation

- Define Business Development
- Discuss the Owner-Consultant Communication Process
 - Development of a Plan
 - Relationship Development
 - Identification of Prospects
 - Tracking of Prospects
 - Development and Pursuit of Prospects

Objectives of This Presentation

- Proposals
- Interviews
- Selection Results
- Project Execution

What is Business Development?



- Identification, development, pursuit, and securing of opportunities so that the top line of the firm can grow profitably
- It is more the “*people*” aspect of the business development and marketing side of the business

Marketing Definition

- In the engineering business, marketing is basically involved in the promotional end of things
- It involves developing and preparing marketing pieces, SOQ's, cut sheets, and proposals

Marketing Definition



- Involves coaching and preparing for interviews
- More of the “paper” side of the marketing and business development process
- Very much interwoven with the BD Process

Development of the BD Plan

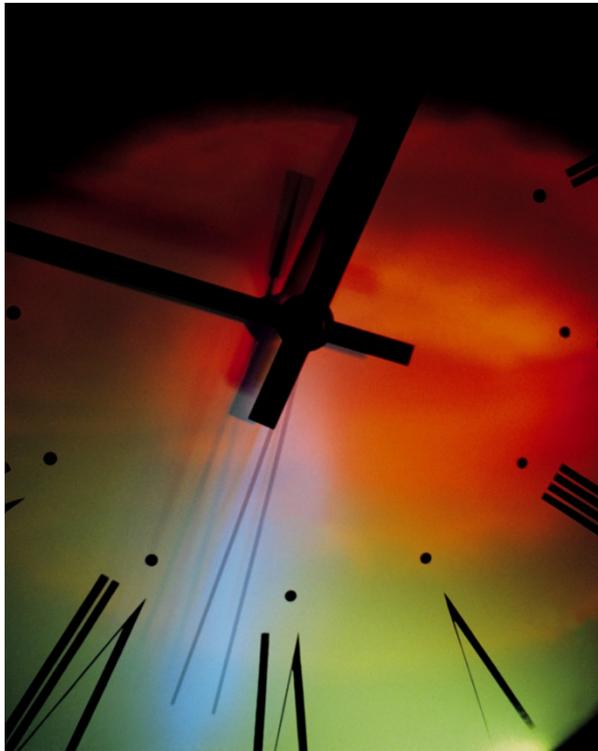
- Potential projects are identified
- Annual and periodic goals are set
- Project Managers are identified and assigned
- Tracking process is established

Relationship Development



- It has become a cliché, but it really is all about relationships
- Bottom Line: You can't do BD from your desk
- The BD Executive has to be visible but strategic
- Have to take advantage of the most important times of the day
- The best business relationships are cultivated over time

The Most Important Times of the Day for a Business Developer



- 7 to 9
- 11-1
- 5-7

Relationship Development

- Challenging our BD Executives to get out for at least 35 functions, events, and meetings per month during the most important times of the day
- Could be any of the following:
 - One on one breakfasts, coffees, or lunches
 - Chamber functions
 - Professional societies (e.g. APWA)
 - Client/prospect functions
 - Public Governing Board meetings

Relationship Development



- It allows you to get to the Point of Origin
- There is no substitute
- Program Pursuit is Relationship Focused
 - Build Your Relationship Throughout Your Career
 - Career Progression
- It is a two-way street

Identification of Prospects

- Also known as Filling the Pipeline
- Need to focus on matching our client's needs to our strengths
- Need to have prospects that equate to 3 to 4 times the number we think we can win.

Identification of Prospects

- Where do the prospects come from?
 - Executing our plan
 - From our business relationships
 - Public sources (e.g. city CIP's)
 - From our friends
 - Through professional groups or associations
 - While doing a project
 - Visualize a project and sell the concept

Tracking of prospects can be simple or very sophisticated

- Notebook
- Excel Spreadsheet
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM)
 - Term applied to the process implemented by a company to handle it's contact with clients or prospects
 - CRM software used to support these processes
 - Information can be accessed by employees in different teams

It doesn't matter what system you use, just use something!

How Do You Know if You Should Pursue?



- Go/No-Go Process
- Ask Five Simple Questions:
 - Do we have a relationship?
 - Do we have the corporate resume?
 - Do we have a project manager that demonstrates competence and would give the client high level of confidence that the project would be a success?
 - Do we have an advocate?
 - Did we know about this well in advance?

Pursuit and Development of a Prospect

- Do we need a teaming partner(s)?
 - Exclusivity vs. non-exclusivity
 - Special project requirements (DBE, GeoTech, Surveying, etc.)
- Getting to know the decision makers and learning more about the project
- Do we understand your issues?
- Do we know our competition?
- What is our value proposition, is it strong, and how do we communicate it to you?

The pursuit plan is a reflection of your needs and how we match up



- Strategy and Execution
 - What are the technical issues
- Structure and Staffing
 - Locations where staff is based
- Availability of Proposed Professionals
- Your organization and decision makers

RFQ's/RFP'S

- If it is through a RFQ or RFP that you hear about a project for the first time, you should:
 - A. Assume you are on equal footing with the competition and plan on pursuing
 - B. Toss the RFQ/RFP in the trash---it is too late
 - C. Do some limited investigation to see if it worth responding
 - D. Put together a response, submit, and see if you can get lucky (Hey...we're desperate for work!)

Proposals are used as the vehicle to communicate our bright ideas.

- Driven more by the marketing team and technical people than BD personnel
- However, BD personnel can and should have significant input into the document
- Should present background and qualifications but should focus more on solving the problem

Interviews allow us to connect with you on a personal level.

- We start preparing before we even get the word we have been asked to interview (Our interview strategy should have been decided with the proposal)
- Time is not on our side: it will pass faster than we think!
- We must Practice, Practice, Practice.
- Our goal should be to focus on solving your problem; not telling you how great we are!



Winning! All is good.



- Need to set a hit rate goal
- Winning or losing is determined very early in the process (remember the 5 simple questions)
- We don't pursue if we don't think the odds of winning are greater than 1 out of 3

Losing; we sweat losing 10 times more than we celebrate winning.

- Are there real clear reasons why we weren't selected?
- Will you be candid with us?
- Can we handle the truth? Are we prepared to do something differently?
- Do we ask for a debrief?

Win or Lose – Debrief!

- We won – What did we do right?
- We lost – What could we have done better?

And, after the project:

- Debrief with the client!



Questions?

OLSSON
ASSOCIATES

TREKK
DESIGN GROUP, LLC

Thank You!

Michael J. Lally, P.E., P.G.
*Vice President and Business
Development Practice Group Leader*

913.381.1170

mlally@oaconsulting.com

Larry W. Frevert, P.E., PWLF
*Senior Consultant
TREKK Design Group, LLC*

816.874.4655

lfrevert@trekllc.com

