

Joint Utility Outreach Forums Consulting Services Results – June 6, 2007

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Prepared for:

California Utilities Diversity Council

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary, Consulting Results, & Key Findings	p. 3 - 4
How to Read this Report?	p. 5 -6
Summary of Figures	p. 7 -18
<u>Section 1</u> Utility Outreach Forum	p. 7 -8
Fig. 1 – Overall Utility Outreach Satisfaction	p. 7
Fig. 2 – Utility Outreach Forum	p. 8
<u>Section 2</u> Certification	p. 9
Fig. 3 – Certification	p. 9
Fig. 4 – Certification Duration	p. 9
<u>Section 3</u> Match-Maker Appointments	p. 10
Fig. 5 – Match-Maker Appointments	p. 10
Fig. 6 – Meeting Representatives	p. 10
<u>Section 4</u> Follow-up Efforts to Build Business Relationships	p. 11 -12
Fig. 7 – Follow-up Efforts to Build Relationships	p. 11
Fig. 8 – Representative Associations	p. 12
<u>Section 5</u> Comments	p. 13 -18

Executive Summary

The purpose of this evaluation was to gain current insight and provide continuous improvement for future joint utilities outreach forums. This follow-up survey was conducted 6 months after the Consulting Services Forum was held in San Ramon, California on June 6, 2007. The Joint Utilities and the California Utilities Diversity Council (CUDC) organized the survey to get a better understanding of outreach efforts, certification, match-maker appointments, and follow-up efforts that potentially lead to new business. The evaluation sample of 45 respondents is 34% of the Consulting Services Forum's participants. About 78% of our sample was a woman owned business. Overall, respondents were somewhat satisfied with this event. Respondents want more emphasis placed on contract opportunities that get them quicker to the point of signing up new business. In addition, more communication and accountability from all stakeholders is necessary to build relationships. Suppliers need to be proactive in following up while the CUDC needs to provide more success stories and evidence of contracts awarded from attending such events. In fact, 3 suppliers (7%) were awarded contracts as a result of attending the Consulting Services Forum.

Consulting Forum Results

- 50% of your respondents were satisfied to very satisfied with the Consulting Services Outreach Forum.
- Respondents are 88.4% likely to attend future outreach forums and 81.8% of them would recommend these outreach forums to other business colleagues.
- Most respondents were certified with other organizations (90.9%) while 55.6% were certified with the CPUC's Supplier Clearinghouse. 75% of respondents who are not certified with the CPUC, do NOT know the requirements to become certified with the Supplier Clearinghouse.
- 65.1% of respondents were able to describe services to utility representatives at the forum; however, 43.2% of them did NOT have a match-maker appointment at the forum. Most respondents met with supplier diversity representatives (42.2%) when attending the forum.
- 74.4% of respondents did NOT find any future opportunities for their services over the next 12 months from their participation in the match-maker appointments.
- Respondents 81.8% of the time did follow-up with contacts made at the forum; however, 36.6% of respondents believe that following up efforts helped establish a relationship. Respondents were integrated (20.5%)

into the procurement process via contacts made from the Utility Outreach Forum.

Key Findings

Respondents understand the importance of attending the Consulting Services Outreach Forum; and most of them do appreciate and plan on attending future forums. In fact, many of them would recommend these forums to other business colleagues. Nevertheless, realistic expectations needed to be communicated about the sales process when attending these events and what kind of outcomes should be expected. The CUDC can educate suppliers around some of the success stories that took time to establish a relationship that actually led to contract being awarded. Perhaps share some of the information found in this report for your next consulting outreach forum.

Respondents want better opportunities that lead to meeting the right decision makers for potential contracts. The match-maker appointments are helpful, but perhaps contract opportunities could be available prior to attending the event so that suppliers can target specific utility companies to meet during these appointments. Some respondents would like more organization around signing up for appointments with more time between appointments to avoid meetings that run overtime. The CUDC could request brief bios from each supplier so that utility companies can have some knowledge prior to meeting with suppliers.

These results should be communicated to all stakeholders involved. Use the results to create passion around what is working and what needs to be improved. A baseline measurement has been created and therefore future evaluations can be used for goal setting or to create benchmarks for future outreach forums. In fact, we could track specific respondents on an ongoing basis to reveal success stories from consistent attendance to these forums.

Response rates are low and need to be improved to get more representation. Think of some creative way to increase responses rates for future evaluations.

Finally, make sure to read the open-ended comments. Many quick fixes are mentioned on how these outreach forums can be better conducted.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT?

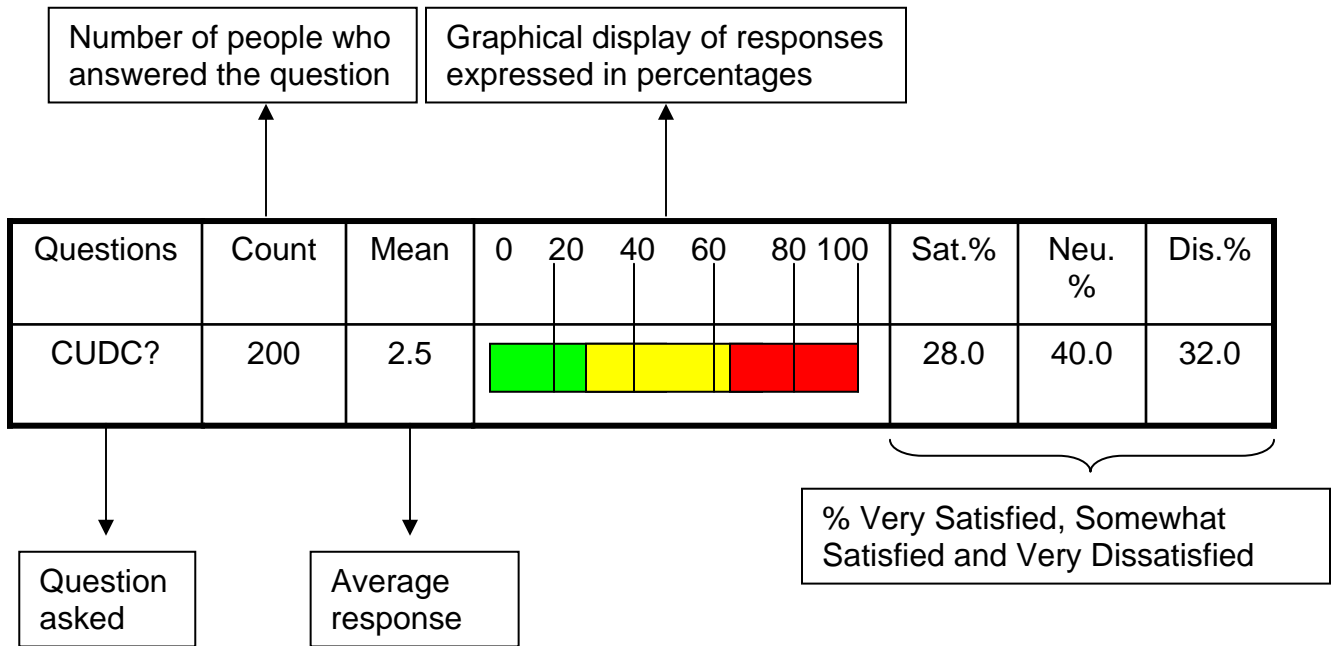
As you go through the figures, there are two basic tables that appear depending on the rating scales used during the data collection process. We used a satisfaction rating scale and a Yes/No response scale.

Satisfaction Ratings

One rating scale measured “effectiveness” on a 5-point Likert scale:

- 1 – Very Dissatisfied
- 2 – Dissatisfied
- 3 – Somewhat Satisfied
- 4 – Satisfied
- 5 – Very Satisfied

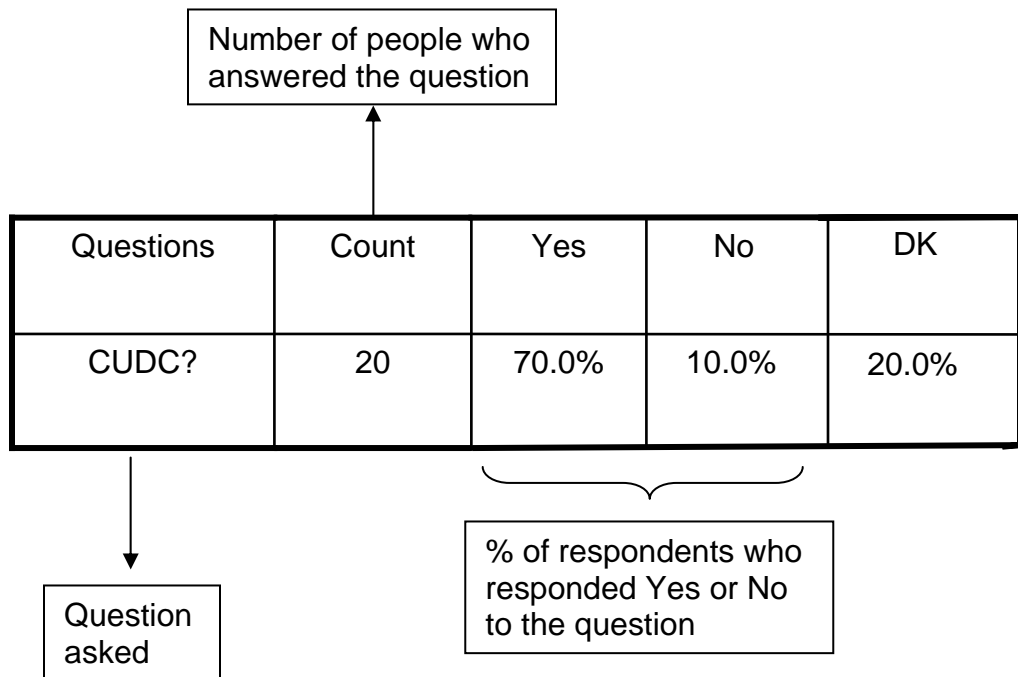
To interpret tables displaying results based on the “Satisfaction” rating scale see the explanations provided in the example table below.



Yes/No Ratings

The other rating scale uses a Yes/No response format (in some cases we also used “Don’t Know” as one of the viable response options).

See the table below to understand how to interpret tables based on this response format.



Note that critical information is also included below figure, such as whether results are rank ordered by one of the columns or what the values are for each point of the rating scale.

Section 1 - UTILITY OUTREACH FORUM

Figure 1 - Overall Utility Outreach Satisfaction

Questions	Count (Valid N)	Mean	Legend		
			Sat.	Neu.	Dis.
Overall, how satisfied are you with the Utility Outreach Forum you attended?	44	3.36	50	34	16

n = 45

1 = Very dissatisfied

2 = Dissatisfied

3 = Somewhat Satisfied

4 = Satisfied

5 = Very Satisfied

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- 50% of respondents are satisfied with the attended Utility Outreach Forum.

Figure 2 - Utility Outreach Forum

Questions	Yes	No
Are you likely to attend future Utility Outreach Forums?	88.4%	11.6%
Was the information from the Utility Outreach Forum useful to your business' contracting efforts?	81.8%	18.2%
Does your firm have a clear understanding of what you need to achieve in order to become qualified to work with utility companies?	81.8%	18.2%
Would you recommend the Utility Outreach Forum to other business colleagues?	81.8%	18.2%
Grand Mean	83.5%	16.5%

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- 88% of respondents will attend future Utility Outreach Forums and 80% of respondents felt the information from Utility Outreach Forum is useful.
- Over 80% of the respondents have a clear understanding of what is needed to achieve in order to become qualified to work with utility companies, and they will recommend the Utility Outreach Forum to other business colleagues.

Section 2 - CERTIFICATION

Figure 3 - Certification

Questions	Yes	No
Are you certified with other certification organizations (i.e., SBA, NMSDC, WBENC or their regional affiliates)?	90.9%	9.1%
Is your company certified with the CPUC's Supplier Clearinghouse?	55.6%	44.4%
If no, do you know the requirements to become a certified diverse supplier through the CPUC's Supplier Clearinghouse?	25.0%	75.0%
Grand Mean	57.2%	42.8%

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- Over 90% of respondents are certified with other certification organizations.
- 44% of the respondents are not certified with CPUC's Supplier Clearinghouse. 75% of the respondents that are not CPUC certified do not know the requirements to become a certified diverse supplier through the CPUC's Supplier Clearinghouse.

Figure 4 - Certification Duration

If yes, how long did it take to become certified?

Response	Count	Percent	0	20	40	60	80	100
Within 2 months	9	20.0%						
Within 3 to 4 months	12	26.7%						
Within 5 to 6 months	1	2.2%						
Greater than 6 months	2	4.4%						
No Response	21	46.7%						

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- 47% of respondents become certified within 4 months.

Section 3 - MATCH-MAKER APPOINTMENTS

Figure 5 - Match-Maker Appointments

Questions	Yes	No
Were you able to describe your company's services to utility representatives at the forum?	65.1%	34.9%
Did you have a match-maker appointment at the forum?	56.8%	43.2%
Did you find any current or future opportunities regarding your service over the next 12 months?	25.6%	74.4%
If "No" to the question above, did any representative connect you with another procurement contact?	20.0%	80.0%
Grand Mean	41.9%	58.1%

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- 65% of respondents were able to describe their company's services to a utility representative.
- 57% of respondents had a match-maker appointment at the forum.
- Over 70% of respondents did not find any current or future opportunities regarding their service over the 12 months from the date of the event, and 80% of these respondents did not have any representative connect them with another procurement contact.

Figure 6 - Meeting Representatives

Were you able to meet with any of the following representatives?

Response	Count	Percent	0	20	40	60	80	100
Buyer	6	13.3%						
Supplier diversity	19	42.2%						
Utility line of business representative	2	4.4%						
Non-minority firm	1	2.2%						
Did not meet with anyone	14	31.1%						
No Response	3	6.7%						

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- 42% of respondents were able to meet with Supplier Diversity representatives.

Section 4 - FOLLOW-UP EFFORTS TO BUILD BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS

Figure 7 - Follow-up Efforts to Build Relationships

Questions	Yes	No
Did you attempt to follow-up (i.e., phone calls, meetings, etc.) with any contacts from the forum?	81.8%	18.2%
Do you believe your follow-up efforts helped toward establishing a relationship?	36.6%	63.4%
Were you integrated into the procurement process via contacts made from the Utility Outreach Forum (RFIs, RFPs, Demos, etc.)?	20.5%	79.5%
Were you awarded a contract?	7.0%	93.0%
Grand Mean	36.5%	63.5%

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- 82% of respondents attempt to follow-up with contacts from the forum and 37% of respondents believe their follow-up efforts helped toward establishing a relationship.
- 93% of respondents weren't awarded with contract.

Figure 8 - Representative Associations

Are you a member of a related business association listed below? (Check all that apply.) (n = 45)		
Responses	Freq.	Percent
Women owned business	35	77.8
Disabled veteran owned business	3	6.7
Minority owned business	17	37.8
.....Black American	5	11.1
.....Asian/Pacific American	8	17.8
.....Native American	0	0.0
.....Hispanic American	3	6.7
.....Filipino	3	6.7
.....Polynesian	0	0.0
....Other, please	2	4.4

*Others included, a Certified Diverse Firm and a Technical Training Center
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Section 5- COMMENTS

Our aim is to let people represent themselves as much as possible in their own words when filling out the comments section. Therefore, comments are presented verbatim, and are not edited for grammar or clarity of expression.

Question: *What is your company's primary product or service?*

Information Technology Consulting & Staffing Services
Low Voltage, Telecommunication cabling installation, security cameras and alarms.
Consulting services
Multicultural consultation agency. Multilingual translations, graphic design, website localization, copywriting, audio visual production ,consecutive and simultaneous interpretation.
IT Consulting, Software Development, Management Consulting, Business Process consulting, IT Staffing
business consulting & professional temporary employment
We have three lines of business: (1) recycling HDPE plastics, (2) sales of bulk absorbents for small spill containment and (2) sales of new and reconditioned bulk supersacks.
Consulting and Training
CD and DVD Manufacturing and Related Services
Administrative & Operations Staffing.
consulting services, Human Resources and organizational transformation.
Products and Services: Professional, Administrative, Management and Technical -, Acquisition Support (HR services) -, Business Process Analysis -, Coaching Services -, Customer Service Training -, Diversity & Inclusion Consulting -, General Management Services -, Leadership Development -, Staffing -, Strategic Planning -, Team Building -, Transformational Leadership -, (see website for additional services)
Specialty recruiting services
Three core services Print Rebates Managed Services (BPO/Staffing)
Professional Services
Independent Contractor Compliance and Payroll Services
Full Service Firm specializing in Administrative/Clerical, Healthcare, and Manufacturing
Consulting and training
Information Technology Staff Augmentation Services
Staff Augmentation
We provide SAP resources
Implementation, development, integration, deployment, staffing and training services for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) (SAP / Oracle / etc.) • CRM (Customer Relationship Management) (PeopleSoft / etc.) • Data Warehousing, Design & Administration (Oracle / IBM DB2 / Microsoft / etc.) • IT Helpdesk Management (Clientele / etc.) • Client-Server Application Integration & Development • E-Commerce & B2B Integration & Development • Custom & Stand Alone Solutions (ASP) • Legacy System Integration & Development • Business Intelligence & Integration
Organizational Development, Leadership Development, Coaching, Strategic Planning
IT Consulting and Staffing
Menda Inc provides project management, business analysis, multi-channel contact center consulting to increase efficiencies and performance.
Next Step facilitates business growth through consulting and professional training services for companies of all stages.
Consulting and Training Services

We provide an array of Human Capital Resources Management services which include IT Staff Augmentation, Payroll Services and IT Consulting Services.
IT and Engineering Staffing Solutions.
Direct Marketing Consulting
Managed care in the workers' comp arena, ADA services.
Promotional Marketing products and services: Business Gifts, Employee Recognition & Safety Awards, Corporate Apparel & Uniforms, Trade Show give-aways. www.safedesigns.com
Strategic Resources provides mid to senior level consulting, contracting and full time placement resources in marketing, HR, finance, strategic planning and operations.
Staffing
Oracle and SAP implementation services
Third Millennium Business Systems delivers services and solutions in the following areas: • SAP services • Oracle services (and a certified Oracle partner) o JD Edwards services o PeopleSoft services o Siebel services o Data Warehousing services • Enterprise Storage solutions • Project Management • Staff Augmentation . Communications . Networks . Architecting
IT Consulting Services
IT Services, Engineering Support Services, Manpower Augmentation and Facilities Management
Staffing - temps and direct hire.
Consulting, Staffing and Training services.
Vendor support for door to door sales, Fortune 500 companies, such as AT&T, Comcast, Cox Communications, TimeWarner, Charter Communications, etc.
Information Technology consulting and staffing
Wireless Telecommunications Consulting and Construction
Environmental and Geotechnical Drilling

Question: How did you hear about the Utility Outreach Forum?

Through an Invitation from a potential client
Internet
I was invited by AT&T
Electronic invitation through AT&T-Joan Kerr. Previously met with AT& T contacts in Women Owned National Conferences.
Email
California DVBE Alliance
E-mailed a flyer
AT&T Invitation
Participated last year
One of our clients invited us.
WEBC-West news letter and invitation to attend
CUDC
Client company
ATT
ATT
AT&T - Joan Kerr and Margaret Rawls
Through WBENC
email
I was contacted.
By AT&T Diversity Team

One of my accounts (Accenture) told me about it.
Invited by AT&T email
Email
email
Through AT&T -we provide services to them on a National basis
San Ramon meeting
invite
ASTRA
SBC Supplier Diversity
Through our association with the NCSDC.
Email from WBENC -- WBEC-West
PGE
email
Through a WBENC notice.
Friend
Email
Email
email
I attend the CDUC and CPUC meetings.
Through a friend who is the Business Development Coordinator of Union City, CA.
Via an invitation from AT&T.
WBENC data base
WBENC
Email

Question: *What would you do to improve future Utility Outreach Forums?*

The utility companies need to pay more attention to minority and women owned businesses. The company representatives collect information but at times have no information how to guide companies for the next steps. Personnel knowledgeable at time cannot make it to the conference and therefore we are not getting enough information. We are given a business card and requested to follow up nobody return phone calls. I have made several attempt but without any result. At times I feel I am wasting my time because Utility forum personnel is just out there to kill time and there is no substance to the conference since nothing is achieved.
More contracting opportunity forum.
A greater emphasis on the contract opportunities...
For the one -and -one meetings, distribute forms to attendees with columns to organize meeting sessions by time, room No. and a layout of meeting tables assigned by company. Have some chairs and maybe a table or two for waiting time between sessions.
I would split the forum into those companies that sell or market services and those that sell products (that could be used by utility companies).
I was not able to meet with the companies I wanted to meet with.
Better marketing to let others know you are there and what you offer.
Many of the companies did not show for their meetings. the compressed time frame for introduction and dialog ran over into the next round of meetings allowing for no time for introduction as some meetings had 5 - 6 registrants for a 15 minute time slot.
One on ones
Get Companies to Introduce themselves in 10 seconds.
Coordinate the network session sign-ups. The sheets were scattered across a table and everyone was jostling to get to them. The networking time slots did not work as some

companies reps did not show or did not show up on time and in some cases two companies were in the same room without enough chairs.
Include a matchmaker event.
I felt as though the companies were just there because it was required of them, but never really truly engaged. We have done a lot better on our own.
We sell a service, not a commodity. We put a lot of effort, time and energy into followup and got nowhere. Many of the companies were not prepared for the one-on-ones, which were way to short. Better organization, more time and the right people
More time for round tables/break out sessions
need to really understand who the key contact within the organization is what their needs/challenges are.
Track the number of contracts that are generated as a result of the supplier forums. What impact did the forum have on driving business to the attendees.
More opportunities to follow-up with the companies that participated in the event.
It's a great opportunity, however, most of the firms that we talked to did not work in the area of direct marketing. While they were all very nice, they didn't hold out much hope that they could use us. If there was a way to meet with those individuals specifically looking for marketing assistance, that would really improve our chances of establishing relationships.
The representatives from the various companies need to know who the internal contacts are for the various services.
nothing really
Not sure
The forum in itself is okay. But there is no consequent follow-up work to be had. Deloitte and Accenture have been awarded the projects and they are very difficult to breach. If you have time, you can contact us for details.
Outreach forums do not material contracts. These forums should be attended by the contracting officials who can award contract on the spot for needed services. Attendee should be contacted in advance to submit information on the products and services so it is just a formality in signing contract documents. The utilities could award Blanket Purchase Agreement during these outreach forums. Utilities continue to have excuses why they do not award contracts to Service Disabled Businesses and not meet GO-156 goals. They need to be proactive and sponsor DVBE firms under a mentor program. Each utility should have at least 10 firm in each commodity or service area. They require DVBE to become a third tier vendor to shield themselves from suits. The primes k the staff. I could go on and on on creative ways to meet the DVBE procurement goals. It is time to be pro-active in their doing business with DVBE and not give lip service through outreach forums. I heard one say we get to much paper from the DVBE's and do not have time to read it so they do nothing. They request it and then do nothing in exchange. They say go to our data base and enter your information and then do nothing with it. It is a waste of everyone's time. At least the federal governmentis getting serious and awarding contracts to disabled veteran firms either direct or through their primes. They now have sole source set asides. No wonder firms not even considering doing business with the Utilities. It is a waste of everyone's time.I have been do this since the program started in the state of California and have never been awarded a contract. I now spend all my efforts working on federal proposals.
Give me some business!
Participate even more - expand the conference.

Question: Please share any recommendations regarding the CPUC's Supplier Clearinghouse certification process.

The CPUC clearinghouse staff are excellent. They helped me in my CPUC application.
The staff at Asian were excellent. In 2006, the first year that we were certified we were able to use our NCSDC certification but in 2007, we filled out the entire application and it was a breeze.
Agnew is certified through the Supplier Clearinghouse Public Utility Commission # 99FS0014 Agnew would like to be informed of any new changes on the certification process, as well as updates on all new business opportunities.
Pretty straight forward.
I have been certified for 20 years but never had the opportunity to do business with any of the company. Please let me know how I can approach and be successful to do business with the utilities companies
Our company does not currently have a branch office in California.
NA
N/A
I did go through the certification process once. I was never certain that it helped-- I found a very long spreadsheet in which my name was listed incorrectly. I'm under the assumption that being certified by WBENC is enough. If that is not the case, that should be clarified through WBENC to their members.
Safe Designs Promotional Marketing has been certified for many years and the re-certification process has been efficient.
The utilities do not use it so why enter the data. The utilities should use it that is why it was created.
It is so lengthy and complicated, I haven't been able to take time from my business to complete it.
Excellent - well recognized and accepted.
a lot of companies now want Diasavantaged status and disregard the minority status - So we are now looking for a avenue to pursue that

Question: What would you recommend to build future business relationships?

Well the present relationship is not built how can I share with you what the future business relationship would be like. I like to see some success, I have spent enough time with follow ups and trying to solicit business so far I have not seen any success.
More buyer and contractor networking activity
The need for enforcement has to come from the CPUC because in the consulting arena the supplier diversity isn't being performed. The major suppliers should be encouraged to give the small businesses contracts. It appears that the primes only did a dog and pony show but they aren't serious about providing real contracts to small businesses. For example, at the Forum the KPMG executive mentioned that they gave 6% of their consulting total and were looking to increase it to 9% but the CPUC has a 21.5% total, therefore, the enforcement isn't being done so the primes don't have the desire to help the minority businesses.
Active participation in future conferences. Expand networking opportunities to further inform the market of how we can partnership in multilingual communication.
When talking with buyers they seemed interested in my products but through my many attempts to phone and email were not responded I did not receive one response either positive or negative. I wish they would respond to even say they are not interested in our company so that I won't waste my time or their time.
Still thinking on that one
Many of the buyers are gate keepers not interested buyers. Supplier diversity programs-

events like this are a farce. it is all about relationships and either you have them, or you don't. breaking into the "circle" is the most difficult step and having a 15 minute intro with a group of other people, some of them your competitors, does not allow for meaningful dialog.
More communication
constant follow up
To better position my company for greater success.
No thank you
Match maker meetings were disorganized and the company reps were not helpful. Many of them were confused, some of them were brand new, some were no shows or late. One of the companies wanted to do a group meeting and then ran out of time. It was fine if you sold a commodity service, but we don't.
Monitor the number of contract awards
We recognize that these efforts take time and will continue to attend similar events in the future to build on our previous efforts.
We met only with consulting firms. The appts for the utilities got taken the most quickly. In fact, there was some confusion around getting appts with the utilities. The consulting firms that we met with (we met with 7 of them) didn't have opportunities that needed our expertise. I think if we were able to sign up for matchmakers with individuals from the utilities that could either point us to the proper internal resource or if those resources could attend the forum, that would help.
I need to know who the Risk Managers are for workers' comp and who the decision makers are for the services we provide.
we arrived too late to really take full advantage of the event, therefore our comments are not as complete as if we have been able to attend the entire event.
More of a clear opportunity to make a connection with those involved in the procurement process
Supplier Diversity folks are tremendously helpful and exceptionally nice people. But, they have not been able to help us get face-time or introductions to ANY hiring managers. They have generic buyer lists. Buyers do not have the talent to distinguish services with IT arena. Everyone is lumped together and the response is "we'll contact you when we have a need. We are full now". However, we know that the client has needs because we hear first hand how Accenture/Deloitte were not able to come up with the resources. We see the positions advertised. And, we see the frustrations of the utility companies themselves (like PG&E) when they say that Accenture is not meeting the diversity goals set for them. How do I recommend we resolve these issues: Take companies like ours, which has all certifications, which has documented evidence of over a decade of global success, which has been consistent and smart in identifying opportunities with the utility companies, which has been building a relationship with the utility company month after month, and connect them to the actual manager that is running the project. Don't put them to a buyer that does not know the difference between a staffing firm and a management consultancy firm.
be consistent
See prior note in comment sections.
Make it easier to get in touch with the decision-making representative of your organization.
More TRUE opportunities for diversity firms.