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MATCHMAKING BEST PRACTICES

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PREPARATION IS KEY

BEFORE SELECTING COMPANIES IN MATCHMAKING

- **Understand your goals**
 - Are you trying to get your name out there? Highlight expanded capabilities with existing customers? Meet business contacts in person?
- **Do your homework**
 - Review the list of potential match candidates and make strategic selections
 - Which companies do business in your service area or geographical region?
 - What problem can you solve for the potential customer?
 - Is the company exhibiting at the event?

PREP BEFORE AND DURING EVENT

- **Research ahead of the event**
 - Review company information
 - What do they buy?
 - Do they list upcoming procurement opportunities?
 - Find site supplier portals here: <https://scmc.energy.gov/small-business-resources/>
 - Identify questions to ask during matchmaking
- **Leverage opportunities at the event**
 - Networking, meals, and information sessions
 - Note connections made with contacts from selected companies
 - Listen for opportunities and insights
 - Attend sessions that feature speakers from selected companies
 - Exhibit hall
 - Make an introduction and identify who is participating in matchmaking
 - This shows that you are already doing your homework on the company
 - Gather facts about the company from exhibit materials

TIME FOR TAKEOFF

ELEVATE YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH

- **Tailor your pitch depending on audience and environment**
 - Customers and potential joint venture partners likely have different priorities
 - Be prepared to trim your pitch to match “the number of floors”
- **Highlight your special qualities**
 - Who are you? What do you do?
 - What sets you apart from the competition?
 - Have you done work with DOE or have other government experience?
 - How do you help the business solve their problem?

FLY HIGH AND LAND THE PLANE

DURING THE MEETING

- **Ask smart questions**

- These might include questions about timing of procurement, upcoming needs, unique features of the site
- This is an opportunity to demonstrate that you did your homework

- **Active listening is key**

- Note any takeaway actions
- Use what you learn to help guide what you highlight about your business
 - Mention any applicable certifications, socioeconomic statuses, key performance metrics, etc.

END THE MEETING AND FOLLOW-UP

- **Determine the right next step**
 - Is this requesting a follow-on meeting with someone else at the site?
 - Is this attending office hours, if available at the site?
 - Is this acknowledging that you aren't a good fit?
- **Confirm agreed upon actions and execute**
 - Clarify the follow-up need and then execute! This can include things like:
 - Completing the supplier interest form
 - Sending along your capabilities statement
 - Reaching out to another contact at the site (at the recommendation of the company)

REMINDERS AND BEST PRACTICES

- **DOE is unique**
 - Each DOE site has their own procurement process
 - You may need to register your interest with each individual site
 - Each site's procurement is similar but NOT the same as government buying
 - Opportunities are not always immediate with DOE sites
 - Submitting interest does not equal getting business from a site
- **Matchmaking time is valuable:**
 - Keep your talking points positive and solution-focused
 - Build and sustain your reputation
 - During the conference through all interactions
 - Complete any follow-up actions as agreed upon

THANK YOU!