

Preparing a Request for Proposal

No matter how large or small your meeting is, before you contact a property, it is essential that you develop clear meeting specifications. It is best to prepare a written request for proposal or quote, rather than contacting hotels by telephone to get a quote.

This document should be clear and concise and serves an important negotiating tool, saves the planner time, which translates into a cost savings for the agency, provides purchasing documentation and justification for site selection and keeps the planner organized. It also provides a blueprint for a successful meeting.

The following template can be used to develop your request for proposal. The description of what each item means follows each item. Simply replace your information within the appropriate category.

RFP TIPS

1. Always put together an RPF over calling a hotel about a meeting.
2. Always notify all parties of your final decision. If using a convention bureau, check to see if this is a service they provide. If not, follow-up with each bidding property.
3. Don't over/underestimate your needs.
4. Don't ask for a quick turnaround time and then wait to make a decision.

Request for Proposal
NAME OF AGENCY/DEPARTMENT HERE

PURPOSE: The following meeting spec sheet is intended to provide qualified, interested parties information which will enable them to respond with a detailed proposal to provide hotel and meeting facilities for the **Fill in the name of your meeting here.**

1. **EVENT PROFILE:** Describe the purpose of the event. Include overall goals and objectives.
2. **ATTENDEE PROFILE:** Describe those who will attend the meeting. Percentage male/female, age, profession, if applicable, other demographic information.
3. **DATES:** if you are flexible here, say so. Otherwise, indicate specific dates. You have more negotiating room if your dates are flexible.
4. **ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE PATTERN:** day of the week your attendees arrive/depart
5. **ANTICIPATED SLEEPING ROOM NEEDS:** # of rooms needed per night of your meeting. For example: 125 on day one
250 on day two and so on.
6. **RESERVATIONS:** How reservations are made. By individual, room list, etc.
7. **TENTATIVE A/V NEEDS:** If you have any idea of what you might need.
8. **BILLING INSTRUCTIONS:** Where to send the bill. **Very important!**

PROPOSALS WILL BE EVALUATED ON THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

(Arrange the following in the order of importance to your group. You may have other items that are important to your group that are not listed here. You can assign points according to the importance of the item, which will help in the selection process. Omit items that are not relevant to your process.

Completeness of proposal. Are all areas addressed?

My goal is not to have to call hotels for missing information. If they omit specific items on the RFP, I sometimes use this as a reason to remove the hotel from the competition. I have learned that it is not easy to get hotels to provide a response for every item contained on your RFP.

ADA compliance – even though the Americans With Disabilities Act is in effect, it is still a good idea to ask about this because, although hotels may say they are compliant, your attendees with special needs may be using service elevators to access upper floors.

Sight inspection - Always do one, if at all possible. This will be your best justification for the selection of a site that may be higher in cost.

Accessibility from airport

Availability, frequency and cost of shuttle service from/to airport

Sleeping room rate - **if you have a ceiling, you might want to say so. Another way to handle it is to say you are looking for the lowest rate and see what they come in with and negotiate from there.**

Ability to meet food and beverage needs within budgetary guidelines – **if you have a ceiling, include it. Ie, continental breakfast \$7.25, lunch \$15, breaks \$2 pp, etc.**

Meeting room rental charges

Audio/visual fees

Comp room policy - **1 per 40, 50, etc.**

Parking fees, if applicable

On site restaurant facilities - **if your group would use them**
Anything else important to your group that is not listed.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE NEEDS:

Detail food and beverage needs here. If you have a specific per person budget or any special requests indicate that here as well.

Detail your meeting room needs here. If you haven an agenda, attach it. Indicate the square footage you require and any special set-up requirements.

MEETING ROOM NEEDS: all times are approximate

Examples:

| <u>HOURS</u> | <u>FUNCTION</u> | <u>SEATING/CAPACITY</u> | <u>SQ FT.</u> | <u>SET UP</u> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Day 0 | | | | |
| <i>Will you need a conference office? If so, when do you need to be in?</i> | | | | |
| 10:00-12:00 am | Conference Office | TBD | | TBD |
| 2:00-7:00 pm | Registration | | | |
| <u>DAY 1</u> | | | | |
| 6:30-12:00 am | Conference Office | | | |
| 7:30 am | Registration | TBD | | Flow |
| 8:00 am | Continental Breakfast | 200-500 | | Flow |
| 8:30 am | General Session | 200-500 | | Theater |
| 10:00 am | Break | 200-500 | | Flow |
| 10:15-11:00am | Concurrent Sessions (4-8) | 50-75 each | | Classroom |
| 11:15-12:00am | Concurrent Sessions (4-8) | 50-75 each | | Classroom |
| 12:00 | Lunch | 200-500 | | Rounds |

Selection Process:

How and when will your decision be made? Is this done through your recommendation or are you the decision maker?

Additional Considerations:

1. What other groups are in the hotel during over the proposed dates for this meeting?
2. If attendees wish to stay over after the meeting will the conference rate apply?
3. What complimentary services are provided to guests?
4. Provide information on transportation within your community to places of interest, restaurants, etc. – **probably in the boiler-plate response.**
5. Provide 3 government meeting planner references.
6. **What else is important to you?**

Address your responses to:

Responses may be emailed to me at _____, or faxed to _____. A hard copy with a meeting-planning packet on your property should follow. If you have addition questions, contact:

DEADLINE FOR ALL RESPONSES:

Developed by:
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