Debriefing Suppliers: Why and What to Discuss
Speakers

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Debriefing: What is it?

A practice used primarily during the Request for Proposal process whereby the contracting authority will meet with those parties whose proposals were not deemed appropriate for award.
Polling Question:

Does your entity conduct debriefing sessions if requested by a supplier?

Yes

No
Polling Question:

If you don’t conduct debriefing sessions, why don’t you?

A. Didn’t know it was a supplier option.
B. Not mentioned in our policy.
C. Do not believe it is helpful.
D. Just adds more risk of protests.
E. Other
Debriefing: Primary Reason

It is viewed as a learning process for proposers who may gain a better understanding regarding perceived deficiencies contained within their submitted proposal.
Is Supplier Debriefing Required?

Model Procurement Code -
• Section 3-203(8) Debriefings

Federal Acquisition Regulations 15.506

Canada Free Trade Agreement -
• Article 516 “Information Provided to Suppliers”

World Trade Organization Agreement on Government Procurement –
• Article XVI “Information Provided to Suppliers”
Solicitation Document

• Should indicate that debriefing opportunity exists
• Brief outline of debriefing process or direct to entity policy if available online
• Ensure that deadline for debrief request is provided, i.e. within ? days of award notice
Polling Question:

Do you think debriefing sessions should be held before or after contract execution?

A. After award notice but before contract execution
B. After contract execution is complete
Why Do Supplier Debriefing?

Good Business Sense –
• Open, fair, transparent processes
• May reduce protests (open, honest communications)
• Helps suppliers to improve their responses
• Obtain helpful information feedback on solicitation processes
Supplier Debriefing Basics

- Conduct separate debriefings with each supplier
- Confirm date and time of debriefing session
- Ensure the same participants attend every debriefing session (at least one person should attend all debriefings for the same procurement (consistency))
- Retain all debriefing documentation
What Should I Say and Do?

- Provide general overview of evaluation process as set out in solicitation document
- Discuss strengths and weaknesses of the supplier's submission in relation to the evaluation criteria (general overview not point by point comparison)
- **DO NOT provide specific comparison to other responses**

(continued)
What Should I Say and Do?

- Overall ranking of proposals (their rank)
- Overall evaluated cost or price (high, low, etc.)
- Summary of award rationale
- Provide suggestions on how supplier might improve on future submissions

(continued)
What Should I Say and Do?

- Address specific issues/questions raised by the supplier regarding their submission (do not get sidetracked in a general discussion – stay on point)
- Be open to feedback from supplier on current procurement processes & practices

**TIP:** Retain all debriefing documentation
What Next?

Once debriefing session is completed:

- Escalate any issues and/or potential risks to senior management or legal counsel as necessary
- Seriously consider supplier feedback about procurement processes and practices (continuous improvement opportunity)
Debriefing can be a valuable tool for both suppliers and public sector entities if used appropriately and the process is managed well.
U.S. RESOURCES:

U.S. Model Procurement Code -

Federal Acquisition Regulations, Article 15.506
https://www.acquisition.gov/content/15506-postaward-debriefing-offerors
CANADA RESOURCES:

Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) - [https://www.cfta-alec.ca/canadian-free-trade-agreement/](https://www.cfta-alec.ca/canadian-free-trade-agreement/)

TRADE AGREEMENTS - INTERNATIONAL:

World Trade Agreement – Agreement on Government Procurement (WTO-GPA) -
https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/gproc_e/gpa_1994_e.htm