

Business MATCHMAKING



A Cooperative Agreement between SBA and HP Small Business Foundation

Best Products Company

Arlington, TX

As vice president with Best Products Company, a Texas-based reseller of industrial supplies and products, Donnie McDaniel knows the value of meeting face-to-face with potential new customers. That understanding, and his decision to attend a Business Matchmaking event in Washington D.C., led to a contract that has potential to exceed \$1M from a single meeting.

Business Matchmaking is a series of regional events sponsored by the SBA and Hewlett-Packard that bring government and industry buyers face-to-face with small businesses just like Best Products. Business Matchmaking doesn't promise that every company will walk away with a big contract, but it does give them the opportunity to state their case directly to the key purchasing decision makers.

Getting a Foot in the Door

Best Products offers 175,000 name brand MRO supplies such as janitorial, safety and welding supplies and other tools. Best Products also represent minority and women-owned manufacturers of industrial products, providing them with a sales channel to reach buyers. The Best Products supplier diversity catalog features thousands of products that are manufactured, private-labeled, or imported by a diverse group of suppliers.

As an SBA-certified Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB), HUBZONE and a Women-Owned Company, Best Products has relied on the SBA as a resource in the past. McDaniel credits the SBA with helping increase revenues from \$750,000 annually to over \$8 million, in a period of three years.

McDaniel was excited about Business Matchmaking because, even with the backing of the SBA, getting a foot in the door with major buyers is difficult.

“To do business with a Lockheed Martin or a Raytheon or any large government prime, it almost takes an act of Congress. These companies are busy and trying to

focus on their core businesses. They are taking the time to attend these events specifically to meet with vendors one-on-one, and that's an opportunity we won't pass up."

Success — In the Eye of the Storm

In September 2003, McDaniel attended his first Business Matchmaking event in Washington, D.C. Like a half-dozen other Business Matchmaking events held throughout the country, the Washington D.C. event featured 15-minute one-on-one appointments with government and corporate procurement officials with bona fide procurement needs, along with networking and educational sessions.

The Washington D.C. event had one uninvited guest however: Hurricane Isabel. The Hurricane disrupted the travel plans of some attendees, but McDaniel still secured meetings with several buyers. McDaniel met with BAE Systems, one of the world's largest aerospace and defense contractors, with its U.S. headquarters in Maryland. From that meeting with BAE Systems, McDaniel and Best Products walked away with a contract that will generate approximately 250 purchases orders per week.

McDaniel was delighted with the immediate success he found at Business Matchmaking and signed on to attend the next event in Houston. In Houston, McDaniel met with more purchasing officials and is now currently bidding on a deal valued at \$100,000 per month to supply construction materials to a major prime contractor.

From his meetings at just the D.C. and Houston events, McDaniel estimates revenue is up between **\$50,000 to \$100,000 per month** for his company. He is also preparing for a second meeting with another major national company he met in Houston. McDaniel has high hopes this meeting will result in yet another contract for Best Products.

Success Follows Success

Going for a perfect three in a row, McDaniel chose to attend the first Business Matchmaking event of 2004 in Anaheim, CA where he secured yet another long-term contract, this time with a division of NASA. McDaniel is also bidding on a contract with Business Matchmaking co-sponsor Hewlett-Packard.

"We are bidding on a project with Hewlett-Packard to supply their Houston offices. It could bring in almost \$600,000 a year – and if it goes well, there is the potential to work with other locations nationwide that would bring the project \$1 million."

Snowball Effect

While McDaniel is looking forward to future Business Matchmaking events, he said one the connections he makes at past events have lead to an ongoing stream of business for Best Products.

“The contracts we secured at Business Matchmaking events are leading to additional business outside of the program. Business Matchmaking is having a snowball effect, because it has helped establish our credibility with major government and industry players.”

Note to Media: Below is contact information to learn more about Best Products Company and its experience with Business Matchmaking.

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