

# ***“Playing By the Rules Wins Your Firm Second Place”***

AIA-LA Mobius 2009 Conference

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**Rainmaking Group**





# ***Rainmaking Group***

Comprehensive Marketing & Management Services  
Exclusively for the Design & Construction Industries

# Profile

Since 1981, we have assisted almost 100 client firms to:

- Manage growth
- Plan for succession
- Wring-out additional profit
- Enter new expanding markets
- Achieve an overall higher profile in the marketplace.

# Services

- Strategic Planning
- Executive Leadership Development
- Succession Planning
- Personnel Placement
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- A broad scope of Sales/Marketing & Business Development support services



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# Learning Objectives

- 1) Several new winning marketing techniques the competition uses
- 2) How pushing the limits of competition will often win new projects
- 3) Where the individuals in the audience stand on the issues
- 4) Where the colleagues in the session stand on the same issues

# ***“Playing By the Rules Wins Your Firm Second Place”***

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# Disclaimer

- Actual experiences encountered during my career or from my network of friends
- Some of this stuff cannot be made-up
- Many are Desperate/East Coast Tactics
- The names and locations have been changed to protect the guilty
- Use at Your Own Risk





***Second Place is the First Loser!***



***“IN OUR EVENTS THERE  
ARE ONLY GOLD  
MEDALS”***

***“NO SILVER OR BRONZE  
WINNERS”***





## The Art & Science of Lie Detection

***A Little Lie Never Hurts Anyone!***



# Little White Lies

- Stretch the Truth on Government Forms
  - Total Staff Numbers
  - Billings
  - Project Completion Dates
  - Small Business Enterprise
  - Include Recently Departed Staff
  - Include Individual Experience Projects
  - Minimize Amount of Work in Progress





***Constantly Apply Pressure***



# Dirty Laundry

- Anonymously Inform Client/Prospect of the Competition's Law Suits & Project Failures
- Send Newspaper Clippings, E-Mail links
- Encourage Vendors to do the Same
- Spread Rumor the Competition is Laying-Off Staff





***Every Firm Has Them***





# Bait & Switch

- Always Submit the A-Team
- The Best Presenters & Most Experienced/Qualified Staff
- Replace Team After Awarded the Project
- Resell the Same A-Team
- Repeat the Process Infinitely
- The Clients May Never Know
- Keep it All an Internal Secret





***Now Watch Carefully!***



# Switch – No Bait

- Submit Only Quality Consultants to Help Win the Project
- Substitute Less Expensive Firms Afterwards
- Shop for the Best Price
- Negotiate the Services
- Cut the Consultant Scope After the Project Begins
- Blame Everything on the Consultants



# Surprise!

- Submit Only the Very Best Consultants
- Don't Inform Them Until You are Shortlisted
- To Save Embarrassment, They'll Agree
- Negotiate Fees to Amount Submitted
- Replace Consultants That Don't Agree
- Blame Them for the Misunderstanding
- Clients Don't Re-Interview and Re-Select





***You Won't Believe This One!***



# Rumor Seeding

- Brag to Suppliers, Consultants & Vendors that the Project is “WIRED” for your firm
- Encourage Them to Spread the Word
- Prepare a Viable Story/Reasons to Support the Claim
- Keep the Activity Secret





**Corporate Greed**

Because doing the right thing  
isn't my problem

***Some People Will Do Anything!***



# Phantom Staff

- Submit Ringer PM's or Designers Not Currently on the Staff
- If the Project is Won, They Get Hired
- The Client Will Never Know
- After the Project is Over, Usually, so is the Employment







***Is That Your Work?***



# Who Done It

- Include Significant Projects in all Promotional Material
- Highlight Minor Services as Major Work
- Give High Profile Projects a High Profile in Collateral Material





***Pull Out All The Stops!***



# Stack the Deck

- Fly the Board to Your Best Projects
- Wine & Dine the Selection Committee
- Party Busses
- Sky Box Tickets
- Gifts & Campaign Contributions
- All's Fair in Love & War – “Sales Is War”





## ***What Is Your Firm's Culture?***



# Bonus' or Bounty

- Pay PM's Bonus' Based on the Profitability of the Projects
- Encourage PM's to Wring-Out Profit at the Expense of the Client & Consultants Fee
- Charge for In-Contract Services, as Extra Services
- Practice Instilling “**Fear & Doubt**” in the Client
- Complete the WD's in the Job Trailer







***Pay To Play!***



# Additional Services

- Contribute to Political Campaigns of Existing Clients
- Bill the Public Client for “Additional Services” to Cover the Contributions
- The Politician Client Approves & Pays the Invoices
- Everyone Goes to Jail





# Reimbursable Expenses

- Contribute to Political Campaigns
- Encourage Staff to Contribute Too
- Reimburse Staff for Contributions
- Everyone Goes to Jail





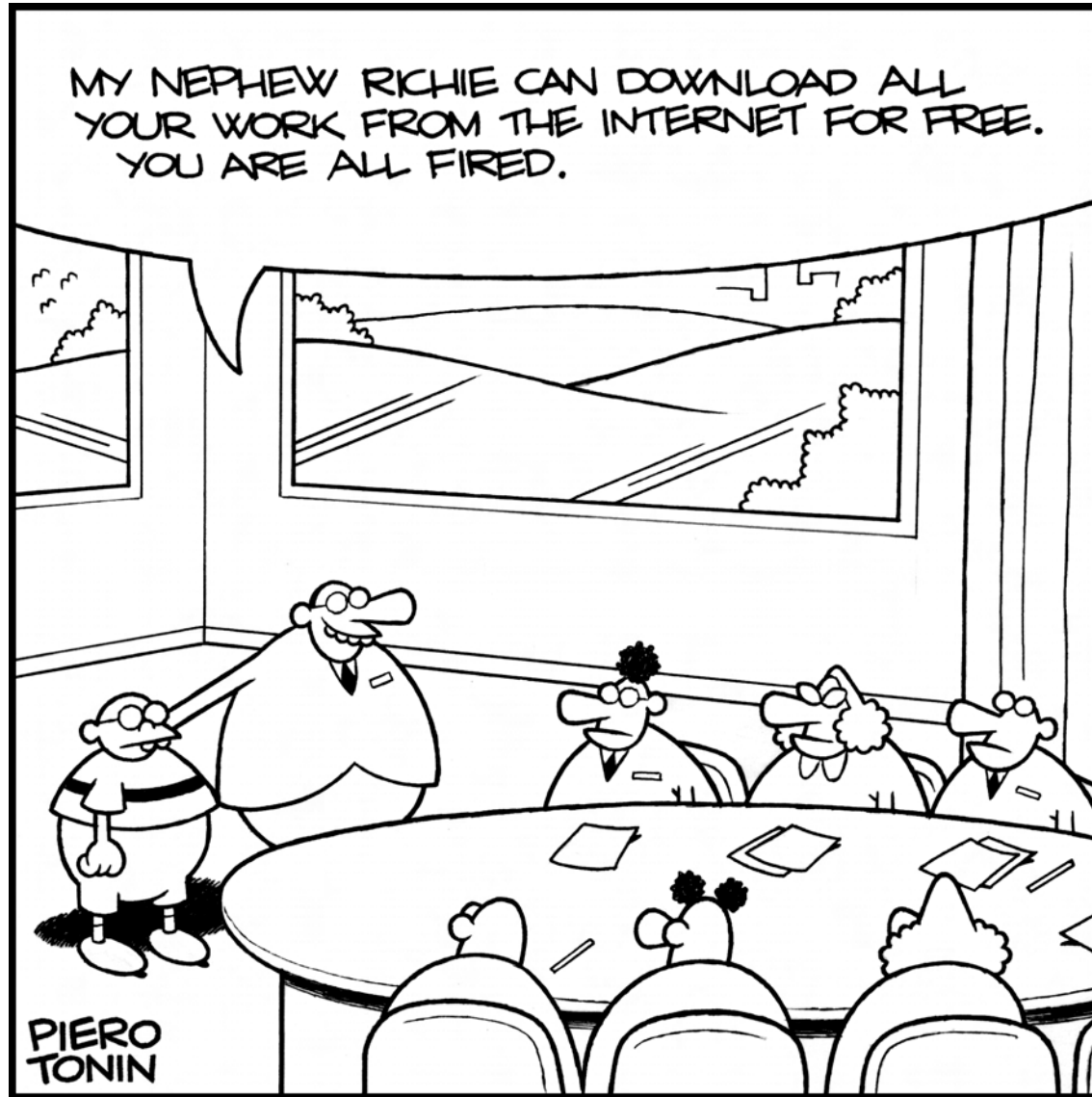
***Use Any Advantage!***



# Eaves Dropping

- Watch Competition's Presentation
- Listen at the Door
- Study Competition's Brochure/Web site
- Send Out-of-Town Team Member to Spy on the Competition





***Fair Game?***



# Web Downloads

- Everything on the Web is “Free”
- Pluck Project Photo's and other content from Client's, Consultant's and Contractor's Web Site
- Mimic Bio's & Project Descriptions from the Industry Giants





***Some People Are Scavengers!***



# Clean-Up After Yourself

- Help Yourself to Any Collateral Material Left Behind by the Competition
- Use the Contents to Poison the Prospect Toward the Competition
- Mirror the Quality Aspects
- Neutralize the Competition





"I didn't get the job. They said I was over-qualified."

***Embellishment!***





# Exaggerating

- Show Practice Projects as Completed Work
- Include in Proposals and Interviews the Projects Designed as a Work Sample for Another Project, but a Competitor was Ultimately Selected for the Project
- Include Staff Experience with Other Firms as Additional Qualification Without Highlighting





*"Oh, yeah! I'm a hell of a lot further beyond reproach than you are!"*

***Gamesmanship!***



# Two-Minute Drill

- Work the Hardest After the Interview
- Contact Board Members and VP's
- Have Friends Contact Board Members
- Send Unsolicited Supplemental Material
- Change Consultants
- Lower Your Fees





***Impersonation***



# Dirty Tricks

- Torpedo the Competition
- Contact the Client, Impersonate the Competition and then Cancel the Meeting or Interview
- Client will Never Believe It
  - The Dog Ate My Homework
  - Clients Never Reverse the Selection





# Double Cross

- Establish a Mirror Firm
- Set-Up Bogus Accounting System
- Have Staff Charge Time to a Billable Project While Working on the Back Door Projects
- Invoice & Deposit Payment in the Mirror Firm's Account
- The Budgets of the Authentic Project Will Always Show a Loss



***“Playing By the Rules  
Wins Your Firm  
Second Place”***

***Thank You Very Much!***

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# Values Exercise

- Leisure Time with Family /Friends
- Reputation Among Peers
- Excitement
- Wealth
- Independence
- Professionalism
- Reasonable Profit
- Admiration from Clients
- Working Career
- Personal Integrity



# 12 Recession Survival Tips

- Collect Your Money
- Mine Your Files
- Gobble-Up Tons of Small Projects
- Keep within your Distinctive Competence
- Accelerate Marketing Efforts
- Perform Volunteer Work
- Pursue Lost Clients
- Avoid New Markets
- Readjust Benefits package
- Cut 5% of Staff Every Year
- Stay Terminally Positive
- Insist on Referrals & Testimonials



# Go or No-Go Analysis Guide

How did we learn about the opportunity?  
Previous client relationship or knowledge  
Media article  
Word of Mouth – Rumor

Is the project real?

Is the project funded?

Do we have the technical know-how this project and client need?

At least 5 relevant similar projects in the last 5-years  
Is the Team available from the similar projects?

How does the project match with our Business and Marketing Plan Goals?

What time and \$ investment will be necessary to win the project?

What are the compelling benefits to win the project?  
Opportunity to enter a new market  
Additional work from the client in the future  
PR opportunity

What are the client's compelling reasons to select us?

What value-added benefits do we bring to the client?

Have we had significant prior contact with this client?

What key decision makers have we met regarding the project?

Who else do we need to reach to win the project?

Will the client recognize us as a key player in this building type?

Are we willing to commit maximum effort to this opportunity?

Do we have the manpower to fulfill this commitment?

Why do we believe we are the logical choice?

Who is the competition?

Which firm is the front-runner?

Will we be able to make our margin?

## SUCCESS TIPS

- *Tell the Truth*
- *Always Deliver*
- *Practice Empathy*
- *Bring Value*
- *Visualize Objectives*
- *Be Unique*
- *Crave Knowledge*
- *Be Sincere & Appreciative*
- *Specialize*
- *Be Terminally Positive*
- *Be Persistent & Consistent*
- *Think Outside the Box*
- *Be Friendly & On-Time*
- *Develop Trust*
- *Keep Physically Fit*



Thank you for your time!

## QUESTIONS??

This concludes the American Institute of Architects  
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