Negotiation Techniques

The following general principles must be remembered and applied to negotiations for any site, service, or supplier. By following these simple guidelines, a meeting manager can utilize the methods and lessons of meeting management in a more efficient manner.

Remember!

• Present and maintain a professional attitude.
• Control stress and tension.
• Avoid politics and egos.
• Take time to gather all facts and requirements beforehand.
• Meet with the proper hotel or site people who have the authority to make decisions.
• Know all the following Do’s and Don’ts.

DO
• Define the purpose and objectives of the meeting.
• Know the event.
• Have printed copies of meeting plans available.
• Make key contacts in all services and sites.
• Follow up frequently.
• Obtain peer referrals.
• Contact union stewards before an event at a union venue.
• Communicate with clarity and outline everything in writing.
• Make all agreements part of the written contract.
• Possess the authority to make a decision (or sign a contract).
• Be ethical.
• Ask questions.
• Listen and pay attention.
• Minimize all distractions.
• Verify all legal clauses of the contract with an attorney.
• Know the budget.

DON’T
• Sacrifice quality for cost.
• Make unreasonable demands.
• Insist on being the final authority.
• Be inconsiderate of a supplier’s profit margin and business needs.
• Escalate and overestimate needs.
• Hesitate to ask questions.
• Be apprehensive about negotiating for everything required.
• Promise what cannot be delivered.
• Lie or misrepresent.
• Jump at the first offer.
• Pass up a good deal based on a personality conflict.
• Be intimidated.
• Hesitate to advise the facility of changes.

Source: Professional Meeting Management, third edition, published by the Professional Convention Management Association