

Talking Points from Dave Dacquino NCMA DC February 17, 2010 Dinner Meeting

Thanks for the opportunity to speak at the NCMA DC Chapter event on Wednesday, Feb 17th. As promised, here are a few bullet points to summarize my speech.

I am offering an Industry CEO's perspective on the role of Contract Professionals. I feel that there are 6 key topic areas that are critical to success.

1. Contracts Organization

a. The organization that implements the vision of the company and makes it executable. Contracts need to be a part of the leadership team and must understand where the company is going. Contracts set a tone for relationships with customers and suppliers.

2. Communications

a. It is incumbent upon Contracts Professionals to seek out all information needed to fully understand the customer and to know what the spirit of the deal is. It is NOT acceptable to write a contract just based on what the data is that is sitting on your desk.

i. Be careful not to listen with filters on. We need to be actively engaged listeners

ii. Seek out the "Contract Intent"

3. Diversity of Thought

a. Getting a diverse set of views is critical to writing State-of-the-Art contracts. We cannot keep solving problems the way we did years ago. We must be innovative, must craft a deal that is good for both parties and will accomplish the mission. "If it is not hurting your head, your problem is that you are not optimizing the contract"

4. Change

a. It is critical to understand the environment that is causing the change. Contracts must drive the change. Not be a victim of it. This is the art of the trade craft. If you are uncomfortable with this, it is time to get out of contracts.

5. Metrics

a. You get what you measure

b. The metrics that are written in the contract is what will be focused on. So you better get them right.

c. Expecting one outcome (The Spirit of the Deal) and codifying another outcome (The Contract Metrics) is just insanity and wrongheadedness.

6. Teamwork

a. Contracts folks must be team players. Not bureaucrats or cops.

b. Contracts need to find the holes in the requirements or conflicts and solve/fill them.

c. Looking for constructive debate on the issues with options and possibilities.
Looking for the deal maker

d. "If it's not hurting your head, you are probably not optimizing the contract!"