



Probes

Building Rapport

Making Connections

- What is the best method of communication for you?
- What is the best time of day to reach you?
- Are there any upcoming scheduling issues? For example, vacation plans.

Planning the Agenda

- Is there anything else you would like to put on today's agenda?
- Is there anything else I should know about or ask about? For example, is today your birthday? Has there been a major change in your work environment?

Proving Updates and Revisiting Past Topics of Mutual Interest

- What projects have you been working on lately?
- What's new?

Understanding the Business

Business Basics

- Who are your customers?
- What are your company goals, mission, vision?
- What do you value?
- How do you mitigate risks?
- Are unions an issue?
- Are you looking at expanding your business into other geographic areas?
- Do you have new product lines coming out?
- Are you looking at expanding your business into other product lines?
- How do other facilities purchase the product?
- What other projects are you working on?



- What is your overall capacity?
- Who are the decision makers?
- What is your competitive advantage?
- What are your 5- and 10-year goals?
- What is working well today?
- What is your present market share?
- What are your market share goals?
- Where does this fall on your priority list?
- What trends you are seeing in the market?
- What makes your business unique?
- What are the primary challenges you are facing right now?
- What future improvements are you planning?

Pricing Considerations

- What is your strategy for competing with low cost countries?
- How do you arrive at your pricing?

Supplier Relationships

- What do you like and dislike about your current suppliers?
- Are you working on other projects with us?
- How important are we to you?
- What portion of the business do we represent?
- Why should you be the supplier?
- What do your best suppliers do for you?



Preparing for Negotiation

Contract Details

- What is the length of your typical agreements?
- Have there been any changes since we last negotiated?
- How is your department evaluated regarding these types of agreements?
- What are your short-term goals?
- What's not negotiable?

Examining Core Issues

- What potential timing issues exist?
- What is your timeline for making a decision?
- Who are the decision-makers for this negotiation?
- What is the cost structure/price breakdown?
- What transportation methods will be used?
- What metrics do you use?
- How will you evaluate us?
- Are there logistical constraints?
- What is your inventory capability?
- Where do you foresee delays in this project?
- What soft benefits can be inspected?
- How did you choose the pricing index?
- Is there potential for growth?
- What specific resources are required?
- Are there potential scope changes?
- Are there incentives for exceeding expectations?
- Are there penalties for missing deadlines?
- Are there warranty issues?
- To what extent does your legal department get involved in this type of agreement?
- Are there must-haves in this agreement?
- Are you looking at continuous improvements to drive costs down?
- What is the environmental impact?



Focusing on Creativity and Innovation

- How can we change the process?
- What can we do to lower your costs?
- What can you do to lower your costs?
- Are there other areas of potential mutual collaboration?
- What problem do you have that we can solve for you?
- What would be the ideal outcome?
- What are the biggest problems you have with your current suppliers?
- What are the biggest problems you have with your customers?
- How can we expand in other operations?
- How can we make you a rock star in your company?