

# MEMORANDUM

TO: Staff - design professionals  
FROM:  
DATE:  
SUBJECT: QUALIFICATIONS BASED SELECTION (QBS) for AE Services

You are invited to a Power Point presentation on QBS on <date> at <time> in <location>.

DEFINITION: QBS is the preferred method of acquiring AE professional services.

THE QBS PROCESS:

## 1. EVALUATE QUALIFICATIONS

Public clients advertise for projects through a RFQ (Request for Qualifications). We respond with SF 254 and SF 255 forms. Sometimes we add other written material in the Qualifications Package (QP). If you would like to see one, see me.

## 2. RANK FIRMS

Most clients will screen all QP's to cull them down to 3 to 5 firms (short list). The short listed firms will be interviewed or asked for a technical proposal (without price). The short listed firms are ranked using many factors such as; staff expertise, past performance, approach to the project, innovations, experience on similar projects, communication skills, client references, meeting schedules, etc.

## 3. NEGOTIATE WORK SCOPE AND FEE WITH TOP RANKED FIRM

This is the heart of the QBS process. It allows the AE (Architect or Engineer) the opportunity to candidly discuss the client's needs and "wish list" and how much our services will cost. It is here that AE resources can be focused on saving the client money by innovation and quality plans and specifications.

If the client and AE can't come to an agreement, the negotiations are terminated and they go to the next ranked firm. Occasionally this happens, but most AE's will go to great efforts to make the clients comfortable with their fee. This is because over 85% of AE work comes from REPEAT clients.

In the QBS process quality, innovation, efficiency, and timeliness are rewarded by fair fees and further opportunities. To the AE, this results in profitability that pays for higher salaries of quality people who work efficiently. To the client, this results in VALUE by reducing the life cycle costs of the project. It is a WIN – WIN system.

*QBS is used by all Federal Departments; all State of Maryland agencies; the Maryland University System, Baltimore City; Baltimore and Howard Counties; and occasionally by the other Maryland counties.*