

Impact of the Agency Selection Process on Client Public Relations Programs and Outcomes

The Agency Search & Hiring Survey conducted by CommunicationsMatch™, RFP Associates & Researchscape was distributed online to 800 communications officers and executives at Fortune 1,000 companies and large non-profit organizations between February and April 2019.



The final results and full survey report will be released in May. Interim results discussed during the IPR Bridge Conference are based on responses as of March 25.

- >½ publicly traded companies
- >½ have senior level titles
- ⅔ have agency backgrounds
- ¾ have 20+ years experience
- ⅓ work with ≥ 3 agencies
- ⅔ use an RFP to solicit agencies
- ⅓ pay ≥\$1m for primary agency
- ¾ work with procurement

How Clients Choose Agencies

- Majority rely on previous experience and word-of-mouth when selecting agencies
 - Yields 2-5 candidate agencies per search
- RFPs in some form are used by majority
 - Process is less than comprehensive and omits key information to help differentiate agencies
- Most satisfied with selection process and with their ultimate choice...
 - ...But there are challenges: resources to find agencies, time constraints to identify and hire firms, candidates' ability to distinguish themselves

The Agency Challenge

- Agency proposals and presentations often seen as boilerplate, upselling more services, with disconnects on how they respond to scope of work and program goals, budget and staffing
- Client satisfaction lower for agencies with the biggest budgets: Half of the \$1million+ agencies received “moderately satisfied” or worse ratings
- Keys to client satisfaction: proactivity, account coordination, team stability, and meeting objectives, budget and deadlines



Request the full report:
Summary findings:

rfpassociates.net/IPRBridge
communicationsmatch.com/agency-search-report