

Business MATCHMAKING



A Cooperative Agreement between SBA and HP Small Business Foundation

Global-5, Inc.

Orlando, FL

Mary Hamill knows what it takes to create and run a small business. She's been doing it since 1996, when she formed Global-5, Inc., a strategic public relations and marketing firm in Orlando, Fla., following a successful career in broadcast journalism. Global-5 has grown steadily and boasts an impressive list of national clients, and Hamill credits a powerful working relationship with the U.S. Small Business Administration for a good portion of her success.

Still, most projects found Global-5 working as a sub-contractor, and Hamill dreamed of gaining prime contractor status in both the public and private sectors in order to really grow her business. She gained 8(a) status with the SBA under a program for small, certified minority and women-owned businesses, and recently began participating in the Mentor/Protégé program which matches veteran contractors with aspiring partners.

She was intrigued when she heard about Business Matchmaking coming to Orlando in March, and flattered when invited to participate in a Mentor/Protégé panel discussion.

\$5.5 Million Contracts Secured

Just months after the event, she's more than intrigued. Hamill is downright ecstatic, because Global-5—through a Mentor/Protégé joint venture called Engineering Visions—has secured a \$3 million contract with the U.S. Navy. Another \$2.5 million contract with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) also has come as the result of the Business Matchmaking event.

Business Matchmaking, a partnership among the U.S. Small Business Administration and HP, provides opportunities for small businesses to have personal appointments with government and corporate procurement officials regarding potential contracts. The program's events also include networking and education sessions and provide valuable insight on local financing options, how to apply for the Government Services Administration (GSA) schedule, access to technology resources, international trade and trends in technology and marketing.

At the Orlando event, Hamill was impressed by the large number of meetings she attended with

government and corporate representatives. Even more important--as it turned out--was the time she spent with two SBA officials from the Jacksonville office, Ron Ammerman, chief of economic development, and Nancy Alvarez-Hernandez, business development specialist.

Guidance Leads to Joint Venture

During the time they spent together at the Business Matchmaking event, Hamill solicited guidance and counsel on potential opportunities beyond the dozen or so appointments at the event itself. Global-5 had formed a joint venture with another experienced government contractor, JHT, Inc., and the Business Matchmaking event provided an opportunity to fine-tune plans to secure government contracts. Working together as Engineering Visions, the joint venture was the result of the SBA's Mentor-Protégé program, and gives Global-5 access to an additional 20 JHT employees with expertise in accounting, IT and administrative support.

"I can't say enough about how helpful the SBA people have been, or how fortunate I was to attend the Business Matchmaking event," Hamill said. "They really want to help. They look out for small businesses, and if programs like this weren't in place it would be difficult to even get the time of day from most of these companies and agencies."

The Navy contract is an IDIQ (indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity) agreement that will cover a number of delivery orders, including Program Management and Training Systems Engineering Analysis for the Navy's new T-48-A aircraft. Additional training analysis and Interactive Multimedia Instruction projects also may fall under the contract, as could Public Information personnel or support. Additional work might become part of the overall project without additional paperwork, another positive aspect of the contract.

"JHT is an experienced government contractor, while Global-5 has enjoyed success in the private sector. The Engineering Visions partnership gives both companies the chance to expand their horizons," Hamill said. "For example, Global-5 won't have to start from ground zero to get through the paperwork necessary in the bidding and contract process in the future," she added. "We're in the system now."

FDOT Contract Is Long-Term

Also at the Orlando event, Global-5 met with the contracting specialist for FDOT who facilitates opportunities for women and minority-owned businesses with that major state agency. Following a lengthy and detailed proposal process, a 5-year, \$2.5 million contract was awarded to Global-5.

“The contract calls for public relations/public involvement support for the Interstate-4 corridor that runs through Orlando,” Hamill said. “More tourists travel this road than perhaps any other road in America, and we can trace our involvement with this high-profile project directly to Business Matchmaking.”

Plans were already underway to increase the staff at Global-5, with additional positions being planned on a task-by-task basis. With the new business in hand, the firm has recently grown from 6 to 9 employees, with the possibility of more additions in the future.

"This is helping Global-5 move to the next level, hopefully becoming a prime contractor rather than one of many sub-contractors," Hamill said. "The help I've received from the SBA and the conversations at the Business Matchmaking event are really paying off. Anyone who thinks the SBA is there only for small business loans ought to take another look. They have a fabulous website that's progressive and customer friendly, offering a wide variety of online resources."

Hamill recommends working with the SBA and participating in Business Matchmaking to any small business with designs on long-term success.

“When you’re in business for yourself and trying to do bold things, it’s awfully nice to have someone looking out for your interests,” she said. “The SBA is unbiased. It’s all about helping you find work, and they’re experts at guiding and helping you.”

Major Pharmaceutical Company Also Shows Interest

In addition to the major government contract, Global-5 also is positioned for success in the private sector. One of the high points of nearly a dozen appointments Hamill had at the Business Matchmaking event was a meeting with a world-leading research-based pharmaceutical company that provides a platform for delivering strong growth in today's rapidly changing healthcare environment.

"This company hadn't been on our radar," said Hamill. "But a company representative decided to meet me and discuss their needs and what Global-5 could do to help them achieve their objectives."

The next day, Global-5 received a "request for information" letter seeking a thorough description of Hamill's firm and its capabilities. Just three months later, Hamill now expects a positive

response—and a contract—in the near future.

Matchmaking Event Credited

With two major contracts in hand and another possibly on the way, Hamill is understandably glad she participated in Business Matchmaking.

"This was by far the best event I've attended, both in terms of quality and quantity," she said. "If you want to work with large businesses and government agencies, this IS the way for small businesses to get a foot in the door. It's a great opportunity for small businesses."

About Global-5, Inc.

Global-5's training, outsourcing, marketing, multimedia and public relations strategies are designed to help organizations grow and adapt to change, as well as keep their customers, shareholders and employees well-informed, loyal and motivated, and to move their products or services into a position of market leadership. Global-5 regularly creates innovative solutions for some of the world's most respected organizations. For instance, when American Honda introduced the hybrid version of the best-selling small car in America, the Honda Civic Hybrid, Global-5 was chosen to spread the word. Twenty million people across North America saw and listened.

Global-5's media push in connection with the unveiling of AAA's "Top Cars" effort resulted in coverage on NBC's Today Show, and a video news release aired on every major market in America, reaching 46 million viewers. Science Applications International Corporation recently used Global-5 to help with the dedication of a new facility in Orlando's Central Florida Research Park. With Global-5 positioning, the dedication was declared "Science Applications International Day."

Note to Media: Below is contact information to learn more about Global-5 and its experience with Business Matchmaking.



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