

The Write Plan, LLC Newsletter

- A Technical Writing Solutions Company

"What are the things to watch out for in project kickoff meetings and Pro Bono Work

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What's New ...

October ... the weather gets colder, the days shorter and less sun light! Not sure if these are welcome things to all of you but for me the older I get the less I look forward to them!!!

Instead of telling you what is new with me this month I decided to provide you some facts about Halloween. :o)

THE ORIGINS OF HALLOWEEN

The word Halloween originally came from the Middle English 'Alholowmesse', meaning "All Saint's Day". The night before Alholomesse was called "All Hallows Evening" which was shortened to "Halloween" in the 20th century.

Happy Networking!

Chad "The NetworkING of Pittsburgh"

About Us

To encourage and promote the growth and success of other business owners. We offer the benefits of years of experience creating the solutions to the problems that are often roadblocks on the path to success.

Instead of enjoying their professions, many business owners are feeling overworked and understaffed. **The Write Plan, LLC** can help you reclaim your original vision by offering friendly, collaborative assistance on large and small projects.

NEED HELP PROMOTING A NETWORKING EVENT?

If your event would be of interest to entrepreneurs and small business owners please submit your event information for inclusion on the monthly networking events calendar by [clicking here](#).

HAVING TROUBLE TELLING OTHERS YOUR BUSINESS EXISTS?

If you would like **over 2,400** other businesses to find your business monthly, why not [advertise](#) within this newsletter.

HOW DO I SIGN-UP TO RECEIVE MY OWN COPY OF THE NEWSLETTER?

If you are looking to receive your very own copy of this newsletter each and every month please submit the form on our webpage http://www.thewriteplanllc.com/Monthly_Newsletter.html

FEEDBACK, QUESTIONS, OR COMMENTS?

Please submit feedback, questions, or comments on the Request Form webpage http://www.thewriteplanllc.com/Request_Form.html

GUESTBOOK

Tell us what you think of our services, newsletter and networking calendar by [clicking here](#).

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

What's New ...

About Us

Promoting A Networking Event

Advertising Your Business

How to Receive the Newsletter

Feedback, Questions, or Comments?

Guest Book

What are the things to watch out for in project kickoff meetings and Pro Bono Work

Ads



What are the things to watch out for in project kickoff meetings?

Project kickoff meetings are usually called by the client to make sure that the scope, sequence and content of the project is clear to all. We meet the principals, take a tour of the facilities, discuss past efforts to solve the problem at hand, and review the proposed project plan. **What no one likes to talk about however, is that this is all about risk management, for both the client and the consultants.**

The client wants to be sure that the consultant is up to the job and the project scope is not too narrow to accommodate what comes up when exploration reveals new issues. The consultant wants to limit the scope to the proposed work on which they bid and make sure that the client is reasonable about accommodating scope changes. Both want to leave the kickoff meeting knowing what they are getting in to, despite both being focused on improving the client's position.

Tip: As important as discussing what each party intends to do in the project, the kickoff meeting should spend a significant amount of time discussing the limits to the project. Talk about roles and authorities - what the consultant should not be doing and what the client is not obligated to do. List (yes on paper) those activities that are inside the line and which are outside. Be flexible on this but it should be on paper so all can see it and agree to it. We have all been in situations where we want to accommodate the client and have had to come back and negotiate what is in and what is really beyond the scope of work. Be willing to negotiate but be sure the kickoff meeting leaves no ambiguity over roles and responsibilities.

Pro Bono work is a great way to build your network and business. However, every hour I spend doing “volunteer” work is one less billable hour. What am I missing?

In a word, lots. Your value as a consultant comes from a combination of skills, experience, and behaviors. Your success as a consulting firm comes from the combination of your network of contacts and an efficient business enterprise. Pro bono work, done well, is a home run in developing all of these bases of consulting success. **If you see an hour of unbilled work as a cost rather than an investment, you will miss opportunities you may not be able to get even through billed work.**

A pro bono engagement is a different type of service for a different type recipient in a different type of relationships than with paid clients. Your work is donated because you believe in the intrinsic value of an organization, whether it is for a social cause, your community or an affinity group. You and your "client" can get very close and the value of your skills is usually more appreciated than in a work for hire relationships. Pro bono work rounds out your skills, extends your relationships, brings you into a new area where your skills are used, and does fulfill a need for you to lend your skills to build your community.

Tip: Don't wait to be asked to help in your community. There are plenty of hours that you do not bill in which you could donate a few hours a week or month. Pick 2-3 charitable organizations of interest. Contact the chief executive and say you have skills in marketing, planning, leadership development, fundraising, staffing, or whatever you want to contribute. Ask how you might contribute these skills for the betterment of the organization. When you propose specific, high value skills like these, you will get a grateful reception and enter a whole new world of possibilities.

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