

So you need a consultant?

There are times when you would like the expertise and opinions of someone from the “outside” and often this means hiring an environmental consultant.

Everyone needs to get the most for their money - accurate, timely service without unnecessary procedures, or unnecessary information, which can translate into unnecessary dollars spent.

This brochure has been developed to provide information to help you in choosing a consultant when you need one. As always, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) staff are available to answer your questions and help you have a successful operation in compliance with Kansas’ environmental regulations.



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Health and Environment**
Bureau of Environmental Field Services
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Choosing an Environmental Consultant

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Make the most of your dollars!

A few simple steps can save you time and money.



Determine that you actually need a consultant.

Define the scope and type of assistance you need. KDHE regulatory staff may be able to provide some answers. You can also contact the K-State Pollution Prevention Institute (PPI) for pollution prevention and small business environmental compliance assistance. Contact PPI at (800) 578-8898 for free, confidential service or visit www.sbeap.org.



After determining that you need the services of an environmental consultant, ask for recommendations

from others in similar businesses, trade associations or the Better Business Bureau. From these recommendations, make a list of possible firms. KDHE does not maintain a list of consultants or provide referrals.



After making a list of possibilities, choose three or four

and contact them for a preliminary consultation. Provide them with an accurate description of your operation and the type of assistance you need.



Ask Questions:

- Does the firm have expertise in your area?
- Do they have liability insurance?
- Are they qualified (including any licenses or certifications) for the work you may require?
- Will they need a work area, office, computer, telephone, etc., while working in your facility?



Ask for *written* proposals outlining tasks, timelines, estimated fees and work products to be delivered.



Review each firm's qualifications and obtain references. Call the firm's previous clients and ask if work

performed was similar to your needs. Then ask:

- Were deadlines met?
- Were there problems encountered?
- Was the client kept informed as the project progressed?
- Was the client satisfied with the finished report?
- How did the final cost compare with the original estimate?



Review each firm's written proposal carefully.

Compare proposals - tasks should be consistent. Be sure the firms propose to provide the duties you need.



Before signing a contract, read the fine print.

Read, review and ask questions. If the contract is complex, it's a good idea to have your attorney review it with you.

Too Good to be True?

As with any purchase, beware of deals that sound too good to be true (excessively low cost, short timeline, etc.) Be wary of high pressure sales talks, conflicts of interest, or anything that makes you feel uneasy. Remember the old saying "buyer beware."

Be cautious, but when you find the right consultant and consider the tips provided, you should have a good experience with a well qualified and satisfactory consultant to help you make your business even more successful while protecting the environment.