

Exercise 4: Oral Interviews of the ESCOs

Student Instructions for Exercise 4:

In Exercise 3, you short-listed two finalists from among the respondents to the RFP. You also developed a list of questions to be addressed by ESCO's during oral interviews. You will now invite them to make oral presentations and interview them in order to clarify information that was vague, incomplete or missing from their proposals, and to ask specific questions that you may have about their company, personnel and past experience.

In addition to the questions you developed during the previous exercise, you may want to consider asking the following questions during the oral interviews:

1. Has your firm ever had a performance contract dispute with a Housing Authority that resulted in litigation? If so, please identify the Housing Authority and explain how the dispute arose and how it was resolved.
2. What is the longest period of time your firm has ever been in negotiations with a Housing Authority before reaching a final contract (or before either party ended negotiations). [Follow-up] Why did it take so long?
3. What was the most difficult technical challenge you ever faced in implementing an energy conservation measure, and how did you overcome the difficulty?
4. What was the most difficult contractual challenge you ever faced in implementing a performance contract, and how did you overcome it?

Spend 20 minutes in your group discussing whether you want to add anything to your list of questions, and who will ask what questions. Be prepared to follow up if you don't get satisfactory answers. Rating forms are recommended for actual ESCO evaluations, and if time allows prioritize your questions and rate the answers in order to aid in your selection of an ESCO. Your instructors will provide specific directions for how the mock interviews will be conducted, depending on the size of the class.