Agency Tips to Procurement

The relationship between procurement, marketing and agencies isn’t always as good as it should be. The best relationships work when there is open and clear communication between all parties and that is particularly important between procurement and their agencies.

Marketing clients, and the procurement professionals that work with them, need to ensure that they achieve maximum value from their agency relationships, and agencies need to ensure they are profitable, sustainable businesses.

We have created a series of ten top tips on how agencies, marketing and procurement can work better together.

These guidelines focus on the relationship between all three parties; procurement, marketing and agencies, with the aim of becoming a check list in developing effective ongoing working practices.

cips.org | ipa.co.uk
1. **Leverage our expertise**  
We’re all experts in our respective fields, let’s respect that and use it to work efficiently together.

2. **Respect our time**  
Allow sufficient time to complete the process. Be responsive and respectful of each other’s time. If a deadline seems tight, ask why to understand the reasons.

3. **Seek to understand the industry**  
Be informed about our industry. The IPA, CIPS and ISBA websites host a wealth of industry knowledge, to give you a better understanding of what agencies do and the value they deliver.

4. **Be open and collaborative**  
Communicate the business objective that has been agreed internally with all stakeholders and keep agencies updated on how they are performing against it.

5. **Post contract**  
Establish the KPIs and set measurement benchmarks at the beginning of the relationship, and continue to review with us on a regular basis.

6. **Scope, budget and category clarity**  
Whilst budgets are scenario dependent, be clear about the investment. Or if it’s not possible, try to be indicative - for projects as well as for pitching. Be conscious of discussing quality, scope and timeframes.

7. **Be open minded**  
Be open to new pricing models and ways of working. There are many new and alternative ways that agencies can deliver profitable ideas. Creativity and innovation aren’t developed in the same way every time.

8. **Provide the full context**  
Be fully transparent from day one and make agencies aware of the things that will be impacting them.

9. **Consider different ways to demonstrate value**  
Look at results through an ROI and value-delivered lens. Sometimes the work being procured could deliver more value than will be saved if agencies don’t have to cut corners to deliver.

10. **Mutual growth**  
Understand the capabilities of individual agencies and associated companies. Think about how you can mutually grow together, extending overall scope to provide efficiencies and economies of scale.
Top tips for working better together

Procurement Tips to Agencies

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   We’re all experts in our respective fields, let’s respect that and use it to work efficiently together.

2. **Respect our time**
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3. **Knowledge share**
   Teach us what we don’t know. We don’t know everything about marketing, and things change very quickly. So, if there is something that you think we don’t understand, teach us; we love to learn.

4. **Be open and collaborative**
   The more we know about you and the way you work, the more we can do to help. Challenge us as to what you think is right.

5. **Understand the engagement process**
   Although there are elements of flex, follow the instructions, meet the deadlines and rules of engagement.

6. **Understand the contract process**
   Let’s get this out the way, and agreed as quickly as possible. If feasible, sit down with all relevant parties; it’s important to manage risk so we can focus on the future.

7. **Post contract**
   Have regular reviews. We like to know how well you are doing, so agree and measure KPIs / SLAs, effectiveness, relationship targets etc. We will help with action plans to ensure we are all on track.

8. **Scope and category clarity**
   Understand our business needs and objectives. The more you know about us and our challenges the better you will be able to help the marketing team.

9. **Partner with us**
   Trust us - we aren’t trying to trip you up. Good marketing procurement people are experts in this field, and can add a lot of value for both our company and yours, there needs to be mutual trust.

10. **Involve us**
    Get to know us, and invite us to the activities and events that you invite our marketing colleagues to. Involve us throughout the process.