



4 Ways Simple to Increase DBE Business

Marketing isn't always easy, but here are some simple steps that help to cultivate your reputation.

1. Identify your clients and customers
2. Look for new opportunities by networking
3. Guard your reputation! Happy clients = good publicity
4. Follow up on questions and tie loose ends daily

Consider your customers. With a pen and paper handy, ask yourself: Why do people buy from you? Why are people not buying from you? Why do people buy from your competitors?

Use your answers to help choose where to spend your time and efforts networking. Where should you network? DBE Matchmaking functions and after-hours business events are a great start. Check meetup.com for groups near you.

You've probably heard: "If a customer likes you, they will tell someone, but if they don't like you, they will tell 10 people." Now adjust that to the web. According to AdWeek, 81% of people research a company online before buying. If clients write a bad review about you online, rectifying the problem can only improve your reputation (and help correct your poor review). Similarly, don't be afraid to ask those you've done great work for to write online recommendations.

Lastly, take a few minutes each evening to:

- Answer online inquiries and emails
- Use collected business cards to connect on LinkedIn
- Thank people who made a project possible
- Thank people who paid you the compliment of recommending you to a potential new client



About The West Virginia DOT

The purpose of the West Virginia DBE program is to encourage, cultivate and support equal opportunities for firms owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.

The WVDOT provides support for its certified DBE firms through the DBE Supportive Services Program with the intent to improve economic growth and future of WV DBE firms by utilizing the following tactics:

- Expanding business knowledge
- Increase project quality
- Enhance abilities
- Create marketability of WV DBEs

About The Program

The Construction Estimating Institute (CEI) works with West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT) as the statewide provider of the federally funded Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) Supportive Services Program.

We want to increase the number of certified DBEs participating in highway and bridge construction, as well as assist DBEs in growing and eventually becoming self-sufficient.

Additionally, CEI provides supportive services by assisting prime contractors and consultants with identifying DBEs for subcontracting opportunities on priority projects.

Action Facilities Management

The U.S. Small Business Administration's West Virginia District Director Karen Friel recently announced Diane Lewis Jackson, president and CEO of Action Facilities Management, as the SBA National 2016 8(a) Graduate of the Year. Jackson was nominated for the award by James Merrill, chief administrative officer for AFM.

Jackson, a native of Clarksburg, is the founder, president and CEO of AFM, located in Morgantown.

Since founding AFM in 2001 in her basement, Lewis has successfully grown her company — a government and commercial contracting firm specializing in site management, security services, maintenance and janitorial, equipment operations, consulting, staffing solutions and project management. Under her leadership and guidance, Action Facilities Management has grown from two individuals to more than 250 employees in nine states.

Lewis, through her methodologies and innovation with Action Facilities Management, has garnered an impressive list of clients, including:

- United States Department of Defense
- U.S. Department of Energy
- Division of Occupational Health and Safety
- Federal Aviation Administration
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- U.S. Library of Congress
- U.S. Marshals Service
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Mine Safety and Health Administration
- Bombardier and other commercial sites



U.S. Small Business Administration's WV District Director Karen Friel (L), with 8(a) Graduate of the Year award winner Diane Lewis Jackson as she receives the 2016 award. Photo: SBA

Lewis holds two degrees from Fairmont State University, which she earned while raising two children as a single parent.

Lewis is active in her community and currently serves as:

- Treasurer for the Berean Baptist Church of Morgantown
- Vice president of the Members of Diversity Inc.
- Secretary of the Corporate Board of the West Virginia University Hospital
- Board officer of the West Virginia University Board of governors
- Visiting committee for the Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center

- SBA West Virginia Public Affairs Specialist Nikki Bowmar

Supportive Services Offered



- Estimating Training
- Building Capacity
- Mobilization Financing
- Bonding Assistance
- Marketing Plan Development
- Creating a Business Plan
- Building a Website



CEI is an educational organization providing the highest quality construction training in the industry. Over 100,000 owners, estimators, project managers, field supervisors, office support staff, foremen, laborers, and key management personnel have attended courses that are offered nationwide. The courses provide students with construction skills training and the critical information needed to be effective within their companies and organizations.

Call 800-423-7058 or visit us online at www.wvdbesupport.com

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