

Close the Deal – The Final Phase of Job Attraction

Over the past few months we addressed the process by which EDAWN works to attract new companies to our region and then how that prospect moves through the pipeline to a point where we are on the “short list” of communities they are considering. Getting to the short list is tough, so once we are there it is important to close the deal and win that prospect for our region. As Dale Earnhardt said, “second place is just the first place loser”. So what do we do now that we are on the “short list” and how can you help us win that project for our community?

There are many significant factors that a prospect considers when looking at a community such as: regional population, market proximity, workforce, education system, transportation infrastructure, just to name a few. The final few communities that meet all of the criteria set out by the prospect in these key areas will then move to the short list. Once on the short list there are little things can make a real difference like: the professionalism of the people they meet, the cost or terms of a potential lease, cultural opportunities, taxes and incentives. I have even had a prospect say that the quality of the shopping was very important to them or their spouse. Getting the facts on the table and laying out all of the permitting, taxation or incentive details is important, but that is only part of the process. The other part is something you may know of as “the feel” of the community.

You have all experienced this when you go house hunting. Some houses just don't feel right even though they may have all the features you asked your real estate agent to look for. The flow of the house, the yard, the quality of the home or even the neighborhood can all give you a feel that says, not this one! Communities are very much the same and here is where you can help. What can you do as an individual or organization to help make our community “feel” better, look better, more friendly, positive and optimistic? That feel as portrayed not only by EDAWN or our many partners, but from the community overall. The other drivers encountered as we show the real estate options, the waitresses or desk clerks at the hotel or even the taxi drivers and how they treat this “stranger” are all part of that community feel.

Your help in the positive promotion of our region and your interaction with others in public can make a real difference, not only for our prospects but for all of us! We expect to close over 50% of the prospects that consider us part of their short list and that will add thousands of quality jobs to the region each year, but we need your help to do this. While attracting these new companies is important, keeping them here as well as the other great companies in our region is even more important - and that is why “retention and expansion” is the topic of our next column.