



February 16, 2016

To Whom it May Concern:

I was introduced to HelmsBriscoe nearly 15 years ago. My only regret is that it wasn't one year earlier...

One of focal points of the American Water Works Association is to provide training opportunities to our water operators, as part of their annual Ohio EPA contact hour requirements. To accomplish this important goal in the Ohio Section, we set up local day-long workshops and seminars, as well as larger week-long conferences attended by professionals throughout the State of Ohio. With a membership of over 2,500 the Ohio Section offers training throughout the year, in multiple cities. Often the training requires substantial meeting space and overnight lodging, especially for the Annual meeting.

I've been a volunteer for the Ohio Section since 1997, and have managed the Local Arrangements for half a dozen state-wide conferences over that time. As a volunteer, we only have so many hours to devote to planning efforts. Since the day I began to utilize HelmsBriscoe, I wondered how we managed the planning efforts in earlier years. I've had the distinct pleasure of teaming with Kathy Kempton from the first day in the early 2000s, and I'll keep asking for her help.

Why do I keep going back to Kathy? There are several, but I'll mention a few:

1. Each contract is treated as a new document, not just "copy and paste" from the previous year. Every contract we've put together has at least one improvement, and I find this comforting because I don't know the industry trends for hotels and conference. I find it comforting that Kathy has our best interests in mind while crafting the bid proposal and final contract.
2. She knows the hotel brands, and the local staff which we will ultimately be working with during negotiations and once the conference is in session. Additionally, Kathy listens to what we want, but isn't afraid to suggest alternatives to improve upon those initial discussions.
3. Once the contract is signed, Kathy doesn't take the opportunity to "check-out" until the next opportunity. Along with brief discussions throughout the year, I see her at each conference *during* the events, to check on how everything is going. This is important for many reasons, especially when we have a different Lead Volunteer in each city.

Will I continue to utilize HelmsBriscoe in the future? Absolutely! And not just for the big events. I've worked on several one-day meetings of 20 people with Kathy, and never been disappointed. I've also recommended HelmsBriscoe to other organizations, knowing they would benefit from Kathy on their planning Team. I'm confident they appreciate Kathy as much as I do.

Cliff Shrive

Section Director, American Water Works Association

513.646.4886 M

cliff.shrive@stantec.com