

10 Tips for Winning Government Business

ICN Major Projects Forum

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Presented by

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Session objectives

- Provide tips to:
 - Better respond to tenders and quotes, and
 - Increase your competitive advantage to improve your chances of success.

Seminar agenda

10 basic tips / concepts:

1. Read the question
2. Respond (fully) to the question
3. Don't assume everyone knows you
4. Target your referees / references
5. Embrace duplication
6. Remember that customer service counts
7. Offer value add initiatives
8. Understand Government's key policy requirements
9. Submit a complete response, and
10. Get your response in on time!

About MIA Consulting Services

- 15 years in government procurement
- Specialising in whole of government procurements and ICT procurement
- Involvement in Government tendering, evaluation and award
- Focus on improving a company's chance of winning government business
- Understands government and government processes

Introduction to a Tender response

- RFT for a good/service >\$150,000 (incl GST), to the open market.
- Whole of government contract/panel for use by departments and agencies, and wider government sector
- Usually a minimum 3 year term
- Closed until refresh or retender

Purpose of a tender

Tenderers must use their tender response to *differentiate* themselves from competitors, not just to demonstrate that they can do the job.

Tip #1 Read the Question

- Successful tenderers almost always answer all parts of the question correctly
- Tips
 - Underline each requirement
 - Highlight each 'hint' eg:
 - Recent, briefly, detail
 - Relate the question back to the Specifications (Part B), and
 - Relate the question back to the Evaluation Criteria (Part A)

Tip # 2 Respond fully to the question

“Did not address the requirements of the question”

“Provided marketing material without answering the question”

“Presumed knowledge of the company”

“Said they can do it but didn’t provide any evidence of experience or capability”.

Tip # 2 Respond fully to the question

- Evaluators can only evaluate the content of the tender response.
- Evidence is important.
- Be honest.
- **Demonstrate** you understand the product or service government wants.
- **Demonstrate** how you are in a unique position to provide the service.
- **Differentiate** your service offering.

Tip # 3

Don't assume everyone knows you

“We can do this because we are [company] xyz”

- Government evaluators cannot consider any information outside the submitted tender documents and tender process.
- Do not risk assumed knowledge of your company's capabilities and projects.

Tips to respond to tender questions

- Address each question as if your capabilities, strengths and people are unknown.
- Describe reference projects or sites in detail and state how this is relevant.
- Describe how your resources are appropriate for the job.
- Describe your methodologies and approaches in detail.

Tip # 4 Target your references

Purpose:

- Confirm stated company capabilities, and
- Confirm tenderer experience.

Common mistakes:

- Haven't demonstrated the delivery of competencies during previous projects,
- Haven't related to the tender requirements,
- Scatter gun approach, or
- References aren't recent .

Tip # 5 Embrace Duplication

- Answer each question fully.
- Do not cut and paste one answer to another.
- Be aware of how government evaluates tenders.
- Embrace duplication to reinforce your company's skills and abilities.
- Consistency scores well.

Tip # 6 Customer Service Counts

- Customer service proposals are effective in differentiating your tender response.
 - Can generate large variations in scoring
- Many tenderers share the same capabilities but not all put effort into their customer service proposals.

Tips for responding to customer service

- Regular meetings
- Registers
- Regular reporting on end user feedback
- 3 to 5 performance measures
- Presentations summarising the results of your engagement
- Easy to read, informative client reports
- Analysis of project results with trending or forecast information
- Lessons learned and knowledge transfer
- Don't confuse customer services with value add

Tip # 7 Offer value added initiatives

- Value add initiatives are almost a free kick to differentiate your tender from others
- Doesn't always mean for free:
 - Related to the requirements of the tender, but
 - Additional to the requirements
 - Something only your company can provide, and
 - Is valued by government
 - Should be genuine and affordable to the tenderer

Examples

- Effectiveness review of implemented strategies
- Training
- Supporting documentation
- On the floor support
- Consider how your value add initiative can turn into follow on business

Tip # 8

Understand key policy requirements

- Transparency, equity, accountability and competition
- Do not tender if you can't comply with the key policy requirements
- www.vgpb.vic.gov.au
- Conditions of Tender and Specifications

Relevant policies

- Conduct of Commercial Engagements (probity)
- Ethical Purchasing Policy (EPP)
- Victorian Industry Participation Policy (VIPPP)
- Disclosure of Contracts Policy
 - www.contracts.vic.gov.au
- Tender Complaints Policy
- Performance and financial guarantees

Tip # 9 Submit a Complete Response

Examples of incomplete tender responses:

- A tender with no pricing;
- A tender with an incomplete contract compliance statement; or
- A tender with no references.

Material information vs non-material

Checklist for Tender Completion

- Full pricing details
- Completed compliance statements to contract and specifications
- Completed insurance details
- List of 3 referees
- Signed physical copies of schedules 1 and 2 (where requested)
- Correct number of copies of the tender document or CDs;
- Completed “additional information”
- Any drawings/designs etc. requested for in the tender document.

Electronic response

- Before submitting an electronic response please insert your CD / USB into 3 different PCs to ensure the content is there and that it can be read.

Tip # 10

Get your response in on Time!!

Late tenders will not be accepted, unless there is conclusive evidence that the late lodgement of the Tender:

- *Resulted from the mishandling of the Tender by the Department; or*
- *Was hindered by a major incident and the integrity of the Tendering Process will not be compromised by accepting a Tender after the closing time.*

Winning government business workshops

- Practical workshops
- Contacting and engaging with government
- Further discussion and practical examples of the 10 Tips for Winning government business
- Discussion around value for money
- Tips to further differentiate a tender or quotation response
- Government's evaluation and scoring process
- Composition of a RFQ and RFT

Closing Statement

- Develop a competitive advantage
- Maximise your chance of winning government business
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