

The Supply Chain Network - Making Opportunities, Visible, Accessible and Winnable!

Elements of successful bidding - 2: Getting the best start for your bid.

In a previous article (*Elements of successful bidding - 1*) we considered the importance of effective bid management and how it increases the chances of success when bidding for contracts. In this article we look at one of the most crucial components of bid management: the Bid Kick Off - what it is and why it's important.

On bid release, best practice is to hold a Bid Kick Off Meeting for all team members involved in your bid (aka your Bid Team). This crucial starting point is however frequently omitted when companies rush into a bid to get it done within the limited time available.

A bid Kick Off meeting is however a key ingredient to success. Whether it's held face to face, by conference call or by Zoom / Teams, it serves to bring all key contributors together for a focused start to the bid, which sets the direction of travel towards bid submission.



The Kick Off Meeting should be planned and managed by the individual designated as that tender's Bid Manager (this may be the person who manages all your tender submissions). With a formal focused agenda, the meeting serves as a bid-focused team re-group to ensure:

The buyer's requirements within the tender (both its specification and completion of the tender) are understood;

- Any unclear areas for clarification questions are identified for early clarification question raising;
- All roles and responsibilities for tender completion among team members are allocated;
- Allocation of the tender's questions / responses among the bid team is agreed;
- The buyer's tender timetable is embedded among the team;
- Internal deadlines for completion of tasks are acknowledged - with any bottlenecks / obstacles raised and solutions provided to these, for example reassigning responsibilities if one team member is on leave (this will prevent slippage);
- The internal deadline for raising of clarification questions is acknowledged; and
- Dates for the team to re-group and update on progress are agreed.

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The meeting also gives the opportunity to discuss your competitive strategy, for example:

- Discussion of your winning solution that will meet and exceed the buyer's requirements, along with your key benefits over competitors (such as pricing strategy, innovations).
- Identification of known or likely competitors, along with strengths and weaknesses, with solutions as to how you can counter their strengths and highlight their weaknesses in your bid strategy.

Finally, the meeting also provides the opportunity for your team to collectively identify any risks within the tender or contract's requirements, the acceptability of these risks and how you can mitigate them.

The Bid Manager should produce and circulate a timetable to all involved for future reference.

This Kick Off process will lead to buy-in and team commitment; through a structured process your Bid Team - however small - can now confidently move your bid to 'take off' and power towards a successful bid outcome.



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