



How to Win Public Sector and Not for Profit Business

Introduction

This guide provides a checklist of the kinds of things you might find it useful to do when you are bidding for public sector and not for profit type business. These are usually covered by formal quote and tender procedures and may include business that needs to be awarded under what is called the EU procurement rules.

Bidding for such business opportunities can be both time consuming and sometimes complex but much can be done to put yourself in a position where you know which opportunities are worth pursuing and you have the knowledge, skills and capabilities to be successful in the ones that you do bid for.

At the rear of the guide is further data concerning the source of electronically advertised business opportunities which you can search or register for much of them at no cost.

Action Plans

Checklist for public sector type business opportunities

Task	Key Questions	Priority (1=High; 5=Low)
1. Are you committed to doing business with the public sector? Why?	What are your objectives from the public sector?	
	Have you set any goals/targets?	
	Have they been communicated to your staff?	
2. What areas are you particularly strong in?	What are your Unique Selling Points? (U.S.P.s)	
	Where do you have some competitive advantage	
	Do you need to find partners to increase this?	

Finding Opportunities

Task	Key Questions	Priority (1=High; 5=Low)
3. Are you registered on the right portals?	Draw up a list of portals (see useful website section) that appear relevant and register on them	
4. Are you getting alerts	Check profiles are installed for your business	
5. Are you dealing with your alerts	Do you have a process for handling them? Who looks for them? Who responds? How? Who gets feedback? etc.	

6. Which opportunities are you going to go for?	Do you have a system to assess which tenders to go for?	
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Policies; Insurance; References; Financials

Task	Key Questions	Priority (1=High; 5=Low)
7. Do I have all 4 Policies?	Health and Safety	
	Equal Opportunities	
	Quality Management	
	Environmental	
	Any Other Policies?	
	Accreditations?	
8. Do I have enough Insurance cover?	Professional Indemnity?	
	Public Liability?	
	Employers Liability?	
	Any other Insurance?	
9. Do I have references & written testimonials	At least three recent ones. Relevant to the tenders you will be bidding for.	
10. Do I have verification of financial robustness?	Accounts. How many years?	
	Cash flow forecast	
	Accountant's letter	
	Bank letter	

Pre-Qualification Questionnaire – Bid Pack

Task	Key Questions	Priority (1=High; 5=Low)
11. Do I have a Bid Pack to use?	Prepare a single document with ALL your information from which to "cut & paste"	
12. Does the Bid Pack do justice to the company?	Are your Unique Selling Points very clear?	
13. Can the Bid Pack be improved to increase competitive advantage	Have I learnt from previous bid attempts?	

Bid Writing Processes and Expertise

Task	Key Questions	Priority (1=High; 5=Low)
14. Who will head this?		
15. What training have they had? Do they need?		
16. Gather data required and do background research	Are there any areas of the tender that need clarification? Is there a bidders' conference or opportunity to meet with the client?	
17. Identify tender weighting criteria and relevant importance – price, quality, experience, after-sales.	What are they looking for? What is important to the client? How will they award the business?	
18. Structure bid in an attractive, concise, complete but informative style	How easy is it to read the bid and pick up the key points? Have you showcased your talents adequately and truthfully?	
19. Only provide the data that is requested and plan to meet the deadlines in good time.		

Closing the deal – the presentation stage

Task	Key Questions	Priority (1=High; 5=Low)
20. Who presents?	How good are your presentations?	
21. How do you prepare?		
22. Who needs to be there?	Would operational people who will manage or undertake the work add value, authenticity and reassure if appropriately prepared?	
23. What could have been improved?	Is there room for improvement? Does your presentation team need training support?	

Debrief

Task	Key Questions	Priority (1=High; 5=Low)
24. Ask for feedback	What worked well? Even better if?	
25. Is this the right market for me?	What is success rate like? Is the business suited to different markets? Cost v Return on Investment?	
26. What else would give competitive advantage?		

Collaboration with other SMEs

Task	Key Questions	Priority (1=High; 5=Low)
27. Does this market and my business warrant considering collaboration?	Who could I collaborate with? Is their a business fit? Would it improve my chances and be a win/win?	
28. How can you maximise the opportunities by collaborating?		
29. Have you tried to work with other companies on a tender?		

Sources of business leads

Lead Source	Description of Content	Site Address
Wakefield and District Housing	WDH future and current purchasing requirements. Free to browse.	http://www.wdh.co.uk/working/suppliers/tenders/Pages/default.aspx
SCMS	Supplier and Contracts Management System which provides business alerts. Mainly council based in West Yorkshire and surrounding areas. Free to register.	https://scms.alito.co.uk/index.jsp
Contracts finder	Contracts Finder is a new central government service that will also become associated with all public sector bodies for contracts over £10k. Free to use fully operational by 1 st April 2011.	https://www.contractsfinder.businesslink.gov.uk
Ted-Tenders Electronic Daily	Supplement to the Official Journal of the European Union advertising contracts throughout Europe of a significant value. Free to use.	http://www.ted.europa.eu/TED/main/HomePage.do
Public Tenders	Latest public sector tender announcements. Free to use. Most opportunities are taken from TED.	http://www.publictenders.net/
Sell2Wales	Welsh Assembly Government initiative to advertise Welsh public sector contracts. Free to register.	https://www.sell2wales.co.uk/
Public Contracts Scotland	Details of contracts with Scottish Local Authorities, NHS Scotland, the Scottish Government, Agencies, Higher and Further Education and Emergency Services. Free to register.	http://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/

South East Business Portal	Tendering opportunities across the 74 councils and 9 fire & rescue services of the south east region. Free to register.	https://www.businessportal.southeastiep.gov.uk/sece/cms.nsf/vLiveDocs/SD-DEVV-6UNGEK?OpenDocument&contentid=1.001
Bluelight emergency services e-tendering	E-Tendering solution available to all Emergency Services. National coverage with Yorkshire participants.	https://www.bluelight.gov.uk/portal/cms.nsf/vHomePage/fSection?OpenDocument
Republic of Ireland eTenders Public Procurement portal	Helps you find and publish tender notices on government and public sector procurement across Ireland. Free to register.	http://www.etenders.gov.ie/
Supplying to the NHS	One of the portals used by the NHS sector. Free to register on.	https://www.supplying2nhs.com/procontract/healthservice/cms.nsf/vHomePage/fSection?OpenDocument
Supplying to the NHS	CPC Plus is an NHS online market place for NHS Trusts to advertise for goods and services. Covers Yorkshire and Humber and East Midlands. Two services - Silver £100 p.a, Gold £250 per annum.	http://www.cpcplus.co.uk/
Due North	Due North run a number of e -procurement portals for public sector clients. This is a site that links to the current range which can then be accessed. These are usually free to register to.	http://www.due-north.com/suppliers.html

Other Sources of Opportunities

Lead Source	Description of Content	Site Address
BIP Solutions	'Select' is one of several national based pre-qualification services for the public sector. Suppliers can register for one of two schemes and for particular work categories. Two schemes are offered – Certify and Accredited. The first is free the second costs from around £90+vat per annum.	http://www.bipselect.com/
ConstructionLine	UK register of pre qualified construction services suppliers. Used by public sector buyers to select suitable accredited suppliers to tender. There is a charge dependent on turnover but starts at around £90+Vat	http://www.constructionline.co.uk/static/
Tagish	Website of useful public sector and public sector type organisations – links to websites	http://www.tagish.co.uk/esslist/
On-Line guide/course to public sector tendering		
Learndirect	E-Course – Winning the Contract. Free need to register and then can run the course at your own convenience.	http://www1.learndirect-business.com/business-courses/winning-the-contract/