

JPA's Top Ten Tips for creating a winning bid

☀ Identify the client's need

Put yourself in the client's position and think from their perspective. What is most important to them? What is the problem they are trying to solve? Identify the buyer's need and tailor your bid to address that need.

☀ Don't bid for everything

Be sure that the opportunity is winnable, deliverable and profitable. If not, it could be a waste of time and effort. Bid less, bid better, win more.

☀ Follow the buyer's rules

The buyer determines the process and they will look less favourably on those who choose their own way. Answer all the client's questions in the order they are presented.

☀ Ask questions

Asking intelligent questions and seeking clarification during the process serves three purposes: a) it ensures that you get the details right; b) it demonstrates that you are keen; c) it gives you an opportunity to build a relationship with the client.

☀ Identify your bid theme

Your bid theme is *the overarching benefit of choosing you* (it might be experience, innovation, cost efficiency). The theme will be different each time (depending on the client need) but should genuinely reflect your strengths.

☀ Prepare an Executive Summary

An Executive Summary (one page) is an ideal opportunity to give the client the key items of information and to highlight your best bits. Executive summaries make the buyer's life easier and they will thank you for it.

☀ Be consistent

Corporate branding, colours, layout and style should be consistent so that, wherever the bid comes from in the company, the impression is consistent and professional.

☀ Get the price right

Have a clear rationale for your fees and present your price alongside a summary of your value proposition (what do they get for their money!). Don't hide the price but present the top line figures in your Executive Summary. Fees can be accompanied by a 'commentary' rather than the less friendly 'exclusions'.

☀ Be imaginative and creative

Dense text in a bid document is hard to read and makes the buyer's job hard and tedious. Use pictures and graphics to add interest. Use client testimonials as pull out quotes to break up the text.

☀ Ask for feedback

If you are not successful find out why and conduct an internal 'lessons-learnt' review. From this you can build a picture of your strengths and weaknesses and what lets you down against your competitors.