

The Trouble with Tenders.....

... is that you invest so much time into writing the responses, yet your bid to win ratio is just not good enough. Each tender is costing you too much, not just in terms of the direct cost, but also in the fact that it ties up valuable resource which you could put to better use... if only you knew which ones you should bid, and which you should ignore. What can you do to improve this? How can you know which tenders to bid, and which to ignore?

Old truths, new views.

It has long been known that people buy firstly because something feels right, and later justify it with logic. Think of buying your car, or your house. How often have you ended up with the most logical outcome? How often have you changed your mind and bought something different, 'just because it felt right'? People usually set out with a clear goal in mind, but more often than not end up buying something completely different because it 'felt' better. This element of human nature has now been scientifically analysed and academically tested by Professor Tim Ambler and his team at the London Business School through their research into the new science of Neuro Marketing.

<http://www.commercialalert.org/issues/culture/neuromarketing/pushing-thebuy-button>

So what is the relevance of this to winning more tenders?

Despite the best endeavours of procurement departments to 'level the playing field', it is commonly accepted that there is frequently bias in decisions made at tender selection time. So how is this achieved, and more importantly, how can you tip the balance in your favour more often? The knowledge of what it takes to achieve this is one of the key outcomes of ICDL's unique Value Positioning series of events.

When all the tenders have been assessed for compliance, and all prices are checked as being 'there or there about', what enable the tender selectors to choose one tender over another? It is clearly evidenced as part of the compliance process that they can all do the job. It is also clearly evidenced that everyone's prices are similar. So, how can this selection be made? "Ah", you say, "they use a weighted scoring system". True, and where none of the players have created any perceived differentiation in the minds of the selectors, this may be how a decision is reached. Indeed, there are some companies for whom this weighted price is the only issue. But there are also many companies, including a significant number of all government tenders, where the preference would be to buy from a vendor whose offer 'feels right', rather than 'just complies'. Why? Because people want to minimise their own risk, and when something feels right, perceived risk is minimised.

So, what is involved in making your offer feel right?

Value is the answer. Value being defined in many terms such as 'we could choose anyone, but I just feel that '...they alone really understand us' or '...they alone have evidenced success with other similar customers' or it could be as little as '.....they would be the best choice, but I have no real reason'.

How do you get feelings like this into the minds of the key people? By positioning what you have to offer in their world, in their terms, and telling them about it before the tender is out. How do you do this? Having this knowledge, and being able to apply it is the entire focus of ICDL's Business Acceleration program. The outcome is very simple. The difference appears small, it's often no more than 'just a feeling'. The results to your business however are huge! More wins, more often, from more people. That's ICDL's Business Acceleration program.

"Whereas earlier, the focus would have been on the products and how to sell them, now the focus is on creating value and assessing the opportunities from a broader viewpoint".

Heikki Viika, VP Sales & Marketing, Bombardier Rail Control Systems

For more information on how ICDL can help you, call us today on +44 (0)118 979 8433
or e-mail enquiries@thebusinessaccelerators.com

Intellectual Capital Development Limited

Longstaff House, 47a Denmark Street

Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 2AY

T: 0870 203 1010

T: +44 (0)118 979 8433

F: +44 (0)118 979 9998

enquiries@thebusinessaccelerators.com

www.thebusinessaccelerators.com

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