



# The 5 Main Reasons Bids Fail



# Reaction to losing a bid



## *5 Main Reasons Why A Bid Fails*

1. You submitted a non-compliant bid.
2. Your solution does not address their problem.
3. Your evidence isn't good enough.
4. Not answering the question (irrelevant answers or waffle).
5. Complacency and 'incumbent syndrome'.

# Reasons 1: You submitted a non- compliant bid.

## *What constitutes a non-compliant bid?*

- Failing to upload documents and evidence requested.
- Answering No instead of Yes and vice versa for complex questions e.g. “Can you confirm you have never been declared bankrupt?”.
- Missed requirements from covering letters and annexes.
- Wrong format e.g. word count, font style and size.
- Missing the bid deadline, especially due to online procurement systems.

## Reasons 2: Your solution does not address their problem.

### *How did your solution not meet their requirements?*

- You didn't communicate the value you can bring. The most common by far, as often we undervalue our skills and abilities, or we just haven't taken time to think about the value we offer.
- You didn't understand their problem properly or made wrong assumptions.
- Your story isn't coherent - different parts of your response written by different people. The story doesn't flow. Every part of your response must reinforce your differentiator (there is likely only one between you and other competitors).
- You've made assumptions because they know you. If it's not in your tender they can't score it. Spell out exactly who you are and what you offer.
- Complacency (see below)

## Reasons 3: Your evidence isn't good enough.

### *You haven't provided the evidence needed?*

- The evidence doesn't exist – e.g. they ask for 5 years experience and you only have 3.
- Be creative in your answers and thinking – use a sounding board in a colleague or friend if needed.
- You have to be able to PROVE what you are committing to in your proposal. Ideas are not the same as evidence. When have you done something similar?
- Use pictures and screenshots if you can to bring a proposal to life.

## Reasons 4: Not answering the question (irrelevant answers or waffle).

### *Keep your answers to the point?*

- This is extremely common, especially when time is tight.
- When you review your proposal (and you should do it more than once), be ruthless, cut out the waffle.
- Check using this question “Did we answer the question?”.
- Example of a poor answer:
  - Q: How many vehicles will you need to make all deliveries? A: We believe our fleet is large enough to accommodate the delivery schedules specified. See, the question isn't answered.
- A better response is:
  - A: We estimate 4 vehicles are required to deliver the service. We currently have 8, and flexibility in the utilisation of the vehicles so do not anticipate renting any extra vehicles at this time. Should it become necessary we will consider buying or renting additional vehicles.

## Reasons 5: Complacency and 'incumbent syndrome'.

### *Does your tender describe what you do?*

- Just because the client knows you, makes no difference in a tender. If it's not written down they can't score it.
- It may be that you already have the contract and it's due for re-tender. Your client loves what you do and has never criticised... and yet you lose.
- Perhaps the competition only priced for what is in the scope, and you know the client missed a lot of activity out and you priced for it all? If that's the case, only price the scope and then add 'options' of additional service and price this separately.
- Don't dismiss the lower scored items such as environmental benefits or added social value. ½ a point scored on these can be the difference that wins you the tender.
- Small business in particular fail to describe what they do in their local communities as they see this as informal and 'just what we do around here'. A tender submission is the time to take credit for the role you play locally.





## Thank you very much for your time

If you have any questions about this presentation  
please don't hesitate to contact us at:

- [www.solar-flare.co.uk](http://www.solar-flare.co.uk)
- [enquiries@solar-flare.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@solar-flare.co.uk)
- 01228 586496



