

Small Business Tips

Things every small business SHOULD do:

Become familiar with the federal contracting rules (Federal Acquisition Regulations) before contemplating entering the federal market.

Learn the FAR Part 19 small business rules and the federal rules on fraud, waste, and abuse.

Learn what a federal office buys before marketing to them.

Have at least one viable working relationship with a large business that does federal contracting.

Become familiar with FedBizOpps, DIBBS, ASFI, and NECO.

Respond to Sources Sought and Request for Information Notices.

Keep up with current small business rules on sites like the SBA.gov website.

Stay current on market trends.

Use databases like FPDS-NG to see which offices buy what you want to sell.

Seek out the opportunities where the offices post them.

Discover where your expertise fits into an agency's mission before contacting them.

Know your niche and where the federal government needs your skills.

Map your capabilities to specific requirements; don't market general qualifications and small business certifications.

Consider developing sample proposals to increase response time to opportunities.

Do the homework! Know what you are getting into with a federal prime or sub-contract.

Provide best value for a fair and reasonable price.

Go to the Procurement Technical Assistance Center and get to know them.

Get a CAGE Code and DUNS number, register in SAM.gov, and Dynamic Small Business Search (DSBS) and keep it up to date.

Ask questions when you have them.

Remember, your small business specialist is a great first contact.

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Things every small business SHOULD NOT do:

Don't assume that you won't qualify for a contract. Ask questions – submit a quote.

Don't think it is easy to win a government contract.

Don't market to every federal agency – find your niche.

Don't limit your inquiries to functional people or sole-source awards. Follow the opportunities.

Don't expect that the government has a contract waiting for you.

Don't get drawn into a situation where you are acting as a front to channel set-aside awards to a large business.

Don't be overly aggressive to small business professionals. We don't award contracts and we want to help you find the answers.

Don't overstate your capabilities or take on too much too soon. Diversify!

Don't send non-specific marketing emails with large attachments. We probably won't get them (email limitations) and many won't bother to read them.

Don't underbid at your own detriment.

Don't be averse to subcontract work before pursuing prime contract opportunities.

Don't rely on socio-economic status alone to market your capabilities.

Don't disappoint a federal customer once you have an award.

Don't try to explain away poor performance.

Don't forget to learn about federal contracts before you get one.