TENDER CHEAT SHEET

The 10 things you must include in your next tender.

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WELCOME TO TENDERING

Hello, and welcome to my **Tender - Cheat Sheet,** the secrets to writing winning tenders.

The ability to write a successful tender is, arguably, your most important business skill. It is worth investing the time and energy in learning how to do it properly.

A good proposal or tender is not easy to write; and it's not intuitive. It's a skill that needs to be learned – often through trial and error. But losing business is often the price of trial and error (more so error). So, it can be a costly way to learn. Reading and using this cheat sheet should help you reduce the 'trial and error' aspect of learning how to write winning tenders.

I make a living by writing successful tenders for people like you. But I also understand that not everyone has the budget to pay a professional writer, or perhaps they just want to do it themselves. I also run Tender Training, so I am well versed in the road-blocks people face when learning to write a tender, and I also have enough experience and success to show you the important things to focus on, as well as how to address them.

This tender cheat sheet is designed to walk you through the key elements you need to focus on to write a winning tender. Tendering is a competitive process, so it's important for you to stand out from your rivals. I believe a winning tender is based on the following elements.

- **Compliance**: A compliant solution is one that meets all the client's requirements and specifications – regardless of the model, value proposition or price
- **Customer orientation**: A customer-focused, personable solution that reflects the client's culture and unique needs
- **Innovation**: An innovative yet cost-effective solution that can deliver all the requirements in a way that has not been tried before – this will make your response stand out
- **Value-adds**: Value for money is essential in every solution - show the client the value they'll receive when using your products or services
- **Outcome focus:** An outcome-driven response presents clients with the benefits and results
- they'll receive from selecting your offer.

Wishing you all the best for your future tenders.

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THE SECRETS OF TENDERING

This Tender Cheat Sheet will help you understand how to write customer-focused, persuasive tenders that win more business. And it also includes the 10 things you must include in your next tender response.

Tenders are customer-focused marketing documents. They sell your organisation, products and/or services while detailing to potential clients the benefits they'll receive from working with you.

1 | Focus on the Client

A tender is a marketing document. Tenders are used to sell your organisation, products and services while detailing to potential clients the benefits they'll receive from working with you. The constant across all tenders and proposals, is that the client is central. The tender isn't about you and your organisation, it is about client and the benefits of your solution and the value your business provides. Ensure every win theme, every strategy and every word are relevant to the client and the offer you have designed to exceed their needs.

2 | Write Persuasively

A business proposal is a written argument — an appeal to gain a reader's agreement. When you write a proposal, you're telling a story, and you're trying to convince your customer that you understand its story — its industry issues and specific problems — and that you have the best solution. Above all, to successfully persuade, you must know your customer, so you can use the right techniques to match its point of view.

3 | Continuously Review and Improve your Tender Process

Tenders are complex, competitors are changing, and clients are demanding more and more then ever for the contract. Don't rest on your brand and your success, you must continually improve your offer and your process.

You are either getting better, or you're getting behind.

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10 THINGS YOU MUST INCLUDE IN YOUR NEXT TENDER RESPONSE

A tender submission should be concise, relevant and demonstrate your organisation's ability to deliver tender outcomes.

It should:

- Be packaged and presented clearly and with a visual impact to impress the evaluators because it is easy to read and therefore, easy to evaluate.
- Substantiate your claims against the tender criteria, proving you can deliver the contract.
- Identify and substantiate - "value-added" services to make your company competitive.
- Conform to the tender submission requirements.

To deliver a value-packed tender, these are the 10 things you must include in your next tender submission.

1 | Executive Summary or Cover Letter

Summarising the entirety of your response/proposal, your executive summary should feature the following elements:

1. A statement of the client's goals, objectives, needs and desired outcomes (you want the client to be mentally ticking everything you say here).
2. Outline of your proposed solution, showing how it will help achieve the client's desired outcomes (the link between solution and the outcome must be explicit).
3. The major benefits to the client of your solution, usually expressed in terms of more speed/quality/value/profit/kudos and/or less cost/time/loss of value/reputational damage. Basically, most clients want service providers to make them look good.
4. Why you are the best person/team/organisation to do the job. You have the best people with the right approach/tools and the most relevant/current experience.
5. You are 'a safe pair of hands'. This is about the Three Cs: Conviction, Credentials and Credibility.

10 THINGS YOU MUST INCLUDE IN YOUR NEXT TENDER RESPONSE

2 | Understanding the client and how you are going to provide a solution

When responding to a tender document, you need to remember that your response is about your offering to the client. This means that you need to talk less about you. The focus should be on the client, and the benefits they'll get from working with you.

Think about:

- What does the customer want?
- What need or want are they really trying to satisfy?
- What is the main reason my customers buy from me?
- What can I do to match or exceed those expectations?
- What can I do to make sure the customer gets what they want?

After you have highlighted your competitive advantage, the best way to tell your customers about it is to create your unique selling proposition.

3 | Company Synergy

One of things you need to demonstrate to the client, is why you are the best company to work with the Client. And the best way to demonstrate this is through company synergy. Synergy shows you understand your client and demonstrate how you align with their organisation.

If you have the material or the ability to research the client, then you can include the following information:

- The evidence you understand the client's environment and requirements
- Show how you are compatible with the client's values and code of conduct
- If the client is a high profile organisation or government department, provide evidence that your image is consistent with their values and profile

Company synergy is so important because it shows the client how you have interpreted their needs from the documentation. It offers you a platform to describe your products and/or services and how they benefit the client based on their unique requirements.

10 THINGS YOU MUST INCLUDE IN YOUR NEXT TENDER RESPONSE

4 | Capability and Experience

Capability and experience is vital to any tender response you write. It shows the client your skills and experience in delivering the goods and/or services for similar contracts, clients or industry sectors. Your capability and experience is what sets your company apart from your competitors, reinforcing your brand and value proposition.

To demonstrate your capability and experience, you can use things like:

- Case studies
- Testimonials
- Sample emails (in which the client has thanked you for your services)
- Outcomes or savings you have achieved

To be competitive in the tender world, it's crucial you can demonstrate your capability and experience. This is the opportunity to really show that you have the skills, resources and infrastructure to deliver the products or services.

5 | Evidence

Use evidence and proof from past performance and experience, give tangible evidence for your claims and builds the clients confidence in you.

This includes:

- Case studies
- References and testimonials
- Awards
- Third-party endorsements
- Partnerships
- Statistics and facts about your organisation

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6 | Competitive Pricing

Your price. Pricing can be tricky, but if you want to win bids, you need to price keenly. The price is part of your 'value proposition' and shouldn't be tucked away at the end of your document.

Present your price with confidence by linking it to the benefits the client will receive when they hire you. Don't forget to also include any savings they will benefit from.

The pricing model submitted with your tender response represents the value for money the client will receive from your offer.

Remember: the lowest price is not always the winning tender because the client will also need to be comfortable with your capability and credibility.

7 | Social Commitment

Social sustainability and commitment can refer to things like community engagement, philanthropy, volunteerism and other similar ventures. Social sustainability can also be reflected in product responsibility, including product performance, safety and standards.

Many council and government tenders focus on your commitment to supporting local businesses and the local community you operate in. The reality is, it's becoming increasingly harder to win new business if you don't have a presence in the location you are tendering for. With so much competition out there, tenders now have a greater focus on social sustainability and your ability to support your local environment and community.

Think about:
If awarded the contract, what will be the benefits for the local community? You must demonstrate how their organisation will contractually commit to providing employment opportunities and/or education, training, and apprenticeship opportunities in the local community.

10 THINGS YOU MUST INCLUDE IN YOUR NEXT TENDER RESPONSE

8 | Testimonials

Recent testimonials for previous or current contracts. Make sure your testimonials are well written. They should not be too long, but contain all the vital information about what service or product you provided, how you went above and beyond in delivering that service or product, and a strong and clear statement of recommendation.

If you do not have any testimonials, it is worth allocating this specific job to a staff member to focus on or hiring a writer to interview your most valued customers. The value of an excellent testimonial cannot be underestimated.

9| Images and Graphics

Keep in mind that the evaluator will be reading at least half a dozen responses (often many more). If they encounter one that is thoughtfully put together, uses attractive graphics and is easy to read and navigate, it will give your organisation an advantage over one that is not as polished.

You can include before and after photos of your services, photos of products and photos of your offices and warehouses. Remember a picture is often be more effective than writing a short summary or description because it provides a rest opportunity for the reader and, if chosen wisely, will be visually appealing.

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10| Innovation and Value

Innovation and value are essential to any winning tender submission.

Innovation allows you to detail how your products and services are ahead of your competitors, and what your company can uniquely offer the client. You have the scope here to explain your creative or more effective products, processes, services, technologies or ideas, and what value this will bring to the client over the contract term.

Innovation is not just about using technology; it is about using new ideas and new methods.

Think about how your innovation will deliver value such as:

- Create cost-efficiencies over the duration of the contract
- Provide additional value to the existing offer

Whatever results your innovative ideas bring, make sure you spell it out for the client. You'll also need to demonstrate to the client how your business continually adapts its products and services to work with the changing marketplace, advancements in technology and most importantly, industry best practices.

Create a solid value strategy, base your value proposition on your strengths or differentiators:

- What do you do that no one else in your industry does?
- What does everyone do, but you do better, or differently?

Focus your proposal on how it benefits the client. Show your value through story-telling and evidence-based resources.

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Extra Tender Resources

Unsure whether a tender is suitable for your business?

Use my checklist to help you organise the details you need to make a well-informed decision about whether a particular tender opportunity is suitable for your business.

GET IT HERE

Not sure how to format your responses? Check out our templates.

We have put together a huge hub of templates and resources that have been expertly developed and can be used by all businesses to help write and manage your tenders and proposals.

GET IT HERE

Do you get asked to provide policies you don't have?

Do you feel like there are frequently new policies required in your business? Have you got your modern slavery policy or your pandemic policy in place?
We have done it for you.

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Free Resources

Tender Hub

This Facebook Group is about help, advice and support for all things tenders. Let's keep this a positive place where we can all help and support each other to write winning tenders!

ACCESS IT HERE

Blogs

The secrets to tendering.... read my blogs and find thousands of words to help you write your winning tender.

READ IT HERE

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Complete Guide to Tendering

The Complete Guide to Tendering - Australia's first program for businesses teaching how to write their own winning tenders including...

Everything I've used to get a 75% average win and shortlisting rate throughout my career generating several millions in profit for Australian businesses.

The recipe for writing, structuring and submitting winning tenders that all us old pros use.Every tip and trick I use to give you the edge over 95% of your competitors.

My mission was to condense two decades of experience into a done-for-you training program.

So you can increase your chances of landing that life-changing contract or getting your next big project by writing your own tenders.

1. Step-by-step action plans that guide you through the entire writing process to maximise your chances of winning the big projects.
2. Fill-in-the-blank templates for winning tenders that will save you hours AND boost your chances of success
3. Life time access and ongoing support

CLICK HERE TO START WINNING MORE TENDERS

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Good Luck

The key to any winning tender is the attention to detail.

Pay special attention to every aspect of the tender, no matter how small.

Each tender response is unique, but one thing that remains constant is the time, effort and attention to detail required to write a great business proposal.

If you remember this at each phase of the process, you'll already be one step ahead of your competitors.

Good luck in your tender preparation and submission.