



Is Tendering Right For My Business?



1. What are your business goals, and how will tendering help you achieve them?

EXERCISE A: List your business goals and how tendering will help achieve them.

This will help ensure you have realistic expectations of what can be achieved through tendering. The goals mentioned in the blog are just a starting point, but there are lots of other business goals which tendering can help with.

EXAMPLE:

Business Goal 1: Increase revenue by 50% over the next 12 months

Tendering will help us achieve this goal by...

- Opening up a new pool of business opportunities with new Buyers
- Providing higher-value contracts than the ones we currently have
- Offering the opportunity to become a preferred Supplier for a big Buyer

2. What is your business strategy, and how will tendering fit into it?

EXERCISE A: Create a process for deciding whether to respond to a tender.

This will help ensure you take a **strategic approach** to tendering and get a good return on investment by only spending time on opportunities you're likely to win. You can use one of the formats below or create a document/process/checklist with criteria specific to your business.



EXAMPLE FORMAT 1:

If we can't complete these statements concisely and confidently, we won't respond to the tender.

- We are applying for this tender because...
(link to business goals)
- The Buyer's needs are...
(show we understand Buyer's expectations)
- We will meet those needs by...
(how we'll deliver on expectations)
- The Buyer will choose us because...
(define point of difference)

EXAMPLE FORMAT 2:

If we answer 'No' to any of these questions, we won't respond to the tender.

- Does this tender help us achieve our business goals? Yes / No
- Do we clearly understand the Buyer's needs? Yes / No
- Are we confident that we can meet the Buyer's needs? Yes / No
- Do we have a point of difference that sets us apart from our competitors? Yes / No
- Are we confident that we have a strong chance of winning this tender? Yes / No

EXERCISE B: Research tendering opportunities available in your industry.

This will help ensure that tendering is a viable option for your business. You can search for current and closed tenders online (e.g. using our [search function](#) or [tender notification service](#)) and in newspapers, or hire an external company to do market research for you.

EXAMPLE FORMAT:

- Industries we can service: _____
- Areas we can service: _____
- Number of tenders in these industries/areas over last 12 months: _____
- Average value of contracts: _____
- Number of contracts which recur yearly: _____
- Value of contracts which recur yearly: _____
- Buyers who publish the most tenders: _____

EXERCISE C: Research your tendering competitors and do a SWOT analysis.

This will help ensure you know who you're up against, whether you have a good chance of winning against them, and what your point of difference is. Competitor websites and tender outcome information (also called award notices) are a good place to start your research.

EXAMPLE FORMAT:

- Competitor name: _____
- Tender responses in last 12 months: _____
- Tenders won in last 12 months: _____
- Win rate (tender responses ÷ tenders won): _____
- Key Buyer relationships: _____
- Key brand message(s): _____
- Unique selling point(s): _____



EXAMPLE FORMAT:

Strengths

Internal aspects within our control.

- What are we good at?
- What advantages do we have over competitors?
- What valuable resources or assets do we have?

Weaknesses

Internal aspects within our control.

- What could we improve on?
- What do our competitors do better?
- Are we limited by any lack of resources or assets?

Opportunities

External factors out of our control.

- Are there any industry trends we can leverage?
- Are there any regulatory changes or new technology which will benefit us?
- How can we turn our strengths into opportunities?

Threats

External factors out of our control.

- Are there any industry trends that disadvantage us?
- Do any of our competitors pose a direct threat?
- What threats do our weaknesses expose us to?

TIP: You can even use this tool before writing a tender response to identify your strengths and weaknesses in context of the specific requirements of a particular Buyer.

3. Are you aware of the requirements of tendering, and does your business meet them?

EXERCISE A: Gather proof of your experience and expertise.

This will help ensure you have a track-record to show Buyers, which you can quickly and easily draw from when writing a bid response. It will also help you identify any areas where you're lacking experience, so that you can look for contracts to fill those gaps.

EXAMPLE IDEAS:

- Ask previous clients to write you a recommendation letter, describing what it was like working with you and why the project was successful.
- Create a testimonial template for previous clients to fill out, with questions which will prompt positive answers or quotes.
- Ask previous clients to be your referees (where relevant/necessary) and make a list of contact details for them.
- Take pictures of previous work (where relevant, depending on your industry) and keep them in clearly labelled folders on your computer.
- Combine photo evidence with a testimonial to create a case study, including information about how you met the Buyer's needs and why the project was successful.



EXERCISE B: Map out all planned work and projects over the next 12 months.

This will help ensure you have the **resources and capacity** to tender, and help identify busy periods vs. quiet periods where you can tender to get more work. You'll also find out how early you need to start looking for tenders, keeping in mind that the process can take months.

EXAMPLE IDEAS:

- Use a calendar or online project management tool to visually map out upcoming work.
- Use colour-codes or category tags to quickly and easily identify projects, types of work, size of job, status of contract (e.g. confirmed or tentative), or level of urgency.
- Make note of preparation time, start/end dates, resources required (e.g. human resources), related costs etc.

EXERCISE C: Create a tender document library.

This will help ensure you have **key tendering documents organised**, and prevent you from scrambling at the last minute, or being disqualified due to non-compliance. Requirements will change for each tender, but aim to have the basic information quickly and easily accessible.

EXAMPLE IDEAS:

- Download documents for tenders similar to the type you'll be bidding on, and make a list of the types of supporting documents often required.
- Include your proof of experience photos and documents, as mentioned in an earlier exercise.
- Keep all documents in clearly labelled folders on a shared drive that can be easily accessed by anyone involved in the bid-writing process.
- Types of documents you might need are:
 - » *Health and safety management plans and policies*
 - » *Quality assurance plans and policies*
 - » *Environmental management plans and policies*
 - » *Relevant industry certifications, qualifications or memberships*
 - » *Company information like legal name and evidence of liability insurance*
 - » *Organisation charts and CVs for key people*
 - » *Financial models*
 - » *Technical specification sheets*
 - » *Relevant research, surveys, statistics or data*