



US Army Corps
of Engineers

Source Selection in Best Value Contracts “Secrets for Success”

Judith W. Blake

Associate Director for Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization
Headquarters, US Army Corps of Engineers

Engineers on point for the Nation and Armed Forces



US Army Corps
of Engineers

Agenda

- Before the solicitation is issued
- When the solicitation is issued
- Two secrets leading to best-value success
 - Writing the proposal
 - Reviewing the proposal
- A "checklist" for success
- Points of contact



US Army Corps
of Engineers

Before Solicitation - Respond to "Sources Sought"

- Sources sought synopses are government's means of testing the marketplace for potential set-asides
- Sometimes used to determine whether a certain "approach" is feasible
- Sometimes used to determine if new technologies or processes are available
- Respond – with proof you can do the job



US Army Corps
of Engineers

Have Current Information on File



- Registration (CCR)
- <http://www.ccr.gov/>

- Online Representations and Certifications
 - <http://orca.bpn.gov/login.aspx>



US Army Corps
of Engineers

Respond to "Notice of Intent"

- Has the government decided to go "sole source"?
- If so, they will tell you in a FedBizOpps synopsis, including
 - Nature of the work
 - Company they intend to make award to
- If your company can do the job contact the contracting officer immediately
- Be prepared to demonstrate your ability to meet requirements and time frames



US Army Corps
of Engineers

Pre-Solicitation, Review the Synopsis

- Is this job a “fit” for my company?
- Can I honestly say “I will not fail?”
- If not, what is my company lacking to be the “best qualified” to do this job?
- Can I team or joint venture or subcontract to get the “missing element?” into the proposal?
- What risks do I face if I win this job?
- How much is it going to cost (time/money) to prepare this proposal?
- Balance risks/rewards -- is it “worth it”?



US Army Corps
of Engineers

Pre-Solicitation Tips

- Help your customer with “market research”
 - Federal Acquisition Regulation Part 10
 - Federal Acquisition Regulation Part 7
- If a draft RFP is used – read it immediately and offer assistance/suggestions
- Attend pre-solicitation conferences or get results from contracting officer



US Army Corps
of Engineers

When the Solicitation is Issued

- Immediately review the solicitation
- What result does the government want?
- Get proposal team together and find out:
 - What assumptions would we need to make to write this proposal TODAY?
 - What are the most cost-effective ways to achieve the results desired?
 - What are the most time-effective ways to achieve the results desired
 - Are there restrictions in the solicitation that would keep you from doing the job the most cost-effective or time-effective way?
- Ask questions/suggest changes as necessary



US Army Corps
of Engineers

*The **SECRET** to Writing Your Proposal*

- Follow Cheryl Anderson's advice!
- And at every single step of the way use the secret edge that will make you a winner:

What are they

worried about?



US Army Corps
of Engineers

The **SECRET** to Reviewing Your Proposal

- **Relevant** information
- **Compelling** presentation of the facts
- Offer **solutions**
 - Demonstrate how your proposal solves all the “worries”
 - How your company will manage all the risks
- **Support** your assertions:
 - Enough detail to assure the government can tell you understand
 - And that you **WILL DO** what is required
 - Where possible – achieve **MORE** in areas with high “worry factor”



US Army Corps
of Engineers

Checklist for Success


- Know your company and know your partner firms
- Do your homework – pre-solicitation and at solicitation issuance
- Ask the “worry question”
- Provide solutions that will leave evaluators feeling less worried
- Write proposals that include information that is
 - Relevant
 - Compelling
 - Solutions based
 - Supported with facts/details
- Review the proposal
- Prove that you leave satisfied customers wherever you go



US Army Corps
of Engineers

How to Reach the HQ

- Telephone
202-761-8789
- Facsimile
 - 202-761-4609
- E-mail
 - SmallBusiness@HQ02.usace.army.mil
 - judith.w.blake@usace.army.mil
- The Corps of Engineers Web Site
 - www.usace.army.mil
- USACE Small Business Web
 - <http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/hqsb/>



*THE U.S. ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS –
RELEVANT AND READY*



*FEEDBACK?
QUESTIONS?*