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Environmental commitment is fast becoming a key to successful tendering

Social awareness amongst bidders for tendered opportunities is fast becoming a key consideration when buying decisions need to be made between suppliers of apparent equal standing. As part of that social awareness, ensuring that your business has relevant environmental policies and action plans in place certainly helps your potential of standing above the pack, and unlike many other aspects of the supplier accreditation process, it need not require volumes of detail and endless project work and expense to “tick the box”.

There are many aspects to environment awareness and sustainability and in many cases the simplest ideas are the ones that give the most return.

Why? Because by their very nature, they are simple and so people across your business adopt them with ease. In many cases a surprising White Knight may appear from your midst and before you know it you are not only able to identify the things you are doing but be able to point to those all important quantifiable successes that buyers love.

As with all tendering processes, you don't want the buyer to read your response to the environmental section and think “so what?” Whilst responses to these questions should convince those on the panel that “wherever possible we manage our business and working practices in a manner that supports sustainability and the long term protection of the environment” to say that you no longer use incandescent light bulbs, use electrical appliances with high levels of energy efficiency, use recycled paper and printer cartridges and all drive fuel efficient cars are a great start, but maybe they are no longer good enough.

Think about having the MD or CEO signing the policy and having all employees do the same. Collate data on just how much you have saved or recycled and make sure that you promote it both internally and externally. Consider if a carbon off setting scheme might work for you and make sure you publicise the fact that you are doing these things. Then think about your industry and consider what specific things might be available to you to demonstrate your commitment.

Finally, when completing a tender submission, do not forget to find out who will be on the buying panel with an environmental viewpoint and what the wider environmental objectives of the buying organisation are. Only by doing this can you ensure that you are broadly in line with their ideals and are able to communicate about the elements that are important to them.

Tendering is all about answering the question and if you do not know who is asking the question then how will you know what the question is really driving at? Whether it is asking about your finances, your risk management processes, your reference clients or the environment, the rules of tendering, and as such winning sales via tendering are the same; prove that you not only understand the issue but in solving it, add value.

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