

# Using RFPs to Build Your Brand

A practical approach for SMEs



Presented by  
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# About EMC<sup>3</sup>

**Culture. Collections. Coaching. Powered by Purpose™**

- Strategy, governance, and planning
- Public and cultural sector focus
- Right-sized, practical approaches



# What This Session Is (and Isn't)



## **Not...**

How to win every bid.



## **Not...**

Legal or technical procurement training.



## **Reputation Building**

How RFPs build your brand and reputation.



## **Sustainable Participation**

How to participate in RFP ecosystem sustainably.



## **Decision-Making Support**

How to make better strategic decisions over time.

# Recent Case

The procurement was cancelled.

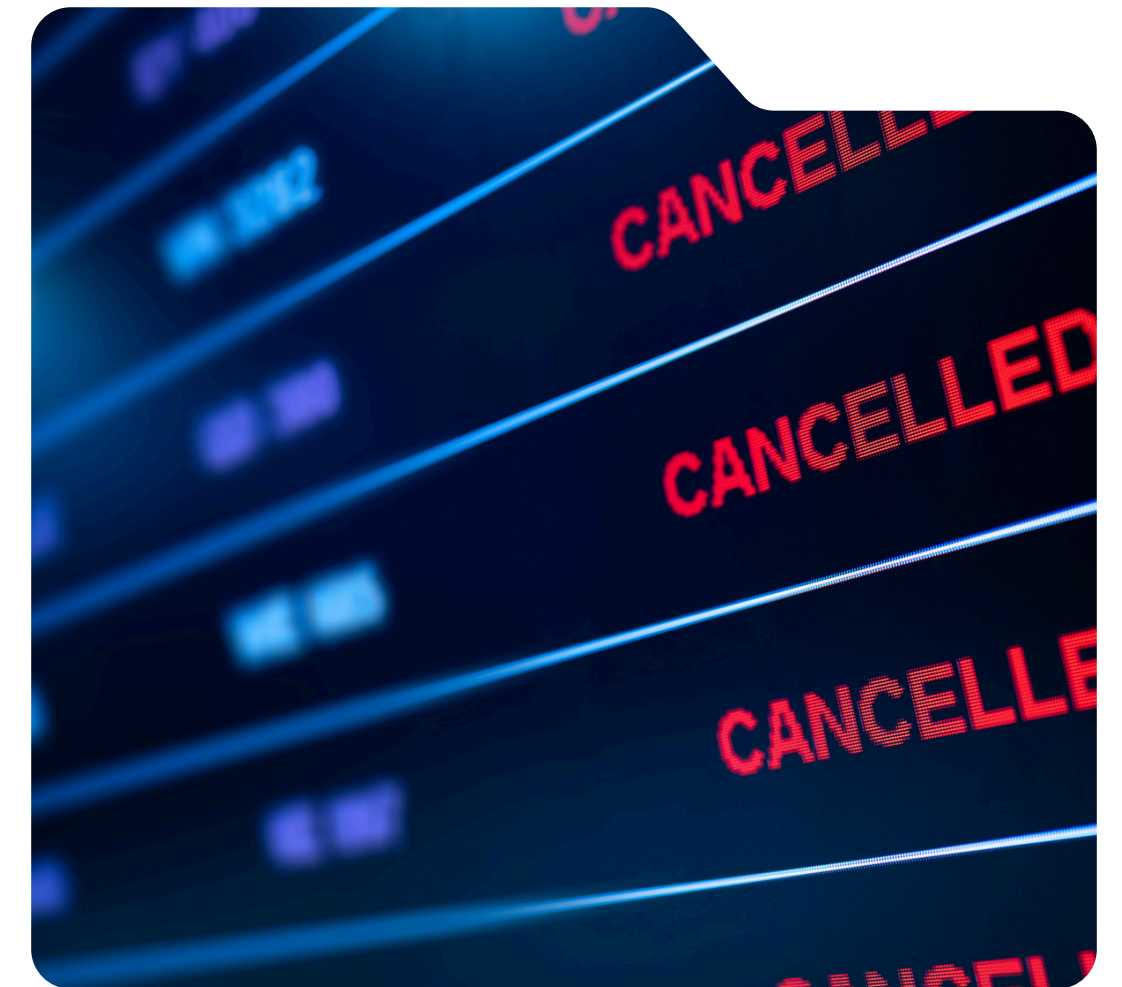
Was it a waste?



Time Invested



Team Assembled



No Outcome

# Procurement is not a transaction

It is a system with

- Signals
- Relationships
- Risk Decisions



# **RFPs as Brand Touchpoints**

# What Buyers Actually See Beyond Price:



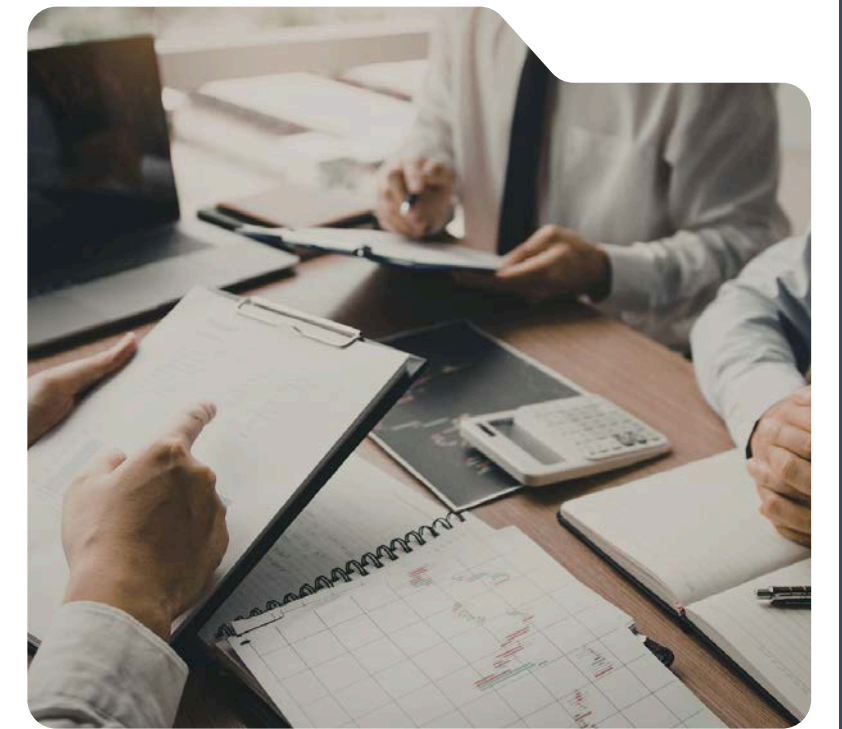
Clarity



Understanding



Fit



Professionalism

# Common Mistakes



Overpromising



Overscoping



Copy-Paste Responses



Ignoring Tone

# Key Takeaway

Every bid builds your reputation: Win or Lose



# **Right-Sizing Your Effort**

# The Real Risk

**Over-investing in the wrong bids**



Time



Energy



Opportunity Cost

# Right-Sizing

 **Not every bid deserves full effort.**

 **Fit**

Is this opportunity truly aligned with your business?

 **Resources**

Do we truly have the capacity to develop this bid? Service it if we win it?

 **Purpose**

Are we clear on the purpose of this bid?

# Decision Framework

**Strong Fit**



**Pursue**

**Unclear Fit**



**Light Effort**

**Poor Fit**



**Decline**

# **Strategic Differentiation**

# What Differentiation is Not



Not bigger



Not more words



Not more promises

# What Works



Clear understanding of  
the problem



Realistic Scope



Appropriate Team



Honest Capacity

# Simple Example Response



## Weak:

We are a full-service firm that can address all of your current issues.



## Stronger:

Here's what we do well, the specific resources we can access and why we're a great fit.

# Not Every Bid is About Winning

Sometimes it's about:



Learning Fit



Building Visibility



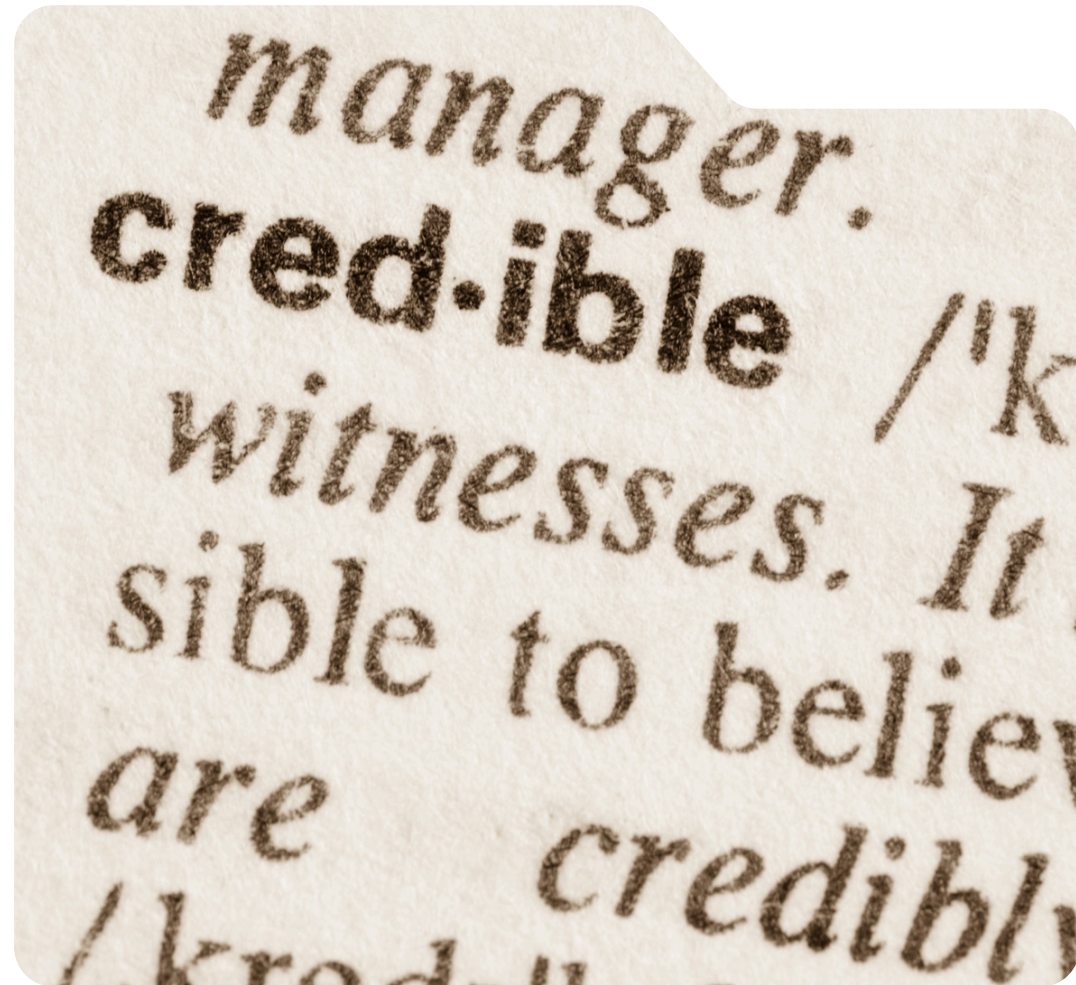
Practicing Process

# **Final Thoughts**

# Better Decisions > More Bids



Protect Capacity



Build Credibility



Learn Over Time

# Mock Scenario

## Details

A municipality is seeking a contractor to:

- Repair interior drywall and repaint
- Fix minor flooring damage
- Complete work within 6 weeks
- Keep the building partially open during repairs

## Decision Factors

- Budget is not disclosed
- Mandatory site visit
- Scoring includes: price, experience, timeline

## Your Business

- Small local crew (5 people)
- Strong drywall + painting experience
- Limited experience working in an occupied building

# Mock Scenario

## Details

A municipality is seeking a contractor to:

- Repair interior drywall and repaint
- Fix minor flooring damage
- Complete work within 6 weeks
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New Information:

- The last contractor missed deadlines
- The City is risk-sensitive
- The contractor will need all resources to have Police Information Checks

## Decision Factors

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- Mandatory site visit
- Scoring includes: price, experience, timeline

## Your Business

- Small local crew (5 people)
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**Questions?**

# Contact Us



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