

Make It Personal

Most bids focus tightly on what customers say they need. Great bids focus on what the customer actually wants as well.

MatchPoint helps organisations win bids, proposals and tenders. We harvest and build best practice, and provide our clients with expert resources, skills coaching and more effective ways to win. This tip will help make winning easier.

If you offered to sell me a 3 year old car for a good price that would get me from A to B, I could weigh up the value against my need for the car. But if you then told me it was a Lexus, that everyone would admire me, and it might help me get membership at the local golf club – I might start to really want it!

Shallow maybe, but a powerful pointer for how to spice up a bid.

When an organisation buys something, it has to satisfy a need for the least possible price. If you can give it more - or the same for less money - you stand a pretty good chance. So most bids focus on two things: the product or service, and the cost. We offer something that's bigger, faster, safer – or cheaper. It's functional, it does the job better, and it saves you cold hard cash. A powerful proposition - providing your product really is different or you are willing to give away big discounts. But there's more you can offer the customer. And sometimes much more.

People make purchase decisions, organisations don't. And people WANT things. They want a secure job, they want to be well thought of, and they want to have a strong and bright future. If you can find a way to offer these things, the people making the decisions will start to want what you are selling. And wanting something for yourself is so much more compelling than needing something for the organisation. The really good news is that almost any product or service can offer these things. Providing you know your decision maker. The key is to look beyond superior function or keener price. Look to deliver personal gain as well.

Personal Gain - Here are some ways it can work:

- **Information is power.** Share some of your product or industry knowledge on a regular basis
- **Making life easier.** Build in extra checks, guarantees and contingencies for delivering against the contract – it makes your client's job easier and less stressful
- **Recognition and status turns many heads.** Offer to put in joint submissions for industry awards and conferences
- **Making friends and influencing people.** Invite them to industry functions and introduce them to your business network
- **Future opportunities.** Keep them alert to changes and opportunities that you can see happening in your customer base.

Do this well and you become much more than a supplier. Ultimately, you can be seen to be a source of personal status, confidence, job security, influence and career prospects – a very powerful cocktail indeed. And the really, really good news is that all this runs directly parallel to the wider business objectives those same decision makers should be pursuing for their own organisation. They should be pursuing up to date product and industry intelligence. They should be chasing opportunities for industry profile and positive publicity. They should be securing low risk contracts, and they should be building industry networks and influence. It works all ways. Win – win – win.



You can't overtly focus on personal benefit in a written bid. But you can allude to it instead. And you should make sure the decision makers know what they stand to win when they make a smart purchase decision to benefit their organisation. The best relationship managers know this, and continually search for ways to create personal wins from the corporate benefits they offer their target customers. Long before the bid goes in.

Most bids come in fairly close to each other. You need something extra to make the difference. Sell the corporate benefits, make sure they see the personal gain. Make them want it. Most purchase decisions are based on emotion and justified by logic – not the other way round.

Find out what they want. And then give it to them. **Make it personal.**