

Aims & Objectives – Tips and Tricks



Bid Writing Glossary of Terms

By Alison Reeves

Have you ever been talking to someone about bid writing and felt afraid to ask what all those terms mean that they use? Well here are some of the common ones for you to learn:

Beauty parade	Formal presentation to a client, usually after being short-listed when you have submitted your bid document. This is your last chance to influence the client's decision.
EOI	Expression of Interest. Suppliers express their interest in tendering for the contract.
e-Tendering	The procurement process simply conducted online, ie supplier registration/expression of interest, contract download, submission of bid document, evaluation of tenders. May or may not involve e-auctions.
Framework Agreement	An arrangement between buyer and supplier where both parties agree the terms of future dealings between them, without committing to or guaranteeing any specific purchase or contract.
Goods	Physical products provided by a supplier, eg stationery, chairs, construction materials, IT equipment.
ITT	Invitation to Tender. The client invites short-listed suppliers to tender their services through a formal, written document that is evaluated against specific criteria (see KPI).
Incumbent Supplier	The organisation who is currently supplying this service or a similar one.
KPI	Key Performance Indicator. Important (set of) measures by which the client will assess your bid (and your performance in fulfilling the contract).
Low-ball	Price the contract very low in order to win the work (sometimes at a loss).
Master vendor	Supplier who manages the project using other (sub-) suppliers and who is accountable to the end-client for the overall performance of the contract.

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Mind-map	Non-linear technique for mapping information using words, pictures, shapes and colours. Useful for capturing the output of brainstorming sessions and for creating a structure to a document. Developed by Tony ('lateral thinking') Buzan.
MSP	Managed Service Provider.
NDA	Non-Disclosure Agreement.
PQQ	Pre-Qualification Questionnaire. First hurdle in the 'Restricted' tender procedure used by public sector bodies to short-list eligible suppliers. Suppliers are then invited to submit a formal tender document.
Procurement	The term used to describe how a company or contracting authority buys or agrees contracts for goods, works and services.
PSA	Preferred Supplier Agreement.
PSL	Preferred Supplier List.
RFI	Request for Information. A preliminary step in the procurement process, where the client requests general information from suppliers about their organisation.
RFP	Request for Proposal.
RFT	Request for Tender.
Services	Intangible products, eg accounting, consulting, design, IT, staff recruitment.
SLA	Service Level Agreement.
Story board	A technique for outlining the contents of each section of the tender document (see mind-map).
Sustainable development	Sometimes defined as 'meeting the needs of the current generation without compromising the life-quality of later generations'.

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Tender	To submit or offer a bid to supply the goods/services specified in the contract by the client.
Tier 1 supplier	An organisation at the top of the supply chain supplying goods or services directly to the client; also known as the 'main contractor'.
Works	Usually relates to construction contracts.

Keep checking back because I am going to expand this as I think of new terms to add!