

Bid Protest As A BD Tool?

If you didn't get, or haven't read, last week's *Washington Business Journal* you didn't read about the increase in bid protests. It seems that what was once a big no-no for contractors is now an acceptable way of winning business. In fact, some quick thinking opportunists are already positioning themselves to take advantage of the new protest industry. Seems that a DC-based law firm has a seminar to offer; *How To Keep The Deals You Win And Get The Ones You Lose*.

I believe this is a desperate attempt to first, get business in financially tuff times and second, get unearned business. Unearned business, business that someone else did all the work to win. I have no doubt that there are legitimate protests but turning the process into a BD tool is only a temporary solution. New contracting rules, increased use of A-76 justifications, few contracts, more competition and the potential for a taxpayer revolt against government waste will just exacerbate the problem. So what do you do?

The answer isn't in trying to face tomorrow with a business as usual attitude or try to survive by protesting other people's wins. Protect yourself against protest by providing the review team with a proposal that can be used to substantiate and defend the award decision. Differentiate yourself in real, unambiguous terms. What is your unique selling position? What separates you from all the column fodder? If you and all of your employees don't know the answers that pass the realism test it's time to go down the pyramid with a chainsaw starting at the top. Transform your organization into one that can be differentiated. Robert Epstein, co-founder of Sybase, said "If you could get all of the people in your organization rowing in the same direction, you could dominate any industry, any market against any competition."

Don't be reduced to column fodder, don't rely on bid protests for survival:

- ❖ Instill your values
- ❖ Make sure everyone knows how they contribute to corporate health
- ❖ Shorten decision time
- ❖ Streamline processes and procedures
- ❖ Know your business, know your competition and know your customers

Build business because of business.

Dan Light Consulting works with services contractors and systems integrators who struggle with controlling cost and the realization that the business isn't reaching its full potential. Our clients have experienced a 95% reduction in the cost of under performing business systems and increases in new business win rates to above 80%.

Contact Dan Light Consulting today for a no obligation discussion of how we may benefit you.

[Dan Light Consulting](http://danlightdirect.com)
dan@danlightdirect.com • (540)219-0001