



WINNING WITH PRIME CONTRACTORS

Latest Trends – Print, Electronic/Social Media, & Alternative Methods and Venues to Market Your Company

METROPOLITAN
SEWER DISTRICT
of greater
CINCINNATI





AGENDA

Part I

- Networking
- Welcome
- Role Play
- Trends, Social Media and Marketing
- Break

Part II

- Capability Statements

Prime Contractors for MSD Contracts Want SBEs to Win!

- SBEs are engaged as subcontractors for the following reasons:
 - Add capacity to trades/skills they self perform
 - Add trades/skills they do not self-perform
 - Reduce costs and/or improve operational efficiencies
 - Meet inclusion goals
- Subcontracting opportunities differ by contract
- SBEs with expert skills, relevant experience, certifications/registrations and financial strength are preferred for subcontracting opportunities

Prime Contractors for MSD Contracts Want SBEs to Win!

- Option to work with SBEs to complete a variety public and private projects is important
- Sometimes difficult for key personnel/project managers to identify and review the capabilities of registered SBEs
- Contacting and communicating with SBEs can be a challenge
- Networking and establishing relationships with SBEs is a two way street
 - Become knowledgeable about the prime contractors
 - Speak the industry language!

Develop Your Technical Skills for the BIG Win with MSD!

- Ensure that your firm offers state of the art, innovative and efficient solutions
 - Maintain skills, equipment, services, certifications, licenses
 - Become a subject matter expert
 - Re-brand your product offering to penetrate new markets
 - Deliver **“Big Ideas”**
 - Delight your customers
 - Produce meticulous and detail reporting
 - Do not offer inept client service or erratic support on the day-to-day



Develop Your Technical Skills for the BIG Win with MSD!

- Join relevant industry groups and professional associations
- Set Google alerts for relevant industry topics
- Take advantage of trainings, certifications, classes and webinars
- Attend trade shows and conferences
- Participate in job shadowing and mentoring programs
- Volunteer with non-profits, small businesses, government agencies or industry groups

Populate Public Databases for the BIG Win with MSD!

- Routinely google your company, key personnel and contractors
- Where are you listed: (Update or Delete)
 - D&B, CCR, state and local government listings
 - NMSDC, WBENC, Customer, Industry and Supplier Databases
 - Chambers of Commerce, BBB, CVB, Yellow/White Pages
 - Personal interest groups, universities and fraternal organizations
 - Social Media Sites

Populate Public Databases for the BIG Win with MSD!

- Use key words that are relevant to viewers:
 - Research RFPs and interview customers
 - Know your niche – what makes you special?
 - Be mindful of critical search criteria
 - Cincinnati – Blue Ash – Hamilton County – NKY – SW Ohio
 - The Voice of Your Customer – The Voice of My Customer
 - MBE – SBE – DBE – WBE – MWBE – BBB
 - Customer Satisfaction – Focus Groups

Prepare Your Capability Statement for the BIG Win with MSD!

- Use industry language, keywords and NAICS, NGIP and SIC codes
- Focus on those areas of alignment with MSD needs
- Include all skills, equipment, services, certifications and licenses
- Highlight clients and industry experiences as a prime and/or subcontractor
- List credit cards your company accepts
- Illustrate strong financial standing



Prepare Your Capability Statement for the BIG Win with MSD!

- Incorporate graphics, bullet points and columns for easy viewing
- Provide biographies and contact information for key personnel
- Convert file to searchable PDF format and be mindful of file size
- Name and tag the document accordingly
- Consider developing an audio or video of your capabilities to compliment your printed materials
- Be sure that document is visible when printed in black and white



Prepare Your Website for the BIG Win with MSD!

- Ensure that content is current and grammatically correct
- Use industry language, codes and keywords to draft content
- Include all skills, equipment, services, certifications and licenses
- Highlight industry experiences as a prime and/or subcontractor with detailed accomplishments
- List credit cards your company accepts
- Incorporate contact info and capability statements in template

Prepare Your Website for the BIG Win with MSD!

- Invest in quality images, video and audio files and post accordingly
- Link your blogs and social media profiles to your website
- Provide biographies, contact information and LinkedIn profiles for key personnel
- Remove broken links, invalid information and large files
- If possible, hire an expert!
 - Review Google Tools and Keywords
 - Tag files accordingly and add visitor tracking to your website
 - Ensure that your website is mobile friendly

Market Your Company for the BIG Win with MSD!

- Launch a marketing campaign
 - Advertising, Direct Mail, Promotion, Sponsorships
- Submit press releases to the media
- Write articles, opinions and letters to the editor about your industry
- Participate in awards and recognition programs
- Solicit speaking engagements
- Purchase and distribute group tickets for local events
- Increase philanthropic initiatives



Prepare Your Communications for the BIG Win with MSD!

- **Telephone**

- Ensure that the capacity of your system exceeds the needs of your business
- Be mindful of “difficult to use” automated attendants
- Effectively link landlines, voice mail, text messages and cell phones
- Create a professional environment for the person receiving calls
- Manage voice mail recordings and messages

Prepare Your Communications for the BIG Win with MSD!

- Email
 - Establish business email accounts for all staff
 - Ensure that the capacity of your account exceeds the needs of your business
 - Be mindful of spam filters and automated responses
 - Effectively manage email, e-faxes, text messages and social media messages
 - Use effective email subject lines, file sizes and file names
 - Write professional responses at appropriate skill and language level
 - Send corrupt free files using current software formats
 - Minimize the number of attachments
 - Be sure to acknowledge communication from key stakeholders in the MSD contracting process

Secure a BIG Win with MSD!

- Follow planned and current MSD contract opportunities (www.msdbg.org)
- Locate copies of relevant sections of bid documents to identify specific opportunities
 - Some primes may be willing share copies of relevant sections of bid documents upon request
- Participate in MSD Matchmaker Sessions as a presenter
- Identify influencers in the decision making process
 - Economic Buyer, Technical Buyer, User Buyer and Coach

Secure a BIG Win with MSD!

- Submit solicited or unsolicited proposals to prime contractors bidding on each project
- Create an efficient proposal process that creates brand awareness
- Ask for feedback from prime contractors
- Remember, not all attempts will result in a contract. However, contracts are the result of building relationship over time.



Why Social Media Is Important to the BIG Win!

- Research industries, companies and key personnel
- Identify business opportunities
- Enhance your online presence
- Illustrate your experiences, expertise and affiliations

Why Social Media Is Important to the BIG Win!

- LinkedIn
 - Develop key word rich profiles with current contact information
 - Identify decision makers and influencers in the bidding process
 - Make connections
 - Join industry related, fraternal and alumni groups
 - Follow target companies and non-profit organizations
 - Participate in the conversation
 - Do not link to Twitter



Why Social Media Is Important to the BIG Win!

- Twitter
 - Follow media, companies, associations, non-profits and experts in your industry
 - Use search functionality to gather needed information
- Facebook
 - Fan media, companies, associations, non-profits and experts in your industry
 - Link to LinkedIn profile
 - Provide contact information
 - Participate in the conversation



Winning with Prime Contractors

Q & A

BREAK

Winning with Prime Contractors

How to Write a Your Business Capability Statement For
Your Target Audience—Metropolitan Sewer District of
Greater Cincinnati (MSD)

May 12, 2011

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What is a Capability Statement?

- 1 to 2 page document.
- Informs your customers of your capabilities.
- Highlights:
 - the product(s) and/or service(s) your business offers; and
 - Your “business” specific capabilities
 - For this specific request, the business specific capabilities should **focus on those areas of alignment with MSD needs**, i.e., engineering related work, architectural, sewer design, sewer repair, concrete, and supplier of paper-ink cartridges-safety items. These are only examples. To learn more about MSD visit www.msdbg.org.

Think of it as: *A Resume for your Business.*

Why Have a Capability Statement?

- Introduction or prospectus.
- Required by some agencies.
- Client can see at a glance.
- Not exclusive to government contracting.
- Targeted to your audience.

Sounds like a great idea . . .

- Stick to the facts. Embellishment could be detrimental to your business.
- What do your existing customers need to know to do more business with you?
- What do prospective customers need to become your customers?
- There are as many Capability Statements as there are Companies.
- Your Capability Statement should reflect your business and its specific capabilities.

Let's Get Started

- Open up Microsoft Word.
- Click New.
- Click Flyer.
- Click Marketing Flyer.
- Select a template.

Company Narrative

- Provide a Narrative Description of your Company, include:
 - A brief History.
 - A list of the Product(s) and/or Service(s) you offer.
 - Keep it short and succinct.
 - For example-“Superior Widget Company has been manufacturing and supplying high quality precision manufactured widgets to the wholesale and retail markets for over 50 years. Throughout this period, we have prided ourselves on the quality of our product and knowledge and helpfulness of our staff.
- Like your “elevator speech,” This statement should be able to make an initial impression within 60 seconds. Don’t ramble on.

Key Personnel

- Provide Names and Brief Biographical information on:
 - Owner/President/Principal.
 - Name(s) & Brief Biographical Information.
 - Relevant experience.
 - Training & Education.
 - Qualifications (Licenses, Certifications, Security Clearances etc.).
 - Other Key Personnel.

Company Contact Information

- Main Physical Location.
- Mailing Address.
- Telephone Number.
- Fax Number.
- Email.
- Website.
- Any Branch Locations.

Remember to update as soon as information is changed. A potential partner or government agency cannot reach you if the contact information is no longer valid. This happens more often than you might think.

Company-Specific Information

- Company Information.
- Company's DUNS Number. (Dun & Bradstreet Classification Number)
- CAGE Code. (Commercial and Government Entity Code)
- Company's Corporate Structure.
- List of the types of credit cards that your company accepts, be sure to state that you accept **government purchase cards if this is the case (MSD uses a P-Card)**.
- Does it hold a SBA 8(a) certification from the federal Small Business Administration or City of Cincinnati SBE certification? (Any certification currently recognized by MSD) ; and finally
- List of all applicable licenses, professional certifications, awards, recognitions or bonding held by your company.

Items That Should Be Excluded

- Employer Identification Number.
- Social Security Account Number.
- Bank account information.
- Insurance information.

Like Personal Identity Theft, Identity Theft of Business does exist.

Products and/or Services

- Provide a list of the Products and/or Services your company offers.
- *Applicable North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) Code(s) with NAICS Heading Description.*
- *Other SIC, NGIP codes are still used.*
- *Use Bullet Points & Concise Language.*
- *Special Facilities, Equipment & Capabilities.*

Experience

- List 2 to 3 Major Current and Past Project Jobs.
 - Successfully Performed.
 - Similar to type of Business you Want to Do!
 - *Ex. Superior Widgets designed, manufactured, calibrated and delivered 55 dozen custom Widgets to XYZ Company of Montpelier, VT in less than 45 calendar days (2007).*
 - *Superior Widgets provides stand-by Widget Support and Maintenance to the U.S. Coast Guard, Southwest Harbor, ME (1998 —present).*
 - *Del Rio Condos , 224 Unit Condo Complex.*
 - *Smith Mechanicals, \$300K lighting control contract.*

Client List

- List Clients (Governmental and Private) to whom you have provided Products and/or Services.

Clients:

- *Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati.*
- *Cincinnati Public Schools.*
- *Duke Energy.*
- *Proctor and Gamble Company.*
- *City of Cincinnati, Department of Transportation and Engineering.*
- *Fifth Third Bank, Cincinnati OH.*
- *Kokosing Construction Company, Cincinnati OH.*
- It may not be appropriate for every company to provide a client list; dependent on nature of business.

Putting it All Together

- Think “Business Resume”.
- One page, Front and Back.
- Try 2 Columns Per Page (this allows for ease of reading).
- Microsoft Word—Flyers/Newsletter templates are a great place to begin.
- Include Company Logo (If you do not have a logo, do not quickly make one up. Logos should have specific meaning for your company and take time to develop.)
- Arrange Text to Fit.
- Pare Down as Necessary.
- Proof, proof & proof again.
- Convert to PDF for security & ease of e-distribution.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Resist the temptation to share stories of woe.
- Contracting Officers should NOT hear stories about your past struggles.
- Remember, being negative is a sure way to fail.

End Result

- A great Marketing Tool for your Business.
- A clearer understanding of your business — makes selling your business easier.
- ID some “holes” to fill in your capabilities?
 - Troubleshoot, Corrective Action Plan.
- Help you Articulate What your Company does —and does best! —Your “Elevator Speech”.
- Helps you to fill-in on-Line Capability forms requested by Large Prime Contractors & some Government Agencies.

Final Words

- Every company is different.
- Every element of information identified in this presentation is not applicable for every company. Use only those elements for your business.
- Use different variations of your capability statements for different audience. The audience for this capability statement is MSD.

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Q & A