

**TOP TIPS for Procurement Success (from the Buyers)**  
**(from the Panel Discussion held in Perth on 23 August 2016)**

Discussion lead by **Heath Nelson (FMG)**, **Peter Donovan (WA Dept of Aboriginal Affairs)** and **Keva Maher (WA Dept of Finance)**

- **Focus on your speciality and what you are good at:** Don't say you're good at everything (unless you really are). Focus on where your expertise lies and build your business and reputation from that.
- **Start small and take up all opportunities in your speciality field even if it is for a smaller project than you would like:** Once you prove yourself on small projects, you are more likely to be considered for and successfully deliver larger ones.
- **Register on Australian Business Directory WA (ABDWA), Supply Nation, Tenders WA and ABDWA Facebook page:** The more websites you are registered on, the more exposure you will receive.
- **Consider your profile on ABDWA, Supply Nation and any other directories you may be registered with as a marketing tool:** Put as much detail about your company as you can, with examples of experience and past successes. Keep your profile up to date. People really do look at it!
- **Ask for Feedback:** If you were unsuccessful in a tender bid, contact the tender manager and ask for feedback on where you could improve your tender document next time. Even if you are successful, seeking feedback is a great way to make sure you are ahead of your competitors at the tender renewal.
- **If there is a Procurement Briefing, it is crucial to attend the briefing, even if it is not mandatory:** This is an opportunity to meet the person who will be awarding the tender, network with potential JV partners or sub-contractors and see who your competition is!
- **Be proactive in contacting the people who make procurement decisions:** At private companies, that may be the procurement or contracts manager. Most contact details can be googled. The State Supply Commission website lists the name of the Purchasing officers and contract managers. Use those contact details. In Government, procurement officers can directly engage a registered Aboriginal business without having to competitively tender or send out a quote to multiple suppliers. Leverage off existing contacts you have and pro-actively contract manage.
- **Use the search function of TendersWA to your advantage:** Set up your email notification on TendersWA to be notified of tenders that are of particular interest to you. Target relevant contracts awarded that are expiring to determine whether there is an opportunity be get directly engaged or invited to quote.
- **Ask for help:** If you find the Tender process confusing or just need some advice on tender requirements, contact the Small Business Development Corporation WA (a government sponsored agency). They offer lots of business skills workshops and advisory services for free or low fees. The Department of Finance offers a new to Quotes and Tendering Seminar for free for all businesses to attend. The next Seminar will be in November 2016.
- **FINALLY: DELIVER DELIVER DELIVER!:** Deliver quality services or products and be competitive. Price correctly to ensure you can sustain the service or product offering for the term of the contract.