

The Training Room

Challenge: Daryl Alexander and Associates is a successful Executive Recruitment firm, specialising in the healthcare industry. With offices in Sydney, Melbourne and Associates in Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Singapore and London, they are positioned to provide their clients a national and international solution and therefore compete with much larger providers. The Managing Director, Dr Amanda Reid mentioned in our initial telephone conversation that the organisation, although growing, was missing out on opportunities when they were called upon to tender for business. She believed this may be something to do with the tender documents that were submitted. Tenders were prepared in house and Amanda was looking for some advice on how to prepare them.

Process: The Recruitment Training Company offered a no-obligation, free review of a recently submitted unsuccessful tender document. All information submitted to us was of course kept confidential and once the review was complete, we emailed a detailed report to Amanda.

Reviewing the document, we found a number of themes common to many recruitment agencies when preparing responses internally.

When preparing a tender response, keep in mind that a number of individuals, all with differing needs will be reviewing your response. At a minimum, you need to be aware of the following influences that are likely to make up the review panel:

1. Economic buyer – this person signs the

contract to be entered into. He/she is interested in the benefits of partnering with your organisation. He/she wants to be reassured that the right decision has been made.

2. Technical buyer – this individual is interested in compliance. Normally a procurement officer, he/she will review your document to ensure that you have complied with all instructions and you have met the minimum criteria. This is normally the first screen for your document.
3. User buyer – those individuals that will use your service on a day to day basis. They are interested in value for money, quality of service and the relationships that they already have in place being protected.

Many recruitment companies have a couple of great relationships within the organisation and write the tender document with those individuals in mind. They leave out important differentiators because they assume their clients know what they are. You must prepare your response with all the buying influences in mind. Remember that it is likely that 50% of the panel members know nothing about you or the great relationship you have with someone else within the organisation.

In addition, respondents need to remember that a proposal/tender response is the ultimate sales document; utilise the opportunity to really “sell” your organisation. When mentioning features, add benefits to them and highlight your differentiators as often as you can. Remind the client why they should choose you.

Another tip, taking into account the

different personalities evaluating your response is to provide flowcharts in addition to words when describing processes within your organisation. This assists those that are more “visual” to understand the flow within your organisation.

The quality question is always one of the most difficult to answer if you do not have formal accreditation. Your client is normally looking for a description of some sort of system that you have in place to provide a consistent service to them. You may have an internal manual that sets out the process you follow when a client gives you a job brief or you may provide a week of induction to new staff when they join your organisation and teach them the process you follow. These are all things that you should tell the client about in your response. Discuss how important quality is to your organisation and how that philosophy benefits your clients.

In Summary:

1. Answer each question keeping in mind all the buying influences and what they may be looking for.
2. Use flowcharts as well as words when appropriate.
3. Your tender is a sales document – prepare your response accordingly.
4. Address the quality question from the client’s perspective, not yours. Assure the client that you have policies and procedures in place to provide them with a consistent, high quality service.

What the client said:

“I think it’s often very easy to lose sight of the fact that you’re not necessarily tendering to the people that know your company and its standard of service just because you already supply to them.

“I was really impressed with advice Gaynor and The Recruitment Training Company gave. We’ve now moved forward from this preliminary work and will continue to use their service to help us tender in the future.”

Amanda Reid, Daryl Alexander & Associates.

Send your training issues to The Recruitment Training Company and Recruitment EXTRA to benefit from a complimentary assessment and case study in “The Training Room”.

Gaynor Lowndes

