

*This document is part of a series of Fit To Bid® guidelines, providing invaluable information to help SMEs improve their tender responses and increase their chances of success. Can also be used as a reference during the tender preparation process and as a learning resource for SMEs who are new to tendering.*

## Tips for successful tender responses

1. **Understand the requirements:** make sure you fully understand what is being asked for in the tender. Read all documentation carefully and make sure your response addresses all points.
2. **Be clear and concise:** your response should be easy to understand. Avoid jargon and keep your sentences short and to the point.
3. **Provide evidence:** wherever possible, provide evidence to back up your claims. This could be in the form of case studies, testimonials, or data.
4. **Focus on value, not just price:** while price is important, it's not the only factor that's considered in a tender evaluation. Make sure you highlight the value your company can bring.
5. **Follow instructions:** each tender will have its own set of instructions and requirements. Make sure you follow these exactly. This includes document formatting and submission deadlines.
6. **Ask questions:** if anything is unclear, don't be afraid to ask for clarification. It's better to ask a question than to make an incorrect assumption.
7. **Proofread:** before you submit your tender, make sure you proofread it carefully. Spelling and grammar mistakes can create a bad impression.
8. **Be professional:** your tender response reflects your company. Make sure it's professional, and therefore, displays your company in the best possible light.

Remember, each tender is unique, so it's important to tailor your response to the specific requirements of each one.

## Common mistakes that SMEs often make in their tender submissions

1. **Not reading the ITT document carefully:** can lead to missing out on important details and requirements. It's crucial to read entire ITT thoroughly to understand what is being asked for.
2. **Ignoring the evaluation criteria:** the evaluation criteria is a guide to what the buyer considers important. Ignoring this can result in a response that doesn't align with the buyer's needs.
3. **Poor presentation:** a poorly presented tender can create a negative impression. It's important to ensure that the tender is well-structured, clear, and free of errors.
4. **Incomplete responses:** missing out on answering some parts of the tender can lead to disqualification. It's important to answer all questions and provide all requested information.
5. **Late submissions:** tenders have strict deadlines. Submitting late can result in disqualification.
6. **Focusing only on price:** while price is an important factor, it's not the only thing that buyers consider. It's important to also focus on the value that your company can provide.
7. **Not providing evidence:** claims made in the tender should be backed up with evidence. This could be in the form of case studies, testimonials, or data.
8. **Not asking questions:** if anything is unclear, it's important to ask for clarification. Making assumptions can lead to misunderstandings and mistakes.

Avoiding these common mistakes can increase the chances of a successful tender submission. It's always a good idea to review the tender submission to ensure that it avoids these pitfalls. Good luck!