

## Tenders and fraudulent documents

*By Werner van Rooyen, Director of HowToTender (Pty) Ltd which specializes in tender consulting and tender training.*

We had the privilege to attend a briefing session of the National Department of Health the other day. These briefing sessions are always special, specifically those for the supply of pharmaceutical products. These products are very specialized and only companies that have the correct credentials can respond to these tenders. What this mean is that if you are not in the pharmaceutical industry and you do not have the correct licencing for your products then you waste your time attending the briefing session and responding to the tender.

Just like with any other tenders there are certain documents that you need to submit with your tender, for example Tax Compliance and B-BBEE certificates or affidavits, but together with these documents there are other compulsory documents like a licence to manufacture medicines and a Medicines Registration certificate. You might think that these documents would be standard issue for these companies and that would all be genuine. But it is not.

We were incredibly surprised to hear from the National Department of Health that some companies submit fraudulent documents to win a tender.

The lesson that we all need to take away from this briefing session is that no matter what you tender for, ensure that your compulsory documents are the originals, or certified copies of the original document. Government will validate your compulsory documents and if you have submitted a fraudulent certificate you will be exposed. Once you have been exposed and found guilty you will not be able to tender for any tender.

The Government is wide awake to fraud and one gets the feeling that they are starting to clamp down on fraud and corruption in the tender environment. That is good for South Africa as well as for all the companies that respond to tenders.

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Contact us at [estelle@howtotender.co.za](mailto:estelle@howtotender.co.za) should you need more information.