

Compiling your tender response

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

One thing that has bothered me frequently is how bad Tender and Request for Proposal documents are compiled.

Sometimes it seems like they had copy and paste a previous document that is more or less the same as their tender. The reason I am saying this is because there are forms in the Tender document that is not at all applicable to the Tender that you must respond to. This is confusing for the Responder. You as the Responder to the Tender is already nervous and unsure, and putting unnecessary forms into the tender document are not helping ones' cause.

We have responded to many tenders, request for proposals, request for quotations and request for bids during the last six years. These responses to tenders were both for Private as well Public Sector Tenders. During this time, we established a systematic approach in compiling our tender responses. The steps that we follow are simple and easy to replicate. We can certainly encourage our fellow tender responders to use the same system and steps when compiling your tender response.

The following steps can be followed to make sense out of your tender response:

1. In a normal tender response (not electronic), it is important to compile your tender documents in a neat fashion;
2. A professionally printed cover page on the front gives the tender response a professional look and feel; The cover page should indicate which tender you are responding to as well as your company information – this is for easy reference;
3. It is always good practice to start your response with a cover letter; In this cover letter, which is addressed to the Purchasing Authority, mention the following:
 - 3.1. The tender description and number;
 - 3.2. The person responsible for the tender response;
 - 3.3. And tell them why your company is the best for the job – but remember to keep it short;
4. The cover letter is followed with the original tender documents received from the Purchasing Authority
5. After the tender documents – follows an Index of your returnables. Ensure that you mark your tender response clearly. This can be done by using page numbers or partitions placed between each section of your response;
6. Directly after the Index the Pricing schedule should follow – Evaluation committees do not want to search frantically for your pricing schedule;
7. While Tax Clearance Certificates are still in play it should follow your Pricing Schedule;
8. Your certified copy of your B-BBEE Certificate or EME/QSE Affidavit is up next;
9. From here on in we recommend you follow the Purchasing Authority's document and file your response according to their scope of work.
10. Important to remember is to keep your compulsory documents together. Do not mix compulsory or additional documents with the Functionality response.
11. It is always good to insert some form of partition between the original tender document and all other documentation;
12. Finally – bind your tender response in to one tender response document.

To learn more about this and many other tender conditions attend our “Become a Tender Expert” 2-Day workshops presented in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban, Port Elizabeth, and Cape Town. Book and pay online at <https://howtotender.co.za/tender-expert-form/>

Contact us at estelle@howtotender.co.za should you require more information.

You can also purchase a Tender Manual (Handbook) on our website <https://howtotender.co.za/> which is a step by step guide how to respond to a South African Tender. It includes examples of completed SBD forms.