



ABOUT the AUTHOR

JORDAN KELLY is a bid strategist and consultant. She is author of 'Think & Win Bids: Winning High-Value, High-Stakes Bids through Superior Questioning, Listening and Thinking Skills'. WA Transport Magazine readers can subscribe to her free newsletter - 'The Bid Strategist' - at www.bidstrategist.com



Win Themes', 'Silver Bullets' and Other Corporate Claptrap



Many operatives in the bidding and tendering space bang on about "win themes" and "silver bullets".

This month, I'd like to use my column to create clarity on something particularly important . . . and over which there has long been confusion:

A "win theme" is not something a bid team sits around, chews the fat over, and "comes up with" (which isn't to say that that's not what many think it is).

What it is, is a core, success-critical competitive strength or advantage that is identified through careful and thorough research (including that which is conducted long before the tender call documentation is released).

If a proponent's research is sufficiently thorough, the true win theme (or themes) will be uncovered naturally in the course of that research (and the associated competitive analysis) process.

A real "win theme" will, in a sense, "identify itself".

By way of example, I refuse to work with the outputs of external

facilitators who produce a bundle of flipchart sheets containing skeletal "mind maps", barely-connected bullet points, flow charts, and other squiggles encircling the latest trendy terminology, complementing this with a few pages of captured conversation and passing off the result as a "bid strategy".

Yet, believing the contents of this form of "workshop" will magically produce winning submissions, this is close to the standard procedure for many bidders. That is, they look outside of their own walls to some consultant's generic template, as opposed to looking within and conducting their own genuine, deep thinking processes - thinking processes which could, done right, win bids reliably and consistently.

Others simply leap into the writing part of the exercise without any form of strategy.

It's no wonder 99 percent of organisations produce 99 percent sheer "brochureware" (as I call it) in response to an EOI, RFP or RFT.

One Piece of Flawed Thinking that

Crops Up Almost Every Time

One of the many symptoms of this flawed process is the resultant confusion between strategy and tactics. More specifically, it's the result of coming up with great "ideas" without the benefit of thorough research and a well-formulated underlying competitive strategy.

"Strategy" and "tactics" are not interchangeable terms. And they're certainly not interchangeable concepts:

Strategy informs tactics. Two different things. Two different functions. Two different processes.

A basic, high-level definition of "strategy" might be: A way to get from a current "state" to a specific desired end-state.

Between this current state and the desired state may be any degree of gap; it doesn't matter. "Tactics", then, are the components of the plan designed to achieve the overarching strategy.

Taking this singular example highlights the folly in sitting around trying to "come up with" "good ideas" for "what we can say" in a submission. ■

SUBSCRIBE TO WA TRANSPORT MAGAZINE



- ONE YEAR \$65.95** inc gst (11 editions)
- TWO YEARS \$127.55** inc gst (22 editions)

Fax or email this form to **08 9296 0388** or karen@angrychicken.com.au or post to address below and you will instantly be subscribed and will be sent a tax invoice in due course.



Name		Company	
Postal Address			
p/c	Phone	Fax	
Email		URL	
Date	Signature		

If you wish to use your CREDIT CARD – please visit www.isubscribe.com.au and search for WA Transport Magazine. Please email karen@angrychicken.com.au with your web site address
Angry Chicken Publishing Pty Ltd P O Box 1387, Morley WA 6943

T 08 9296 4488 F 08 9296 0388 www.angrychicken.com.au