

in this issue:

successful b2b selling

Most of Quadrant's clients have corporate customers or channel partners and we observe that business relationships fall into two extremes – cost-driven tendering, often online and with little differentiation between suppliers, or relationship-based selling where supplier skills are key.

These have some similarities, of course, but fundamentally they require very different strategies to succeed. In this issue, we look at the ins and outs of successful selling in these different environments.



from monopoly provider to energy partner 

Our client EDF Energy is a great example of adjusting for 'commodity versus complex' selling. We first worked with London Electricity ten years back, before deregulation hit traditional electricity boards hard. Today the company is a market leader, having developed its sales method for both simple and complex circumstances.

A good example is EDF's OGC framework win, where public sector buyers can benefit from aggregated savings and innovative services. This has been achieved by having a clear goal for desirable business and structuring the sales teams to create solutions. *Key take out?* If a commodity like a kilowatt can be made distinctive, what's holding you back? See this article:

<http://www.ebusiness-energy.com/attachments/energising-public-sector.pdf>

defining your market

The two extremes of buying and bidding are principally defined by product and service complexity. For less complex products such as simple services or industrial components, global online procurement cuts costs dramatically and also simplifies procurement. So in order to compete here, suppliers have to address their cost-base and decide where their core competencies lie. For commercial functions this means focusing on marketing effectiveness, reviewing strategic opportunities regularly and using innovation to counter commoditisation.



However, selling more complex products and services means delivering added value rather than just lower costs. For example, public sector suppliers like our new clients May Gurney and SunGard Vivista are increasingly asked to provide consultancy alongside core services.

For commercial markets, too, the rise of outsourcing and partnering - and the customer desire for 'solutions' rather than pure products - can increase contract value, but can also significantly increase skill requirements and risk.

key questions:

- ⊕ Are you in a principally low-cost or added-value marketplace?
- ⊕ Is this position recognised in your strategic planning?
- ⊕ Does your bidding and customer relationship approach reflect it?

ten top tips in successful bidding

Having kept abreast of useful findings to add to our own experience, here are Quadrant's insights from research into complex procurement, which found ten practices that helped to distinguish generally successful bidders from the 'also rans':

1. Ensure your energies go into bids that are in line with strategy
2. Develop your bidding skills - feel free to borrow from the best practice of others
3. Objectively FILTER your prospects, then focus on winning the bid
4. Make your client's needs and culture the core of each bid element
5. Improve your team's interpersonal SKILLS and cultural empathy
6. Avoid fatigue and 'clientitis' - put in extra effort towards the end
7. Differentiate your PROPOSITION at every stage of the process
8. See every point of contact as a chance to distinguish yourselves
9. Control your company's POSITIONING within the target sector
10. Develop your breadth of competencies through PARTNERING

Ever generous, Quadrant has TOOLS for many of these items and we are always happy to share these with you (see item 2 above!).

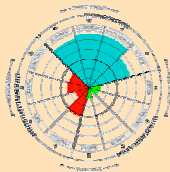
cultural assessment offer to you

In this issue, our offer is a questionnaire-based assessment of your team's culture.

In association with John Harkin - and where we and the client feel it particularly appropriate - Quadrant is increasingly



using cultural assessment tools in assignments. Our preferred tools are from Human Synergetics, whose Organisational Culture Inventory provides a picture of your team's culture in terms of 'how things are done' and 'what's expected', identifying both counterproductive attitudes and a direction for organisational change. We are increasingly incorporating this with strategic and process assignments.



To enter the draw for a free cultural assessment of your team, simply send katrina.murray@qcl.co.uk an email within a week of receiving this newsletter.



welcoming new clients

New clients for whom we have completed assignments this quarter come from sectors we know well - financial services and technology.



One of the largest providers of banking and financial solutions in the Eastern Caribbean. Quadrant worked with Republic Bank on both the structure and culture of their marketing function.



One of the UK's leading software and IT suppliers to public and private sector customers. Quadrant has been working with SunGard Vivista on issues around market engagement, programme resourcing and the enhancement of their capabilities.

creating a client proposition



Client propositions are Quadrant's way of bringing together the key elements of a complex product or service offer. This approach allows for better evaluation, communication and development of the offer whilst also ensuring that it is built on firm foundations.

The proposition is built along three stable dimensions:

- ⊕ **Known customer need** - what are the key characteristics and scale of the customer demand - current or potential - and how to earn value?
- ⊕ **Product feasibility and affordability** - what will it cost to develop, launch, serve and sustain the offer in the marketplace?
- ⊕ **Sustainable advantage and value** - how confident can we be that our offer would be preferred to those of our competitors - and how long can we maintain this lead?



Please contact simon.ross@qcl.co.uk for more information on this.

what we do and who we work for

Quadrant is a leading London-based consultancy which offers strategic advice, solutions and resourcing for major private and public sector organisations. We work closely and at speed with client teams to deliver market breakthroughs and revenue growth using a sustained, customer-focused approach.

If you think we might be able to help you to land more complex sales, please give Simon Ross a call on 020 7240 7200 or drop him an email at simon.ross@qcl.co.uk. We would be happy to arrange a no obligation meeting.

