

Title:

Project Management - Winning the Project

Word Count:

518

Summary:

In our last article on Project Management, we discussed what the Project Manager would need to do during the bid period, in order to ensure a winning bid for the company. In this article, we move on in the life of the project.

Keywords:

project management

Article Body:

The big day has arrived, the day on which your customer decides which of the competing bidders has won his new project. As the Project Manager, you may or may not be the first to hear the news. Customers work differently. Sometimes a member of the customer's staff, or more than one, will "whisper" the news to his opposite number in the bidding company and sometimes full protocol will be observed, with a formal communication being sent from the customer's Contracts Manager to your Commercial Manager. Either way, the Project Manager will be one of the first to hear the good news that your bid was considered to be the best and that the job now starts in earnest.

Bearing in mind that a large part of the Project Manager's job is management, one of your first duties should be to arrange a celebration for all the people who worked on the bid. This sign of appreciation will do wonders for staff morale and will ensure that you have a willing team. Depending on the value of the project, this celebration might be a beer in the pub or a full blown lunch. Don't forget to include everyone or this will have the opposite to the desired effect. When having your celebration, use the opportunity to praise past efforts and lay out future expectations.

At this early stage, your other major task will be to ensure that someone is arranging your office accommodation. If you work for a large company which likes to co-locate its project personnel, you will need to make sure that someone is taking care of space, storage and communications so that your staff can quickly settle down and devote themselves to making the project a success.

After the celebration (the same day might not be such a good idea), call your

first project meeting for your senior team members. At this stage, it is unlikely that your company will actually have signed the contract for this project so before that happens, more work is necessary. Your team will need to again review the customer's documentation to ensure that they still say the same as they did when you responded to the bid. It's not unheard of for a customer to try and sneak in a few extra requirements when they think you're not looking. You will also need to make sure that your responses to both the Invitation to Tender and any subsequent questions have been included in the new documentation and that the price, payment plan, technical solution and everything else, have been acknowledged.

As long as all the documentation is in order, it is normal practice to go ahead with the project, even without the benefit of a signed contract. Often, the customer will have sent a formal Instruction to Proceed agreeing basics such as the price. You will probably need this to get project funding signed off by the senior financial people in your organisation, enabling you to get on with the job... and that's where the next article will take us.