

BQ

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BIDDING QUARTERLY

**SACRIFICING
YOURSELF
TO WIN:
THE HIDDEN
COSTS OF
BIDDING**

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BID MARKETING
EXPERTS





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INTRODUCTION BY BEN HANNON

An elastic band can stretch to a point and generally return to its original shape. You can repeatedly take this action and it will remain fully functional. However, over time it will lose elasticity, or if you stretch it too far, it will break. Now, some elastic bands are more resilient than others and it will take more for them to snap. However, they all have a breaking point. I think you can see where I'm going with this.

Wellbeing is a very personal emotion. Everyone has their own threshold for stress (and indeed different kinds of stress) and everyone has their own coping mechanisms. It's often a common interview question, 'how do you cope with stress?' which is an odd one to ask because there is no real 'right' answer. It's so personal.

Thankfully, in our office we have an environment that promotes personal wellbeing and actively discourages running yourself into the ground. Working tirelessly to close a deal can have short term benefits, however it can be seriously damaging in the long term. Our work is never-ending, so we are encouraged to manage our own wellbeing and work efficiently, not endlessly.

Within the highly competitive and deadline driven world of bidding, it's no surprise that personal wellbeing can be put at risk.

How often do we hear the term 'must-win' when referring to key bids? This, by its very nature, suggests that you must do whatever it takes to win; give everything you have to get the deal over the line; and be better than your competitors. If you aren't working, they are – and they're winning. The phrase 'must-win' itself feels passive aggressive. It begs the question, 'will I lose my job if I don't win this deal?' So you stretch yourself a little further and sacrifice yourself to win.

But what happens when you give too much?

Once you've worked yourself into the ground to submit your winning proposal, how do you pick yourself up and go again?

Bidding is relentless, so regularly evaluating your wellbeing is important. Does the word 'deadline' make you anxious? Do you feel annoyed when an unexpected RFP lands? Do you constantly feel exhausted? If so, bidding might not be for you. At the very least, it sounds like your current working conditions need changing.

When taking on a new recruitment opportunity, if I'm told there is a culture of leaving the office on time, it's a huge benefit and a great selling point. It's because unfortunately within bidding, this is unusual rather than the norm. The desire for a greater work / life balance is frequently cited as a reason why people look to move on from their current role. It's also why we are inundated with applications whenever we have a home-based opportunity advertised on our website. People want to work in an environment that is good for their own wellbeing.

No one wants to reach breaking point. So how do you add slack to your rubber band?

Unfortunately there is no one-size-fits-all solution to this problem. In this issue of Bidding Quarterly, our Experts have provided a great selection of stories and suggestions, some of which are breathtakingly honest. It is our hope that as we become more comfortable with talking about these issues, there will be a greater emphasis placed on personal wellbeing. While we certainly don't claim to have all the answers, we hope to generate discussion on such an important topic.

In the meantime take stock of your own happiness, enjoy what you are doing and whenever possible, leave early!



EMMA POOLE

I've been managing teams of people, directly and indirectly, for about 25 years, most of those in the stress-fuelled bid & proposal environment.

I've seen a gamut of personal, mental and physical health issues that affect work performance and motivation: anxiety and full-on depression, various physical conditions that are worsened by stress, cancer, heart attacks, major and minor surgery, miscarriages and the menopause, financial worries, children and / or ageing parents, personal relationship strains and divorce, and, ultimately, death – including the sad but expected, the sudden and unexpected, and the downright tragic.

We all know bids and proposals are deadline driven, and those deadlines are often immutable – so how does the show go on if a crucial member of the team is struck down (physically or mentally, directly or indirectly – it doesn't really matter how). How do you avoid sacrificing yourself (or anyone else, for that matter), in your bid to win?

The options open to a bid leader or team manager are all standard fare in terms of managing scheduled and unscheduled staff absences, and I'm sure many of you will have employed or experienced some if not all of them:

1 Expect the individual to be terribly British and put on that stiff upper lip and just get on with the work: but be very aware of how that may play out.

2 The project team shares the additional workload: but this needs a very collaborative and understanding environment and strong leadership; it's very easy for individuals to side-step with excuses (real or imagined). In which case, you have to question how important or winnable is the bid really? Or how committed and motivated is the team to this opportunity? Is it worth the personal sacrifice?

3 Someone else steps up to fill the gap, either voluntarily or volunteered: often the go-to solution if you're in a proposal team environment, obviously not so easy if you're a team of one or self-employed (in which case, what's your contingency?) However, in this age of everyone only having time to deal with "Important and Urgent" activities (also known as 'slim resources' in many organisations), this often has a knock-on effect on other projects.

4 You outsource to an agency or a freelancer: but how quickly can you mobilise at short notice? How much have you networked with potential providers? Do you have a contingency contract and NDA in place with someone you know and can trust?

5 Ask for a deadline extension: sometimes that's an option.

6 Withdraw from the opportunity: sometimes that's an option too.

(No) Apologies for the Delay. Service Will Resume Shortly

But my real point is that 'life' happens to everyone – and no apologies should be given or expected if 'life' throws a curve ball that interrupts your carefully scheduled and organised project plan (which, of course, in that elusive ideal world, would include a risk register listing 'key person risks' and your contingency plans, i.e. those outlined above).

As a line manager, I've always felt it's been my absolute priority to give my team members the time and space to deal with whatever their personal issue is. We're all human and it's really hard to keep some personal issues out of the work arena (and increasingly recognised that it's not always helpful to long term recovery or resolution either). According to those psych-evaluation tools I don't have a particularly strong 'empathy' gene, but some of those issues I listed at the beginning of this article are my own personal experiences. I've been there and I know how it feels, and I know how I would want to be (and fortunately have been) supported while in the middle of a personal crisis.

I've been lucky in working for organisations who value their employees and who give me the discretion to demonstrate that in how I manage my teams – but if you don't then you can and must gen-up on Employer Duty of Care legislation. You can use that to mould your organisation to a more progressive and understanding way of managing both personal and workplace stress. It will repay you with greater loyalty and individuals who are more willing and able to go the extra mile on that next vital and winnable opportunity.

JON WILLIAMS

Missing Out on the Magic?

A few years ago, APMP's global conference took place at the Sheraton Walt Disney World resort. I flew to the States; presented; we sponsored the event. It really was a great week, packed full each day from the early breakfasts to the late nights in the bar.

Back home, a friend asked a few days later: "Did you enjoy Disney World?"

Cue a pause. A moment of reflection. And the sad realisation that I'd spent a week for work at the gates of one of the world's most famous theme parks, and hadn't taken the time to go inside. Indeed, it hadn't even occurred to me to do so.

These days, running a successful business, I spend 150 nights a year in hotels. In a good year. In some, it's more. In the government's last census, it asked if you had a second home, defined as somewhere you'd slept for more than 50 nights the previous year. I had to answer: "The Sheraton Skyline Hotel, Heathrow."

So you might argue that I'm not the best person to preach about work / life balance - or, as I prefer to call it, life/work balance. But I've seen too many of my fellow professionals struggle or suffer for this not to be an issue dear to my heart.

You know, what we do has a degree of pressure, inevitably. A fixed deadline. Complex documents to develop. Square-peg solutions to align to round-hole customer requirements.

The consequences of losing high. Competitors hungry for the business. Senior execs watching and meddling, with high expectations. Other bids to juggle in parallel.

A team thrown together for the bid, many of whom have never worked together before - and never will again. Their day jobs to be done at the same time. Their appetite and aptitude for proposal work limited.

And that's why proposals are such fun. We do incredible stuff, as a profession. We produce brilliant documents that win work and create (and protect) jobs in our organisations.

And we do it against the odds.

We're brilliant people. Amazing.

But if you don't find it fun? If you don't thrive in this sort of environment? It's less Bid Solutions you need to talk to, than recruitment consultants for other roles. Don't drive yourself into the ground if this profession really isn't you.

And for those of us who do? We need to be kind to ourselves. And find people to work with who'll be kind to us.

There are strategies for managing one's own well-being that others will share here far better than I could ever do. For all the meditation and the days off that help me, I remain the guy who went to Disney and didn't make time to go to Disney.



JON WILLIAMS

Missing Out on the Magic?

But I do recognise this as an area in which leadership is key. Soon after I'd launched the first bid centre I ever built, nearly twenty years ago, I arrived at work on a Monday morning to find a note on my desk from one of my team. "We were in all weekend on the bid to X. We got it sorted. I'm going to come into the office a bit later today."

My comments when she arrived? "Thank you. And sorry."

"Sorry?"

Sorry. Because I'd designed the team. I'd been responsible for building the process from qualification onwards. The engagement model. The capacity plan. For communicating, evangelising to the business.

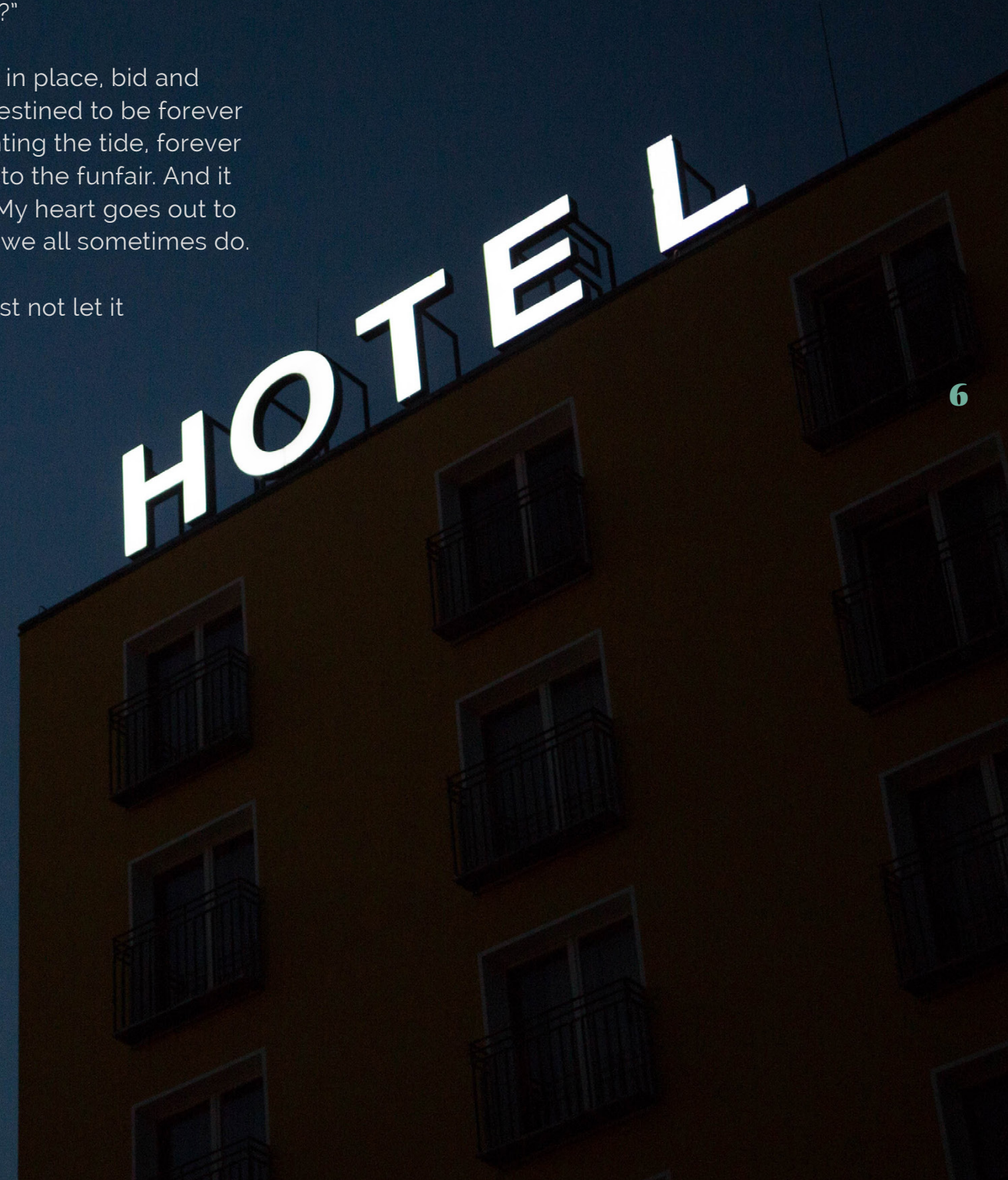
And if a deal had needed weekend work? Yes, I was sorry. Because, for all we bid and proposal people want to go the extra mile, I was the one who mustn't have got it quite right.

Two tips, then. Create the right culture in your organisation around proposals, from the top down, so doing the right things right are in the DNA of every deal.

And build the right capacity model to bring the right skills to the right deals, with absolute clarity as to what support your team is sized to offer in a given month, quarter, year. "Just another wafer-thin proposal, sir or madam...?"

Without those fundamentals in place, bid and proposal professionals are destined to be forever on the back foot, forever fighting the tide, forever forgetting to take time to go to the funfair. And it doesn't have to be like that. My heart goes out to those who are struggling, as we all sometimes do.

Winning is wonderful: let's just not let it be at all costs.



HOTEL

ALISON GURD

I consider myself very lucky, I have a high performing team. They regularly receive praise from our global partners that they have once again raised the bar; they are an integral and invaluable part of the sales force.

One of the key criteria that ensures the team is able to maintain their performance level is that they are aware of the importance of looking after themselves and each other. We work in a stressful, time pressured environment that can take its toll in different ways on different people. So what are the keys things that we do to make a difference to our well-being?

Stay within the boundaries of our role – I am not a “jobs worth” person but we do need to be careful that we are not the legal, product and pricing expert on a bid. We are part of a multi-national organisation; we must focus on putting together a compelling proposal with one voice, if we spread ourselves too thinly with other activities we will not be able to achieve this.

Matched effort – How hard is the sales lead working to win the bid? If the win themes are lame, the sales lead is not interested in the kick-off or no one is free to review content then why should we burn the midnight oil? We are part of the deal team; let's make sure we are all in it to win it! In these situations we produce a proposal that is complete and compliant - but not compelling.

Laugh in the face of adversity – it is very important that we don't alienate the sales person by laughing at the unrealistic deadline, but we do try to keep humour in our team at all times and a tell-tale sign that things are not right is when the humour disappears.

We do not clock watch – we are a global team based in London, we need to flex our day to work with our partners in other locations which means we may start our day at 6am or 11am, we just keep each other informed. If someone has worked late, then we do not expect them to come in early the next day; we need to come to work refreshed.

Can You Put Well-Being Before a Bid?

Don't get pushed around – we explain the consequences of missing our deadlines, for example we have a cut-off for reviews, if the deadlines keep getting missed we will not complete a full review. We will ensure that the grammar and punctuation are correct only.

Post bid huddles – within our team we review every deal we manage. What worked, what didn't. Did we try something new, should we change our process, did we get new content, did we like the people we worked with. This can be very therapeutic!

Eat, sleep, work, repeat? – We do our best to eat healthily, to sleep well and to have hobbies outside work. It is not perfect, and we are often juggling too many RFPs to go to the gym / pub / book club every week but we respect each other's work / life balance and support each other when personal commitments clash with business deadlines.

Celebrate success – a cliché? Possibly, but we love an excuse to celebrate birthdays, weddings, promotions, surviving a tough week, no deadline Fridays, winning business.

So our list may not have anything new or exciting but when put together it creates a great team atmosphere. We enjoy working together and playing together, something I personally believe you should strive for in your working day. Some members of my team, including myself, have worked in less supportive environments and would remind each and every one of you that you deserve better. We can all be exhausted at the end of the week but never unappreciated or unhappy.

Over my bidding and tendering career, I have been involved with some disasters. Some of them I have been able to recover from and a few have even resulted in the loss of the bid. It does not matter if the fault is not yours; as the bid manager you are responsible.

So, how do you keep going with this level of stress, knowing that whilst the pain of the last catastrophe is still raw you still have yet another bid to get out? And how do you keep your motivation up whilst everything around you looks like yet another impending disaster?

I don't have all the answers. But, I can share with you some of the things which have kept me going whilst trying to navigate through the pressure of the heaviest of bids.

Keeping Your Cool

When it all seems to be going wrong, it can be very difficult to keep things in perspective. My first strategy in dealing with the stress is to tell myself two things, both of which are in my bidding experience entirely true:

- 1** Nothing is ever as good or as bad as it appears at first sight.
- 2** In 6 months, this event will seem to be so trivial that you will not remember why you were so worried at the time.

For instance, can you remember the biggest bid problem you had 6 months ago? I can't even remember what I was doing 6 months ago without a lot of effort.

Take a Break

If you keep working towards the end of a bid too long, as you get tired you will probably spend more time correcting your own mistakes than moving the bid forward. This helps no-one.

Taking a break means getting away from the bid, the computer and the desk. When you get back, you will feel the increase in effectiveness. Your work rate will go back to where it was and your decision making will be better. This is one of my bid investments which brings a huge ROI.

Keep up the Humour

When the pressure is really on and the whole team is struggling to meet a critical deadline, the whole bid environment can become emotionally charged. Everyone just wants to get the bid over with and to go home. This is not an environment which will help a quality bid being produced.

My solution is to break the tense atmosphere with some humour. It lightens the atmosphere

for everyone and improves productivity and bid content.

Have a Clear Objective

As a bid manager, I am aware of the one overriding objective of the bid activity; get a winning bid out on time! However, half way through the bid, this can seem to be an impossible task.

My secret for this is "chunking". I break down what has got to be done into manageable "chunks" and order them in the way I need to get them done. I don't have to worry about hitting the end objective; if I stick to managing my chunks, the bid will be ready on time.

Don't Waste Time

When the pressure is on, it is too easy to get diverted and put off doing the difficult bits you just don't want to do. Then you find as the deadline approaches, you do not have the time to do some of the things that would lift the quality of the bid. So, I adopt a "Just Do It Now" approach. Once you tackle that important bid task you have been putting off, your stress load goes down and the remaining jobs become, somehow, more manageable.

So Now You Know!

I remain convinced that it takes a very special person to be a bid professional. You have got to be resilient to all the issues that fall on you from the moment the bid starts running. More importantly, you have got to keep going whilst others around you have had enough. Then you can use the euphoria which you feel after your "Good" bid is delivered to the client to set you up to take on the next one.

and breathe

Back in 1999, I was introduced to the world of bidding:

"Fancy writing a bid, Nige?" said the Sales Manager. "It's a high pressure, high adrenaline role that favours those who love 'pure challenge'. I think you'd enjoy it." I gave 'it' a go, losing my first bid but learning from my mistakes until I won virtually everything I submitted. By 2009 I was addicted to winning, pushing myself to work 100 hours per week while managing up to 20 concurrent bids and 'filling the gap' left by ineffective salespeople. By 2014, my team of 220 people was submitting 6,500 bids per year and winning 79% of them. We were unstoppable successful. Or so we thought. One by one we began to fall. And then it was my turn.

I became tired and fuzzy-headed. Ocular migraines (a 'waterfall' sensation in one's vision, combined with headaches and nausea) occurred every day. I began moving slowly and had trouble remembering names and actions. I became unpredictably argumentative, impatient, and intolerant of others' views. Realising that I couldn't trust myself to behave rationally, I elected to work from home. There, with

the phone ringing relentlessly, I sat at my desk, crying and trembling. My wife encouraged me to see a doctor, who signed me off work for two weeks and prescribed a four-month course of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy "to help break a cycle of anxiety and depression".

I returned to work and was doing well until a customer emailed me at 5pm with their demands for an 'improved offer' by 7am the following morning. I cancelled my plans, rallied my team, and worked through the night. We submitted the proposal on time. But then the customer did the same thing again the next night, and every night for five months. When our 100th BAFO was accepted, I was hailed as a hero. But a colleague had suffered a fatal heart attack during the process and my marriage was in tatters. I returned home and cried myself to sleep, vowing that I would never let someone put me or my team through so much again.

I woke the following morning to a sense of confusion and numbness – not recognising my daughter or, as I attempted to get ready for work, being able to figure out how to put on my socks. I fell to the floor

and crawled under the bed, shaking uncontrollably and seeing everyone and everything as a threat to my safety. Seven hours later, I was sitting in a hospital room with a consultant looming over me. She was explaining that I was having a "psychotic episode" and "should be detained for my safety and that of those around me". The consultant gave me an option – that if I agreed to being medicated for 'an extended period' then I would not be a threat to society. This seemed like a better alternative to being sectioned, so I agreed to a programme of anti-depressants that saw me sleep almost non-stop for six months and exist without internal thought for a further four months. I'd lost my mind in order to win.

My breakdown made me realise that we bidders inherently give our all, but absolute focus should only be given to that which matters absolutely. We should seek to win, but not at all costs.

An extended version of this article is available at the Bid Solutions website.

See: bidsolutions.co.uk/cost-of-winning-nigel-hudson

PETER MCPARTLAND

Bidding by its nature can feel intense for those co-opted to the bid team. We must see bid leadership as an activity that safeguards people.

It is our duty to ensure we remain aware of the negative impact that certain situations associated with bidding can have on our colleague's wellbeing – and mitigate that negative impact.

Building trust

Social awareness is essential to engineer the genuine trust needed to support people we bring in to what can be complex and pressurised environments.

This trust not only means they are more likely to be more motivated but it enables you to measure more accurately how best to work with that person to maximise their contribution – and maintain wellbeing.

For example, we are often guilty of taking for granted that our subject matter experts or service delivery team have experience or capacity to perform strongly in the many stages of a bid lifecycle.

Seeking feedback from team members throughout will build trust and highlight areas of concern for them. These can then be addressed through specific and personal support.

Group dynamics

At the formative stages, when you are developing win strategies, exploring different ideas or encouraging imagination, it is easy to forget such events can feel demoralising for some involved.

That is because the best ideas invariably evolve through discussions where people are exposed to what can feel like conflict and rejection.

Bringing diverse groups together, either from different teams, or made up of people at different levels can also generate rivalry.

It is vital that we, as bid coaches, emphasise the importance of creating an environment where people know from the outset that they have the freedom to share opinions, irrespective of their perceived comfort zone or the status of others in attendance.

Being realistic and supportive

It is important to safeguard writers by keeping reviews structured, focussed and filtered. Do not underestimate how demoralising it is to be involved in review meetings which quickly generate into a free for all to criticise rather than enhance the work of others.

The dynamic obviously changes from the ITT response to the pitch interview because thoughts of potential rejection or triumph become very personal.

Being a Positive Influence on the Well-Being of Others

Throughout the process of preparing people for the big day, we must be mindful of the anxieties that often come with it, for people of all levels. What one presenter wants the preparation journey to feel like will not necessarily correspond with the thoughts of others. This can be very unsettling.

It is not uncommon for people to have personal preparation preferences, and we need to pay attention to them.

Agile working

Organisations are becoming increasingly dispersed and people's working weeks/days are being tailored to support individual preferences. It's important to respect the flexibility and practicalities that underpin the roles of those we bring on to the bid team. Showing a lack of appreciation of these or treating such terms as inconvenient is wrong.

Also be mindful of the dynamics that exist when hosting non-face-to-face meetings. Keep them short and focussed would be my advice to ensure we don't create time pressures on their other commitments.

Winning over our people

People co-opted to a bid team should look back on their experience of the bid with genuine enthusiasm and confidence.

Please be mindful of the negative impact that working on a bid can have on a person's well-being if not led in a genuinely considerate way.

**PRACTICE
KINDNESS**

PETER BRYANS

Sacrificing Yourself to Win: The Hidden Costs of Bidding

I'd like to focus on the person "running the numbers" to generate a price to the customer. Let's call them the "Pricer". For me, the most significant hidden costs in this role is in the need to reconcile the resultant price for Sales (needing sufficiently low prices to win) and Finance (needing sufficiently high prices to make money).

A good Pricer is conscientious and wants to get things right within the time available. Also, pricing is one of the last tasks that is done in the bid cycle. The Pricer is likely to run a spreadsheet to collect all cost / price elements and submit in the compliant customer format. This means they have jurisdiction on what the price will be upon submission (subject to being correct and approved, of course).

The Pricer has to align two (potentially conflicting) agendas:

1 The Sales Directorate who are very aware that competitors may win on price. The Pricer therefore has to keep the price low, maybe even lower than may seem practicable, especially to beat competitors who are notoriously cheap.

2 The Finance Directorate who focus on the company's P&L account and want a sufficient gross margin / profit. The Pricer needs to ensure sufficient overhead recoveries, profit margins, operational costs, and operational / financial / contractual risks are covered in the price. Cashflow analysis and the cost of capital are also factors.

The Pricer needs to keep both Sales and Finance happy.

I have been in the middle of a number of tenders where this can be mathematically impossible. It has nothing to do with who I may agree or disagree with as it is simply a case of inputs, calculations and results that end in one being content and the other not. If the price is competitive but the gross margins are too low (or even at risk of being negative) then Finance are not happy. If the costs are all recovered and the margins look good but the price is too high then Sales are not happy. It is the Pricer who can be treated as the owner (and sometimes even the

creator) of such a problem. This can put a lot of stress on the Pricer as they may feel responsible, or be made to feel unhelpful, if "their" numbers are not strategically correct whilst they may be mathematically correct. Furthermore it is likely that this predicament occurs a day or so before the deadline as pricing only really comes into focus late on in the cycle, especially if decision making and cost estimation is tardy.

I have found that this hidden cost is particularly common in the more high-value bids. This is principally due to the fact all tenderers will find the same opportunities exciting and therefore all bid for them: opening up a firm to low cost competition and even low cost incumbents. Yet the stress on the Pricer remains considerable and can lead to demotivation and, ultimately, resignation.

The best mitigator for the hidden costs of bidding for the Pricer is for the wider team, and especially the leadership, to comprehend and actively-manage what the Pricer is going through. It is my hope that with an understanding and a pro-active collegiate team ethos that the hidden costs of bidding for a Pricer can be identified and minimised, if not removed.



PIPPA BIRCH

More people are now working from home for a variety of reasons, including a flexibility not found in a 9 to 5 office job. Unfortunately, even in this ideal work scenario, health (as well as productivity) can be negatively affected. When considering working from home, all challenges should be explored carefully, with a strategy put in place to mitigate the negative impacts.

As a freelancer, I juggle the needs of my clients, family and myself. While I enjoy the freedom and flexibility working from home offers, it can sometimes put huge pressure on my health and wellbeing. Sometimes I cram work into school hours and don't take breaks. And why does the kitchen call so loudly with its lovely goodies? When bidding pressure is on, how on earth do I stop?

Let's look at the positives first, because there are lots. Some of these depend on your working patterns, Client/ Manager expectations and the stage of a bid. Apart from the obvious flexibility of working patterns, working from home means you could work in your PJs, find concentration and focus (no office politics or tea runs!), complete helpful home tasks like washing and taking in parcels, go for a walk/run/cycle during the day, attend school functions – the list is endless!

All By Myself - The Joys of Working from Home

Challenges to our health & mental well-being when working from home

I'm not a medical professional, so I can only give you my personal take on these challenges and how we can overcome them – obviously not everyone faces the same issues and impacts.

The graphic below explores a snapshot of the considerations, challenges and negative impacts of home working. Effective management of these, whether for yourself or for your staff, is critical.

CHALLENGES				
WORKSPACE	ISOLATION	DISTRACTION	EXPECTATION	BALANCE
Room, desk, chair, tidiness, light, suitability of space, equipment	Lack of social and physical interaction with other people	Social media, television, household tasks, visitors	Working times, volume of work, availability, deadlines	Family, home, fitness, 'me time', switching off, guilt
NEGATIVE IMPACTS				
PHYSICAL		MENTAL		
Backache • Headache • Impaired Vision Weight Gain • Diabetes Cardiovascular issues • Productivity Fitness • Relationship Breakdown Lethargy		Depression • Loneliness • Reduced Drive Frustration • Stress Feeling of inadequacy • Boredom Difficulty switching off • Lack of focus Anxiety		

PIPPA BIRCH

How can we mitigate these challenges?

There are some good tips and tricks to make home working more pleasurable, productive and have less of a negative impact on your health & wellbeing. These are just some ideas - you need to do what's right for you

Workspace: Keep it separate, ensure natural light, invest in good furniture, tidy up at the end of every day, move regularly

Isolation: Get out and about, attend events, network, make phone calls, arrange a coffee/lunch with a colleague, get a pet, take your work out, consider sharing space

Distraction: Set a schedule, plan for social media time, silence mobile, leave a note on the front door to dissuade visitors

Expectations: Ensure clarity first - hours, working times, outputs, calls etc, set schedules, keep communicating, use web-based document collaboration

Balance: Work out what's important to you, introduce a 'commute', take a day off to recharge, make a written note of the hours you work so you can flex around them if needed.

All By Myself - The Joys of Working from Home

Is there a right way?

There is no 'one size fits all' in any situation. Our health & wellbeing is personal, and so are the ways in which we, as individuals, need to deal with the potentially negative aspects of home working. Working from home isn't for everyone - if you try it and you don't like it or can't manage it, be honest with yourself - go back to the office and your co-workers with your head held high.

And if you love it? Make sure you take care of yourself too.

ABOUT OUR EXPERTS



BEN HANNON

Recruitment Expert

Ben is responsible for consistently providing long-term success for our clients in an increasingly competitive market. He understands the culture and winning mentality that ensures we stand out from the crowd.



EMMA POOLE

Travel Industry Expert

Emma has established a wealth of proposal management experience since joining Hogg Robinson Group in 2001. She leads a multinational group of proposal specialists and is actively involved throughout the bid process.



JON WILLIAMS

Proposal Management & APMP Training Expert

Jon and his team work with clients worldwide to help them establish winning proposal capabilities and to capture major deals. He has built and led numerous bid and proposal centres; managed, reviewed and benchmarked countless proposals; worked in over thirty countries, and trained many thousands of course participants.



ALISON GURD

Deal Management Expert

Alison is Head of the Proposal Team at BNP Paribas (Securities Services) in London. Alison has extensive experience in deal management, having undertaken sales, relationship management and proposal management roles during her career in the securities industry that spans 25 years.



ANDREW HAIGH

Public Sector Bidding Expert

Andrew is an expert in bidding and tendering, specialising in competitive formal bids into EU Public Sector organisations. Andy is an authority on EU procurement legislation and can bring all these capabilities together to initiate and drive major complex bids through to a successful completion.



NIGEL HUDSON

Professional Development Expert

Nigel is passionate about professional development. He designed and delivered the APMP award-winning Bid Academy for Vodafone and co-authored Europe's leading proposal syllabus with Strategic Proposals. He's trained more than 4,000 people worldwide.



PETER MCPARTLAND

Bid Team Leadership & Innovation

Peter is recognised for his strengths in bid team leadership, innovation and performance improvement. One of the first law firm employees to achieve the APMP Certified Professional qualification, Peter is also a winner of an APMP UK national award for Innovation.



PETER BRYANS

Costing & Pricing Expert

Specialising in strategic cost modelling, estimating and pricing, Peter's 15 year career has seen him at Network Rail, Arup and Detica (now BAE Systems Applied Intelligence) and most recently in senior cost estimating and pricing roles at Aegis and Thales.



PIPPA BIRCH

Highways & Civil Engineering Expert

Pippa has been a Bid Writer for over 15 years, working as an employee for major companies within the Highways and Civil Engineering Sector for the first ten. She started freelancing in 2012 which led her to write for companies across a variety of sectors (construction, facilities management, custody and forensics).



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