



## THOUGHTS OF THE ALCHEMIST

**No Bid Manager has ever won the deal**

The Bid Manager, just like the Sales Professional does not win the deal: The team win the deal.

I know, it is a bit of a dent to our egos, but we are not lone soldiers who win the deal only through our actions. We should know when we have made a significant difference to the chance of winning or have undertaken actions that ensure we are positioned to win, but we are not the heroes – it is the team that succeeds.

For years, I was a fire-fighting Bid Manager, called in when things had gone wrong. I can think of cases that my involvement has resulted in a new win strategy that has taken the bid from 5<sup>th</sup> place to leader. I am proud that the win strategy was invisible to the competition and thus they did not recognise its power, until it was too late. But here is the thing, that new strategy would not have worked if the team had not been so diligent in enacting it.

I know of proposals where I have been called in the day before submission because they were not fit to go to the customer. I worked, often alone, through the night and up to the deadline to get the proposal suitable for shortlisting. Again, I am not the lone wolf. If it was not for the content the team developed and their willingness to accept silly questions at silly hours, I would not have achieved it.

We are the leaders who need to ensure that every member of the team is able and motivated to do their hard and smart thinking that results in our best performance.

A bid is a series of activities, each of which have numerous components that will colour the customer's thinking and earn evaluation scores. It is the combination of all these that result in the win.

Each of these components is the responsibility of team members and if they do not perform, it may not matter how smart we have been, we can get the runner's up medal.

Yes, we need to recognise individual successes and performance, but we must not forget that it is the team performance that gets us there.

It is our job to lead the team, to motivate and support each member to achieve their best, so that we can deliver our best.

We must give positive feedback to everyone pointing out the difference they made, as well as areas for improvement.

We need to acknowledge and reward outstanding individual performance, but we must remember that we celebrate as a team.

Let's stop putting out internal win messages that make special mention of the Sales Professional or Bid Manager and recognise that, in fact we have just done our jobs in leading the team. Our messages must promote the success of the team and, when appropriate, call out the outstanding performance of individuals, no matter what position or organisation level they hold.