



THOUGHTS OF THE ALCHEMIST

Why are Tender Requirements Treated as a French Cheese?

"I just need you to work on an urgent bid?" Do you asked to do the impossible in limited time? Have you ever wondered why the customer is being so unreasonable and then you check the document and find the publication date is weeks earlier?

The answer is simple. In Sales School they train you need to treat a customer's requirement document with respect. It is like you would a good French cheese. It needs to sit on your desk for weeks until it is nice and smelly. Only then is it ready for the hungry Bid team to devour it.

Now we should take it as a complement. They obviously believe that we are so talented, we can turn back time. They think that we just need to chant the ancient bid incantation and with blue smoke the finished proposal will appear.

The truth is, when this happens, and it is not always the Sales Professionals fault, there has been little thinking. There has been little smart thinking.

Often the Sales Professional has not been able to convince their manager that it is a deal worth pursuing, somethings they have not even been able to get time in their busy diaries.

Here is an adage, **Time kills deals**. This is often applicable to the contracts stage of the bid. If it takes too long, you risk the customer deciding not to go ahead with the deal anyway. It is also applicable for this early stage. The longer we spend dipping our toes in the water before deciding to swim the bid, the less time we have available to do the right job and thus the less chance we have of winning.

Sometimes, it is the challenge of getting the right people from your organisation to review the opportunity and agree to give resource. It may also be that the resource is just not available, all too busy on other rush bids.

However, there are times when it is just sitting on the Sales Professional's desk, lost under paperwork and they have forgotten to do something with it.

I say forget treating tenders like a French cheese, start treating them like French champagne.