

A License to Hunt ... GWAC's and IDIQ's

MODERATOR: **Doug Natal**, GS Advisors

PANELISTS:

Carlton Gayles, HP Enterprise Services

Debbie Rieger, A-TEK, Inc.

Wanda F. Russell, National Institutes of Health

Randy Slager, Catapult Technology



Agenda

- Introductions
- History of GWACs
- Catapult's Success Story and Recommendations
- A-TEK's Success Story and Recommendations
- How to Partner Effectively for a GWAC
- Tips for Small Businesses Pursuing GWACs
- Questions and Answers



History of GWACs

- GWAC stands for *Government-wide Acquisition Contract*.
- The 1965 Brooks Act made the GSA the gatekeeper for IT acquisition
- In 1996 the Clinger-Cohen Act enacted to revamp and re-energize IT acquisition, authorizing the creation of GWACs for use by all federal agencies



History of GWACs...

- Clinger Cohen Act – Decentralized the authority and responsibility for the acquisition of IT from GSA to individual agencies.
- Executive Agent Designation
 - Permits that upon OMB's authorization agencies may acquire IT for other agencies
 - Requires agencies to ensure performance measurements are prescribed for IT



History of GWACs...

- GWACs have gained popularity in recent years because:
 - Economies of scale
 - Streamlined acquisition process
 - Large pools of capable vendors to meet requirements



Catapult's Success Story

- First task order on First GWAC was Catapult's first contract (Aug 1996)
- Pursued every GWAC with a good chance of winning – Hunting license



Catapult's Success Story...

- GWACs (Prime)
 - ITOP-II, VANITS, STATUS, COMMITS
NexGen, Alliant, STARS, VETS
- GWACs (Sub)
 - on several but very little work after 2000
 - Know and trust the prime you select
- Results
 - Most task orders from VANITS
 - STARS and VETS – Top performer



Catapult's Recommendations

- Establish your past performance as a subcontractor on GWACs
- Be selective on who you select as your prime
 - Check their reputation for honoring commitments
 - Focus of the prime should be performance and expanding business
 - Ask for payment terms that keep you focused on performance – i.e. payment within 5 days of the prime being paid or within six weeks of accepting your invoice, whichever is sooner.



Catapult's Recommendations...

- Pursue GWACs as a prime when you are a credible bidder
 - Supplement your capabilities and past performance with teammates
 - Solid Past Performance is key
 - Play to your strengths in your response
- Treat your subcontractors as you would want to be treated – they can increase your success
- Build a relationship with the GWAC Program Office as they want the vehicle and the Primes to succeed



A-TEK's Success Story...

- A-TEK is an emerging IT and Professional Services Government Contractor with ~\$25m in revenue, ~200 employees in 22 states nationwide, and a DoD Top Secret Clearance.
- A-TEK is the recipient of the:
Small Business Top Performance Award for CIO SP2 and ImageWorld2
- A-TEK is known for its exceptional Government contracting expertise, and trusted performance with clients, employees and teammates



A-TEK's Recommendations

- Identify one or two vehicles that best fits your offerings (products/services) and commit to knowing them inside and out
- Don't spend your valuable resources going after too many vehicles and not enough true "business"
- Team with a limited number of qualified partners that round out your offerings to fully support the vehicle – prepare a matrix



A-TEKs Recommendations...

- Chose quality small niche firms as well as trusted large firms with breadth and depth to support large requirements
- Educate your company/team on the details of how to use the vehicle correctly so you can assist your clients to understand the benefits
- Be open to teaming on any requirement to fully support your client, and develop trusting relationships for win-win-win solutions



How to Partner With a Large Business on a GWAC

- Business development acumen and stellar client relationship/management skills
- Core competencies that meet requirements
- Willingness and desire to work collaboratively and respond quickly during opportunity pursuit
- Past performance experience - referenceable, applicable and obtainable
- Ability to respond quickly and contribute as required to proposal development, project/account start-up and on-going delivery challenges



How to Partner...

- Established Small Business liaison and Mentor-Protégé programs
- Company sponsored/developed small business activities held internally
- Industry events (trade shows, breakfasts, luncheons, etc.)
- Introduction via new/existing small business opportunity with partnership potential
- “Cold-calls” (least effective method)



Tips for Small Businesses Pursuing GWACs

- Understand what a GWAC is.
 - Developed to meet Future IT requirements – NO current requirements
 - Specific requirements defined by the customer at the Task order level
 - Provides customers with responsive IT service/products capabilities regardless of requirement size or scope
 - No guarantee of work/task orders (minimum guarantee)
 - Fair Opportunity to considered



Tips for Small Businesses Pursuing GWACs

- Be authentic
 - Examine capabilities
 - Know strengths and weaknesses
 - Can you meet the demands of the GWAC?
 - Follow-through and follow-up



Tips for Small Businesses Pursuing GWACs

- Research the Organization
 - Know the organization's mission
- Understand the Agencies Organizational Structure
 - Make contact with appropriate program areas
 - Learn the agencies contracting communities



Tips for Small Businesses Pursuing GWACs

- Develop relationships
 - Agencies are looking for vendors that are interested in developing relationships (i.e., not simply chasing requirements)
 - Get to know Small Business Specialist and maintain relationships



Tips for Small Businesses Pursuing GWACs

- Respond to sources sought announcements and request for information
- Keep contact information current
- Attend outreach activities sponsored by the agencies and other organizations



Contact Information

Carlton Gayles

carl.gayles@hp.com

Doug Natal

doug@gsadvisorscorp.com

Debbie Rieger

drieger@a-tek.net

Randy Slager

randy.slager@catapulttechnology.com

Wanda F. Russell

russellw@od.nih.gov

