

IFI Bidding Success Factors and Support Needs

- The proposal must fit the client's specifications even if they do not particularly make sense. Otherwise one loses points and probably loses the job. [35]
- Focus in essential – both on a type of business and geographically. [24]
- Good information on projects – the *“Europeans have far superior business intelligence.”* [24]
- Once on the short list everyone in the firm has to *“pitch in”*. Proposals are very expensive and losing too many can severely damage the firm. [24]

Comments on civil works – understanding the IFIs, and proposal skills:

- In one instance the company used CIDA INC funds to work on a pre-feasibility study for the World Bank while getting a waiver from the Bank that they would not be disqualified from bidding on the loan project work itself. [Normally a firm cannot work on both preparations of a WB loan and the loan project itself]. The ADB does not restrict a company working on both phases, but neither do they need CIDA INC funding since they have plenty of untied funds available for the early phase work. Also one has to be careful since some ADB officers think that CIDA INC is an illegitimate “bid enhancement”. [22]

Comments on goods/equipment – understanding the IFIs and proposal skills:

- In such a huge and diverse international market a company has to have a focus and a strategy. It has to offer something that clearly differentiates itself from the competitors. This company has developed a proprietary software product for tax administration. It provides professional services along with the product. This has given it an entrée to a large number of developing countries that are attempting fiscal and tax reform. The product is in English because that is where the large market is for such services. [40]
- Technical workshops can be a good marketing device, if the firm has a special product or capability that it can showcase. This firm participated in an IMF workshop last year on fiscal and tax reform that it believes was useful in developing client contacts. [40]
- “We sell on our strengths – excellent equipment based on our own R&D.” [43]
- “The company does not chase the money by monitoring the Banks. It looks for a need and becomes involved with the potential client long before the question of financing arises.” “It is easier to go to the client directly and get them pumped up about the equipment?” [43]
- One has to have a considerable amount of technical and legal knowledge to market this work. [44]