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The good thing about a formal tender response (ITT, PQQ etc) is that you know absolutely when the job has to be done by. So when putting the project plan together it is very straightforward to start at the end and work back from there.

However, the temptation when starting a complex task of this nature is to start by getting on with the big elements, and deal with the leftover bits of detail later. Caution – it is these bits which may be the most time consuming, or which, even more importantly, may require a lead time. If you leave them to the last minute, and the lead time exceeds the time left, woe betide!

My tip is, plan all the tasks from the end back, and work out which ones need starting first. Once started you will then be able to get on with the big elements with the comfort of knowing that everything is under control.

Tender Planning

1. SIZE UP THE TENDER

- a. Review the document immediately (within 24 hours)
- b. Any tasks that may take some time, or that require a long lead time, can be started immediately
- c. Produce a list of response requirements

2. PLAN THE JOBS TO BE DONE

- a. Assess and list tasks to be undertaken;
 - i. By whom
 - ii. By when

3. PUBLISH A PROJECT PLAN

- a. End back: Start at the end and work backwards. Aim to complete with at least two full working days to spare.
- b. Plan all tasks sequentially - tasks / dates / responsibilities
- c. Divide tasks into groups. Don't clutter the plan up with too much detail. (Detailed elements can be planned separately).
- d. Plan each stage;
 - i. First draft
 - ii. Review
 - iii. Final draft
 - iv. Etc.
- e. Plan in the deadline for clarifications

4. COMMUNICATE THE PLAN

- a. Communicate to all concerned
- b. Check understanding
- c. Check buy-in

5. CHECK REGULARLY

- a. Against the time plan
- b. Against the list of response requirements

6. MANAGE TIGHTLY - and adjust the plan if required