

New business pitching just got simple

I never said easy - I said simple. Life is chaotic enough for everyone - the last thing a client wants to buy is a complex offering. Many pitches are lost by agencies complicating their presentation to ensure that they get it absolutely 'right', at the expense of being absolutely clear and simple.

 By Sid Peimer 7 Apr 2004

They tend to pitch for new business with a 'unique' approach that will wow that specific client. Bollocks. Winning pitches all have the same ingredients - a person off the street would make the same choice as the client.

Susan Croft of the Aziz Corporation agrees: "New business pitches need not be a daunting experience. It those few service organisations that learn the golden rule of pitches, who will consistently beat the competition."

In a study of 304 companies conducted by the Centre for Competitiveness at the University of Luton, the winners show a very separate profile to the losers.

Companies that win 75% and more	Companies that win 25% or less
"I need to understand the VALUE that the client expects, and I need to reset those expectations if necessary."	"Everyone knows what is expected of a good agency."
"I need to understand the 'cost of ownership' issues - who's derriere is on the line."	"Surely that's none of our business."
"ESTABLISH the superiority of what we offer - we need to really differentiate ourselves."	"They can see how good we are from our work."
"I need to find out why customers give this client money - what is actually being sold - what is the business 'all about'?"	"Our job is to understand what we do."
"They must buy into us as people."	"They must buy into us as a leading-edge agency."

Adapted (actually slashed to pieces) from: New research shows why "Superbidders" win more business, Centre of Competitiveness, Univ of Luton, 31.10.03.

Professor Coulson-Thomas of the Competitiveness Centre also emphasises the importance of clarity: "The difference between the winners and the losers is that the winners find out what is really important and then focus huge amounts of energy on performing those tasks better than anybody else."

I thought I'd put it into a poem...

Ode to a new client

I want to win your heart
So I'll show you that I'm smart
And wise

And special

Yet all I need to do
Is mirror you for you

That's what wins the pitch

You do.

ABOUT SID PEIMER

You can see Sid Peimer live at Montecasino on the 4th May, where he will show you everything you need to know about winning a pitch. One night only - details on stratplanning.com website.

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