

BID / NO-BID DECISION CHECKLIST

A Guide for Government & Industry Professionals

Executive Summary

Pursuing a government contract requires significant time, resources, and commitment. A structured **Bid / No-Bid decision process** helps organizations evaluate opportunities objectively and avoid investing in pursuits that cannot be won or supported.

This guide presents a simple, practical framework used by defense contractors to assess opportunity fit, customer access, capability alignment, competitive environment, and organizational readiness.

Why Bid / No-Bid Discipline Matters

Organizations that apply a consistent decision model benefit from:

- Higher win rates
- Better alignment with strategic objectives
- Improved resource allocation
- Reduced pursuit of mismatched or low-probability opportunities
- Stronger forecasting and pipeline management

Common Pitfalls When No Process Exists

- Bidding too late, after requirements are shaped
 - Pursuing opportunities without customer relationships
 - Chasing work that doesn't match capabilities
 - Underestimating competition
 - Failing to meet compliance needs (CMMC, DFARS, etc.)
 - Producing weak proposals due to limited resources
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Core Evaluation Criteria

The following categories help determine whether an opportunity is worth pursuing.

Key Factors to Assess

- **Customer Access:** Do we know the decision makers and understand their priorities?
 - **Technical Fit:** Can we meet 80% or more of the requirements?
 - **Competitive Landscape:** Who is the incumbent? Are they strong?
 - **Contract Vehicle:** Do we possess the required IDIQ or GWAC?
 - **Pricing Realism:** Can we price competitively while remaining profitable?
 - **Organizational Capacity:** Do we have the staff, time, and expertise?
 - **Strategic Alignment:** Does this opportunity support long-term business goals?
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Bid / No-Bid Scoring Model

A simple scoring model allows teams to evaluate each criterion objectively.

1. Score each category from 1 (weak) to 5 (strong)
2. Multiply by each category's assigned weight
3. Add weighted scores to determine decision outcome

Example Weights

- Customer Access – 20%
- Technical Fit – 25%
- Competition – 15%
- Pricing – 20%
- Capacity – 10%
- Strategic Fit – 10%

Decision Thresholds:

- **≥ 80%:** Clear Bid
 - **65–79%:** Leadership Review
 - **< 65%:** No-Bid Recommended
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Bid / No-Bid Process Overview

1. Opportunity Identified
2. Initial Qualification
3. Capture Team Review
4. Scoring Against Criteria
5. Decision Meeting
6. Documented Outcome

Simple Diagram

Identify → Qualify → Score → Decision → Proceed or Redirect

Bid / No-Bid Checklist

Use this checklist to guide decisions:

Customer Understanding

- We have access to the customer
- We understand mission needs
- We have participated in RFIs or industry engagement

Capability Fit

- Our offering meets requirements
- We have relevant past performance
- Technology is mature and demonstrable

Competitive Position

- Incumbent is beatable or vulnerable
- We understand competitor strengths and weaknesses

Internal Readiness

- Adequate staffing available
- Proposal resources secured
- Management support confirmed

Financial Realism

- Rough pricing estimates support a competitive bid
- Profitability is achievable

Appendix A — Acronyms & References

Acronyms

- IDIQ – Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity
- GWAC – Government-Wide Acquisition Contract
- PM – Program Manager
- KO – Contracting Officer
- CMMC – Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification

References

- Federal Acquisition Regulation – <https://www.acquisition.gov/far>
- GAO Bid Protest Docket – <https://www.gao.gov/legal/bid-protests>
- DoD Small Business Programs – <https://business.defense.gov>