

## **COMMONLY MADE MISTAKES THAT LEAD TO DISQUALIFICATION**

*At ERM, we strive for a responsible and inclusive procurement process that ensures equal opportunity. The following list aims to help participating vendors avoid disqualification. For specific directions on how to respond to an active solicitation, consult said solicitation.*

### **Missing submission deadline**

All solicitations indicate the time, date, and method to submit a proposal/bid in order to be considered for the work. Bidders should take note of this deadline early on and submit a proposal/bid with ample time, particularly if sending via snail mail. Proposals/bids that fail to arrive by the established deadline are automatically disqualified.

### **Failure to follow instructions**

Bidders should take the time to read the advertised solicitation carefully, back to back. They must identify the information being requested and respond as directed, using the forms provided and in the manner specified in the advertised solicitation.

### **Blank spaces**

Solicitations require the bidder to take action in a variety of ways. Responding to a solicitation might involve providing concrete information, checking “yes” or “no” boxes, noting “n/a” and so forth. A bidder is non-responsive when the County is unable to locate or identify a bidder’s acknowledgment to a question.

### **Insufficient recommendation letters**

When a solicitation requires a specific amount of letters of recommendations, bidders must respond by providing no less than the amount of letters specified. For instance, submitting 2 letters of recommendations in response to a solicitation requiring 3 such letters is insufficient. Bidders cannot use Palm Beach County Dept. of Environmental Resources Management staff for a letter of recommendation.

### **Record of experience**

Personal resumés of company staff do not constitute a company’s record of experience or attest to a company’s past performance. A solicitation requiring bidders to submit a list of work of similar scale and scope is looking to confirm company’s ability, experience, and capacity to perform the services being solicited. A personal resumé fails to meet this requirement.

### **Insufficient references**

When a solicitation requires a specific number of references, bidders must respond by providing no less than the number of references specified. A proposal including contact information for 2 references when the solicitation requires 3 references is non-responsive. Bidders cannot use Palm Beach County Dept. of Environmental Resources Management staff as a reference.

### **Unacknowledged Addenda**

Any addendum issued by the County during the advertisement period of a solicitation must be acknowledged by bidders in their response. The County might issue an addendum to clarify or replace previously advertised information no later than five business days prior to the bid submission deadline. Bidder’s acknowledgment of each addendum issued by the County often consists of noting the date of issuance on the acknowledgment space provided in the solicitation package.

### **Incomplete bid schedule**

In addition to listing the total contract price proposed, bidders must list unit prices for all line items identified in the bid schedule advertised with the solicitation. Verification of all unit prices submitted with a proposal is part of the County’s evaluation process before determining contract award.

### **Insufficient bid bond**

A bid bond is typically 5% of the proposed contract price and due with a bidder’s proposal.

### **Failure to attend mandatory pre-bid meeting**

If a solicitation states the pre-bid meeting is *mandatory* in nature, all bidders considering submitting a proposal must attend to ensure qualification. Attendance does not constitute an obligation by the bidder to submit a proposal later. Attendance is optional but highly encouraged when the pre-bid meeting is *non-mandatory*.