

10 Steps to Winning Your First DoD Contract



You're a small business owner interested in working with the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), but how do you get from where you are now to winning a coveted contract?

1

CONNECT WITH YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK

Give yourself the best chance of success by first enlisting the help of local experts. These FREE resources exist specifically to assist you in navigating the process of becoming procurement ready.



APEX
Accelerators

Education and training ensures businesses are capable of participating in federal, state, and local government contracts in the defense-supply chain

apexaccelerators.us



Small Business
Development Center

Individualized business advising and technical assistance to existing small businesses and pre-venture entrepreneurs

sba.gov/local-assistance



SCORE Business
Mentoring

Training, webinars, online workshops, courses on demand and a library of online resources

score.org



ChallengeHer

Workshops, mentoring and direct access to government buyers for women-owned small businesses

wipp.org/page/challengeher



Veterans Business
Outreach Centers

Resources for transitioning service members, veterans, National Guard and Reserve members and military spouses

sba.gov/local-assistance/resource-partners/veterans-business-outreach-center-vboc-program

2

KNOW THE RULES

Working in national security requires robust safeguards. Review and understand the complex rules that govern all DoD acquisitions.



3

REGISTER IN SAM



GET FOUND!

You have an incredible product or service to offer - now it needs to be discoverable. The System for Award Management (SAM) is the marketplace for DoD goods and services. Your local APEX Accelerators representative can help you get registered.



4

REQUEST / UPDATE YOUR CAGE CODE

Now that Contracting Officers and Small Business Professionals can find you in the marketplace, they'll need to know where you're located. Request or update your Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code that identifies your facility's specific location.



5

TARGET YOUR MARKET



\$154B

*in prime DoD contracts
were awarded to small
businesses in 2021*

Marketing yourself to the over **30,000** DoD acquisition staff will be key to successfully winning one of those contracts. Don't overlook these essential marketing tips:

- find your niche
- don't try to be everything to everybody
- only market to potential customers that buy what you sell

6

CREATE YOUR CAPABILITIES STATEMENT

- ✓ summarize your experience and offerings on one-page
- ✓ include your CAGE code
- ✓ avoid typos
- ✓ tailor it to your target customer
- ✓ demonstrate how you address their specific challenges
- ✓ explain how your service or product positively impacts their cost, schedule, and performance



7

IDENTIFY PRIME OPPORTUNITIES

**BE
PROACTIVE**



Don't just sit around waiting to be discovered! Use SAM to seek out and identify contracting and subcontracting opportunities with potential buyers that fit your target market.

8

FIND YOUR POINTS-OF-CONTACT

Once you've identified an opportunity, request a meeting with a Small Business Professional (SBP) who will serve as your point-of-contact. You can find them through the originating agency's Small Business Office.

You can also connect to the Small Business Administration's Procurement Center Representatives (PCRs).

9

SUBMIT YOUR BID

Put together a top-notch technical proposal. Dot your i's and cross your t's, making sure you've met all of the agency's proposal requirements. Enlist the professionals in your support network to review your bid before you submit.

Submit



10

PROVIDE A STELLAR EXPERIENCE



Winning your first contract is just the beginning. Have a plan for executing the contract to the DoD's high standards.

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Contact an expert at your local APEX Accelerators.

Office of Small Business Programs

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

business.defense.gov

*We maximize opportunities for small businesses
to contribute to national security
by providing combat power for our troops
and economic power for our nation.*

