



## Strategic Space Development

# Business Development: Secrets to Success

## Strategic Planning and Business Development

**Jim Cantrell**  
President SSD

### Points of Interest:

- Involve BD in Strategic Planning
- Strategic plans will guide “bid/no bid” decisions
- Strategic plan allocates resources in BD activities
- Black Hat Reviews help ghost the competitor’s weaknesses
- Upcoming BD courses – special rates

An effective strategic plan guides IR&D investments, market priorities, revenue targets, future product lines, bid/no bid decisions and B&P investments. These are core areas for the corporation and each depends on the success of the business development efforts. It has been our experience in working with companies, small and large, that the successful ones have some sort of strategic plan that touches on all of these elements. These elements are iterated with the company stakeholders. The strategic plan can vary from something completely informal – as in a one page flow chart – to a large and voluminous book that touches on all the key areas and includes a lot of market analysis and strategic insight. Either way, the fact that someone is thinking at this level and putting it into action will make the difference between success and failure.

A strategic plan will set the direction for future IR&D activities. These are a key part of any roadmap that identifies new and emerging markets that your company wants to enter and set the stage for future corporate capabilities and products – those items that the business development team will turn

into value propositions to reach the all important contract dollar. There is a clear need to outline the requirements and strategies in this area with business development stakeholders so they can provide value by determining unmet needs in the market and long-term sales strategies.

The Strategic Plan will also set the stage for which markets will be emphasized and particularly if new markets are to be penetrated. Market emphases are too important to be left to anyone but the corporate leaders but clearly without this guidance business development efforts will lack critical focus and direction. The BD stakeholders will have direct and relevant experience that can greatly improve the odds of market penetrations by helping form the strategy and give “sanity checks”.

Every business has to have revenue targets and the strategic planning process will typically determine what they are. Revenue targets flow down to the business development efforts serving to define the volume of opportunities and new business leads that need to be pursued. Often, these revenue targets are determined outright

from the top levels of the corporation but involvement of BD stakeholders will provide important feedback to the viability of these projections and resources required to implement these revenues.

Despite the obvious need for a strategic plan, most businesses do not do this part of the process well. Small businesses rarely have a strategic plan. Simply put, entrepreneurs usually know where to go and how to get there. However, as the business grows the ability of the single entrepreneur to communicate those strategies and to see larger strategies will benefit from an expanded strategic planning process. This process usually results in medium-size companies struggling with mastering something relevant and avoiding the large planning activities that are both slow and expensive. On the other hand, large corporate strategies are often mired in formality of process and suffer from a lack of dynamism and a unitary world view. These situations can all be a challenge for the business development stakeholders.

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## Strategic Planning and Business Development cont.

Many Strategic Plans fail to become a useful guide for companies because the authors do not fully engage Business Development staff, who should be key stakeholders in the development process. Veterans of business development recognize this and astute practitioners will work closely with company executives and managers to educate them on the value of involving business development personnel in the corporate strategic planning process. As long-time consulting professionals, we have found that the success of business development efforts, and indeed the success of growing companies, depends on the vitality of the strategic planning process and its involving all stakeholders in the organization including the business development efforts.

In the end, the most useful outcome of the strategic plan is to guide “bid/no bid” decisions and to allocate resources to business development activities. A firm strategic plan helps business

development make the “bid/no bid” decisions both defensible and logical. There is probably no more important assessment than this in the business development process and solid guidelines are in everyone’s interest. The second major outcome is the amount of resources allotted to business development activities. It is impor-

tant for the stakeholders to work closely with the strategic planners to understand the real costs of capture as well as having a good match between the resources and the revenue goals.



## The Successful Capture Manager December 5, 2008 • Los Angeles, Sofitel LA Hotel

Strategic Space Development is adding a one-day course in *Effective Capture Management* to its highly successful three-day Business Development course in Los Angeles, December 2 - 5.

Customized for but not limited to Program Capture Managers, this course focuses on proven methods to successfully posture your company to win major competitive programs. The course takes you through the capture process from identifying the initial opportunity to the release of the proposal announcement by the customer. Using real-world examples, this course provides valuable insight into the customers’ perspective.

Registration is open at <https://www.regonline.com/BDCourseDec>. We are offering special end of the year pricing for this December event! See page 4 for details.

Dr. Pat Dougherty, VP, Strategic Planning and DoD Programs of Strategic Space Development, is a highly educated and experienced teacher who gained a broad understanding of the customer’s needs during his 20-year Air Force career in the acquisition corp. Presently, Dr. Dougherty develops business opportunities and capture strategies for suppliers to DoD and NASA. Dr. Dougherty has served on government source selection panels. Additionally, Dr. Dougherty has 16 years of business development and management experience in the civilian aerospace industry. The combination of his extensive real-life training with four college degrees (2 Master Degrees in Management) qualifies him to share the lessons he has learned.

## Capture Management: Conducting Black Hat Reviews

Pat Dougherty, Ph.D.

VP Strategic Planning & DoD Space, SSD

When building a win strategy it is important to have an objective assessment of the competition. This assessment significantly influences the way you evaluate your chances of winning, make a “bid/no-bid decision” and build a strategy that will allow you to offer a better approach than the one used by your competition. Additionally, understanding your competition will prepare you to “ghost” your competitor’s weaknesses in your proposal. A typical method used to gather information on your competition is to conduct a “Black Hat Review”.



During a Black Hat review, a team of 6-10 people essentially “change hats” and act as if they are members of the competing team. As the team “acts” like planners for the other company, they discuss relevant past and current programs, and how they are relevant to the new pursuit. They discuss other relevant aspects of their company from the availability of investment funding and staffing, to how they can modify a past design to meet new requirements. If possible, the Black Hat team will have available public domain data on successes and failures of recent relevant programs and even the price of previous contracts awarded. A wealth of information can be found by searching the company’s website and the web for published news articles. The best Black Hat teams may also have participants who were employees of the competition before joining your company. While it is unethical for them to share proprietary knowledge from their previous employer, it is considered acceptable to give an opinion on a philosophy or approach that is likely to be employed by the competition.

### *In Summary:*

1. Assemble your Black Hat Review team
  - a. Knowledgeable BD staff
  - b. Knowledgeable PMs who are aware of other corporations’ programs
  - c. Experienced staff in generating pricing for programs.
  - d. Staff previously employed by the competition or who worked closely with them on past programs
  - e. Knowledgeable consultants (if you don’t have enough experience within your own staff)
2. Have available data you have gathered from multiple sources (webpages, news releases, etc.)
3. Direct the team to act the role of management of your competition.
4. Arrive at an approach that you believe the competition will take. Determine if they will modify a previous design, develop a new one, or team with another company to address a weakness.
5. Use the results of the Black Hat to make your Bid/No-Bid decision, to build your own winning strategy, and to ghost the competition in your proposal.



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*Strategic Space Development is a business development consulting firm specializing in aerospace and defense sector business and competitive intelligence. Strategic Space has many top drawer clients in the high tech and aerospace sectors and works with companies to grow revenues, identify and pursue new business opportunities, and make sound strategic decisions. Our efforts focus on working the client factors that increase the probability of winning new business. SSD's staff hails from DoD, Intelligence Community, and civil space backgrounds and has a breadth of business and engineering experience to work across the large domain of technical sales and strategy considerations. SSD also offers professional development courses in business development, competitive intelligence, strategy development, and engineering disciplines.*

### Here's what they are saying about our courses:

*"A great lesson in the basics of Business Development. The experience that Jim brings to the class provides excellent real-life examples to accompany these lessons."*

**Sean Olding, L-3 Communications Cincinnati Electronics/Business Development Engineer**

*"Outstanding course with great exchange highlighting the real needs for Business Development"*

**David Cela, Raytheon, Sr. Manager**

*"Excellent insight into BD "things to avoid" and "ideas for success" - great for a BD newbie!"*

**Michael Marsicano, Raytheon**

## Business Development Course Los Angeles • December 2-5, 2008

End of the year is a time to set goals and ramp up for 2009. Enjoy some sunshine and join us for our three-day Business Development course held at the Sofitel LA Hotel in downtown Los Angeles.

Mr. James Cantrell, President and CEO of Strategic Space Development, a highly successful aerospace consulting company, will not waste your time with academic theory but give hands-on examples of the hidden forces at work, how to "follow the money" and how to guide a prospect from uncertainty to a high probability sale.

**We are offering special end of the year rates for this event. See rates for details.**

This course is meant for both experienced business development professionals and those new to the profession and focuses on:

- *Understanding the sales process*
- *Developing the new business funnel*
- *The role of marketing and brand generation*
- *Developing Competitive Intelligence*
- *Proposal strategy development and execution*

Also offered at this venue is our Capture Management Course. See pg. 2



### Rates

4-day course \*\$2600/\$2900  
3-day course \*\$2200/\$2500  
1-day Capture Mgmt \*\$900/\$1200  
1-day Comp Intel \*\$900/\$1200

\*Early-bird rates end Nov. 2  
Visit [bdcourses.com](http://bdcourses.com) to register and for more information.

**Contact:** Rebecca Stowers at  
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1-888-327-3993, ext. 7

We also offer on-site courses at your place of business. Eliminate travel costs and add wider exposure within your company. Contact us today for details.