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## “New Normal” Best Practices

1. **Assess key differentiators and “Why Us?” messaging to position for increasing price sensitivity**
2. **Develop multi-platform connections with customers that transcend Zoom**
3. **Leverage OTAs, SBIRs, and alternative acquisition methodologies for near-term wins**
4. **Prepare for a series of Continuing Resolutions, with the customary slowdown in new starts and extension of existing programs**
5. **Develop strategic partnerships to position for increased set-aside spending**
6. **Implement Agile beyond IT to drive value with customers**
7. **Take advantage of a turbulent environment to approach new customers**
8. **Train staff for streamlined procurements and use of orals, challenges, and demos**
9. **Prepare to meet cyber benchmarks as contracts adopt CMMC requirements**
10. **Evaluate recruiting and staffing strategies and pricing models as the shift to remote workforce becomes permanent**

## Follow the White Rabbit to Align Your BD to the New Normal

- 🐾 Review your strategy now to identify BD practices that need to change as hybrid work environments become the new normal
- 🐾 Find new ways to engage existing clients to stand out from the crowd, relieve the monotony of Zoom, and stay connected while apart
- 🐾 Prompt your BD staff to meet customers where they are – online and in-person – and to emphasize substance over form
- 🐾 Avoid the trap of fast money in proposed spending bills and instead refocus on enduring, long waveform technology trends
- 🐾 Exploit this unique period of dislocation to get meetings with new customers you may not have been able to access previously
- 🐾 Parlay your lessons learned from adapting to the new normal into tangible solutions to customers’ business and mission challenges

### “Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go...”

Having traveled through the rabbit hole of COVID lockdowns and precautions of the past 16+ months, like Alice emerging in Wonderland, companies are looking for direction. COVID has brought significant changes to government contracting and the methods companies use to do business. Simply dusting off pre-COVID strategies based on the assumption that business will return to normal would be as mad as a hatter. Companies must review existing strategies with a particular eye for changes in the market. While many trends in the market began prior to the pandemic, and others resulted from it, all need to be addressed carefully to reach new customers and build new capabilities in the new normal. The “Why Us” story, which drives compelling marketing and messaging, may need a new approach in a hybrid state.

### “The time! Who’s got the time?”

The shift from the office to remote work remains the most significant change in the approach to doing business in the federal sector. While it is harder to remain in contact with employees, it is even harder to remain in contact with customers. Find new ways to engage them openly and comfortably to break up the monotony of accumulating Zoom sessions. Try 1:1 calls, arrange to meet over tea, or seek other ways that get your customers away from mass video chats. Also, make sure you add more structure than before with a strict agenda and more standing meetings at shorter intervals, such as daily or weekly, to replace the casual interactions that used to occur in hallways and at the coffee maker/water cooler. A refreshing format with the right structure will show them that you value their time and have your customer looking forward to meeting with you.

### “It takes all the running you can do...”

Avoid following the stimulus fool’s gold of health and telemedicine spending in the wake of COVID. Health providers and researchers will receive most of these dollars, while the contractor addressable market for telemedicine is small (VA, BIA, and some DoD). These do not represent enduring opportunities for most federal service providers. Also, beware the allure of the siren song in the Infrastructure Bill’s size. The money largely goes to construction and broadband providers, leaving only a few crumbs of cyber and R&D spending for most contractors to fight over. Focus on longer term, enduring technology shifts that play on novel techniques for doing business in a hybrid environment: cloud first, cybersecurity, Agile, etc. These are the tools needed to modernize your approach for doing business in a new normal.



As we emerge on the other side of the COVID rabbit hole, everything is not as it was in March 2020, so tailor your go-to-market strategies to succeed in the “new normal.”

### “If you want to get somewhere else...”

Contrary to popular belief, customers ARE in the office, so if your BD team tells you they are unable to get meetings, take a closer look. Because of hybrid work, it has never been easier to get meetings – people who would not typically see you in-person are now open to virtual meetings. At the same time, incumbents are vulnerable as they fail to adapt new normal habits to existing accounts, so it is an ideal time to try to break into new clients. Because of the business challenges brought on by hybrid delivery, customers are more receptive to new ideas for incorporating emerging technologies to solve their real business challenges. However, you must lead with ideas! Your customers will likely not make the time for the old glad handing and back slapping approach to BD. Bring them solutions to their business challenges of executing the mission on this side of the rabbit hole.