



Stop Chasing Dead Ends:

**How to Steal Your
Competitor's Federal
Playbook and Win More
Contracts**

Most small businesses waste time and resources pursuing the wrong agencies, the wrong vehicles, and opportunities they'll never win. Here's one way to skip the guesswork.

The Reality: While you're refreshing SAM.gov, hoping to find the "perfect" RFP, your competitors already know which opportunities are coming because they've been building relationships with those buyers for months.

The Good News: They left a public trail. You just need to know how to read it.

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6 Intelligence Moves That Turn Competitor Wins Into Your Pipeline

1. Find the Exact Offices Writing Them Checks

- ▶ **Don't just see "Department of Defense." Drill into the specific buying office: Is it NAVSEA PMS 450? Air Force Life Cycle Management Center? Army Contracting Command - Aberdeen?**
- ▶ ***Why this matters:* These offices have budgets, buying patterns, and relationship networks. Once you identify where your competitor is trusted, you know exactly which program managers and contracting officers to target.**
- ▶ ***Your action:* Pull their last 10 awards and map the specific offices. Those are hot targets.**

2 • Reverse-Engineer Their Vehicle Strategy

- ▶ ***The mistake:*** Applying to every GWAC and IDIQ you're eligible for.
- ▶ ***Why this matters:*** These offices have budgets, buying patterns, and relationship networks. Once you identify where your competitor is trusted, you know exactly which program managers and contracting officers to target.
- ▶ ***Your action:*** Identify which contract vehicles generated actual revenue for them (not just ceiling value). If they're winning \$2M+ annually through GSA MAS but rarely through OASIS, that tells you where the real buying action is for your space.

3 • Decode Their Set-Aside Strategy

- ▶ **How much are they winning through?:**
 - **8(a) sole source?** (They have direct agency relationships)
 - **SDVOSB set-asides?** (These offices prioritize veteran businesses)
 - **Full and open competition?** (They're beating large businesses on capability)

- ▶ ***Why this matters:*** This reveals both their competitive advantage AND where they're vulnerable. If they rely heavily on one set-aside, you can position differently or target offices that prefer your certifications. **Your action:** Note the set-aside pathway type on every win.
Pattern = strategy.

Build Your Pipeline

4. From Their Expiring Contracts

- ▶ Here's the play most small businesses miss:
Every contract has an end date. A contract expiring in 12-18 months is an opportunity warming up *right now*.
- ▶ Your action:
 - Find contracts ending in the next 6-18 months
 - Research the program office's mission and pain points
 - Request a meeting with the program manager and small business specialist *now*
 - Position yourself as a solution *before* the RFP drops
- ▶ This is how you get into the game 6-18 months early while everyone else waits for the solicitation.

5. Map Their Customer Relationships to Industry Events

- ▶ **Your competitor's top 3-5 customers aren't random. They're offices with budget, mission alignment, and an established buying pattern.**
- ▶ **Your action:**
 - **Identify their top revenue-generating offices**
 - **Check if those offices are hosting industry days, small business forums, or pre-solicitation events**
 - **Show up. Introduce yourself. Ask smart questions about their mission priorities.**
- ▶ ***Why this works:* You're building face-time with buyers who already value what you offer. You're just a new option.**

6 Study Their Teaming Strategy (Prime vs. Sub Mix)

- ▶ **The question: Are they winning as a prime contractor or riding as a subcontractor?**
- ▶ **What this reveals:**
 - **Mostly prime wins? They have strong direct agency relationships**
 - **Mostly sub work? They're connected to large primes who need small business partners**
 - **Mixed? They're playing both sides strategically**
- ▶ ***Your action:* Identify who they team with repeatedly. Those large businesses are actively looking for small business partners. Study what services they subcontract out. You could be next.**

The Bottom Line: Intelligence + Strategy = Contracts

This isn't about copying your competitors. It's about using public data to:

- **Target the right agencies (where budgets are proven)**
- **Pursue the right vehicles (where revenue actually flows)**
- **Time your outreach correctly (before the RFP, not after)**
- **Build relationships strategically (with buyers who already buy what you sell)**

Most small businesses operate blind. You don't have to.



Ready to Enhance Your Federal Sales?

This is one piece of the puzzle. Building a robust plan, then executing it?: That's where most small businesses get stuck.

Need help? Reach Out!

Book a 30-Minute Strategy Call

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