

Top Critical Success Factors for Teaming:

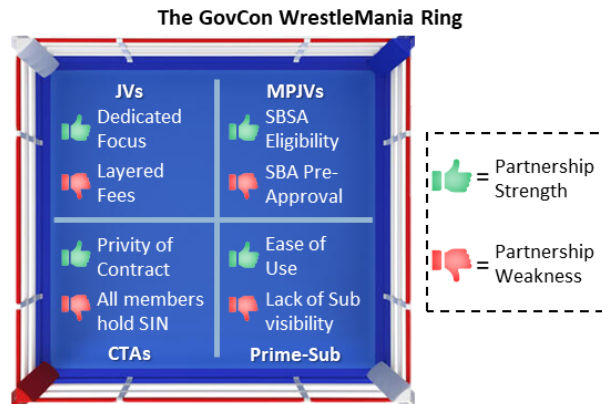
1. *Customers pick primes not teams; while tag team matches are common-place in wrestling, overreliance on teammates can be a fatal flaw*
2. *Avoid giving away guaranteed workshare*
3. *Dream teams must be price competitive... preserve your leverage and teammate optionality by discussing pricing before you sign the Teaming Agreement*
4. *Understand the distinction between teammates you need to win, and teammates you need to execute*
5. *Fight each fight with equal vigor... treat orals as seriously as written proposals; craft the story, polish the slides, and include teammates in practice sessions*
6. *Don't get body slammed when negotiating workshare*
7. *Implement a capture strategy that lets the customer know your finishing moves and capabilities before reading the proposal*
8. *Anticipate that GWAC TOs will be more like a Royal Rumble than a 1-on-1 competition*

Strategic Partnerships are Key to Winning Heavyweight Contract Matchups

- 🐾 Less is more...don't give away workshare to subcontractors for work you can and should do as the prime
- 🐾 Add teammates who can demonstrably increase your p(win)...don't just throw bones to friends or try to take people off the street
- 🐾 Avoid the temptation to reflexively partner with incumbents; in many cases, they are part of the problem, not the solution
- 🐾 Partner strategically – last second partnerships can lead to desperate negotiations on workshare and pricing
- 🐾 The Golden Rule still applies – treat your subcontractors as you would like to be treated when you are a sub
- 🐾 Strategy and operating model (e.g, integrated team v. “swim lanes”) should always drive teaming decisions, not the other way around

Size Matters in the Ring and the Competitive Field

In the square circle where wrestling for GovCon dollars often requires small business workshare, contract vehicle access, or broad sets of qualifications and capabilities, primes often need a tag team partner to get the win. Today's reality is that many large complex programs are “going SBSA.” The reasons usually boil down to meeting small business quotas, disregarding the impact of these decisions. \$50M+ existing programs are being competed as SBSA, with small business turning to large business subcontractors. This results in layered costs and performance risks that are antithetical to Government and taxpayer interests. Learn the contract cage match imperative of having “go-to” small business teammates who don't just round out your teams when you prime, but tag you in when you are ineligible to prime.



In GovCon WrestleMania, each partnership type comes with benefits and drawbacks; one partnership type does not dominate the ring.

Fighting for Workshare and Avoiding Pyrrhic Victory

High saturation, competition, and regulation in the federal contracting ring make it ever more difficult to take home the championship belt without a supportive team. Many of your potential subcontractors will insist on a guaranteed workshare, but unless you're desperate (in which case perhaps you should revisit your bid decision), avoid the temptation. Guaranteed workshare is anathema to a “best athlete” staffing approach, and makes it even harder to hit PTW targets, rapidly fill vacancies, and ensure high quality execution. If you have to guarantee workshare to prevail, discuss specific proposal support expectations and insist on early pricing commitments to ensure that you can still hit your PTW target. Last second partnerships can lead to desperate negotiations on workshare and pricing that get more expensive the closer it gets to proposal submission.

Partner to Win

To become the GovCon Hulk Hogan requires both strategic and opportunistic partnerships. You need your “go-to” teammate in the ring with you for consecutive RFP throwdowns against current belt-holders. This strategic partner is a long-term relationship where you often bring opportunities to each other due to complementary customer and capability sets, and your alignment of strategic goals to win the belt together. In some cases,

a one-time opportunistic partner with deep relationships and customer knowledge, required clearances and certifications, and complementary capabilities can bring the finishing move to be successful as the challenger. Other times, the best partners may be competitors – bringing together common foes such as big consultancies or SIs teaming to go after major bids.

Teaming May be Necessary But is Never Sufficient

Formalizing a partnership tag team is rarely easy. While it is rare to find anyone who has been in a JV and is also a fan of JVs, in some cases they are the least bad alternative. Mentor-Protégé JVs can enable a large business to play a meaningful role in a SBSA match and also capture some of the upside they create. Lastly, formal CTAs legally do not create a new entity but establish a contractual partnership between all team members while giving the Government flexibility to engage the contractor of their choice without incurring the financial burden of a prime's markup. CTAs and JVs should be leveraged as long-term teams, not single-use transactions to gain access to a government-wide IDIQ. Whichever tag team partnership you choose, effective BD and Capture, competitive price, and differentiated value proposition remain the cornerstones of victory.