

# BEST PRACTICES TOOLKIT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

How to Successfully Navigate the  
Federal A/E/C Marketplace

## Get Active in your Local SAME Post

- Participate in events
  - Network with government and industry partners
  - Follow up with people you meet
- Volunteer with the Local Post
  - Join a Committee; Help plan an Event
  - Support STEM and Veterans Programs
- Follow and repost their social media



## Attend SAME Post Industry Days & Small Business Events

- Expand Your Network
- Gain Insider Knowledge
- Meet Decision-Makers
- Meet Teaming Partners
- Learn Best Practices



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## Attend, Exhibit, and Participate in Matched Networking at SAME's Federal Small Business Conference for the A/E/C Industry

- Held in November, 5,000+ participants
- Networking Opportunities
- Discussions with Government Contracting Personnel
- Education & Training Programming
- One-on-One Matchmaking Sessions
- Showcase Your Business
- Identify Potential Teaming Partners



## Develop Your Elevator Speech

- A clear and concise statement of the services/products you provide
  - Make it about them and their needs, not just you
  - Show the value of your company, and reliability
- Communicate what differentiates you from your competition
- Open The Door for Deeper Conversation.



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## Develop a Capabilities Statement

- A capabilities statement is a marketing tool
  - A visual representation of your company, products, and services
  - Limit to two pages; keep it focused and accessible to readers
- Designed to convince federal buyers and prime contractors that you are a high value and low risk company, with a good reputation
- Utilize the SAME Online Directories & Resources
- Search for Prime Contractors, Partners, JV Opportunities
- Find the calendar of local and national SAME events; there are many!
- Stay informed with articles in The Military Engineer and the SAME Newsroom
- Join SAME's Small Business Council and other national groups
- Ask questions and make connections through SAME Engage, members-only online discussion forum
- Consider advertising in TME, and sponsoring and exhibiting at events to get your company's name out there; by associating your business with SAME, it will elevate your brand above your competition



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## Do Your Homework!

Before attending events:

- Research and identify your target primes
- What agencies are looking for firms like yours
- Build relationships and showcase your value
- Don't think the primes will just seek you out; you need to be proactive
- Certification is a tool, not a guarantee
- Engage and follow up consistently
- Be Prepared to Discuss Specific Opportunities
- Ask agencies questions before the opportunity is published
- Present teaming opportunities to primes
- Bring intel to the meetings; ask good questions that lead to answers you need
- Consider buying business development/market research tools and services (several are members of SAME and offer reduced pricing to fellow corporate members)



## Find a Mentor

- Identify someone in the industry to help you understand the government marketplace
  - SAME's Online Directory of Individual and Corporate Members
  - Industry Associations & Networking Groups
  - Local Chambers of Commerce
  - Prime Contractors to Team With
  - LinkedIn and GovCon Communities
  - Existing Connections, Other Companies in Your Area
- SCORE (*Service Corps of Retired Executives*)
- Find Agencies that NEED your Services
- What have agencies purchased?
  - [www.usaspending.gov](http://www.usaspending.gov)
- What do agencies anticipate purchasing?
  - <https://www.acquisition.gov/procurement-forecasts>
  - What are agencies purchasing now?
  - <http://www.sam.gov>

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## Focus on Contracts You Can Perform

- You can't do everything; do what you do best
- Assess your capabilities and past performance
- Understand the scope and requirements; don't overextend your capabilities
- Build strategic partnerships; the firms you work with the most will become your trusted partners
- Prioritize quality of the work you do over quantity

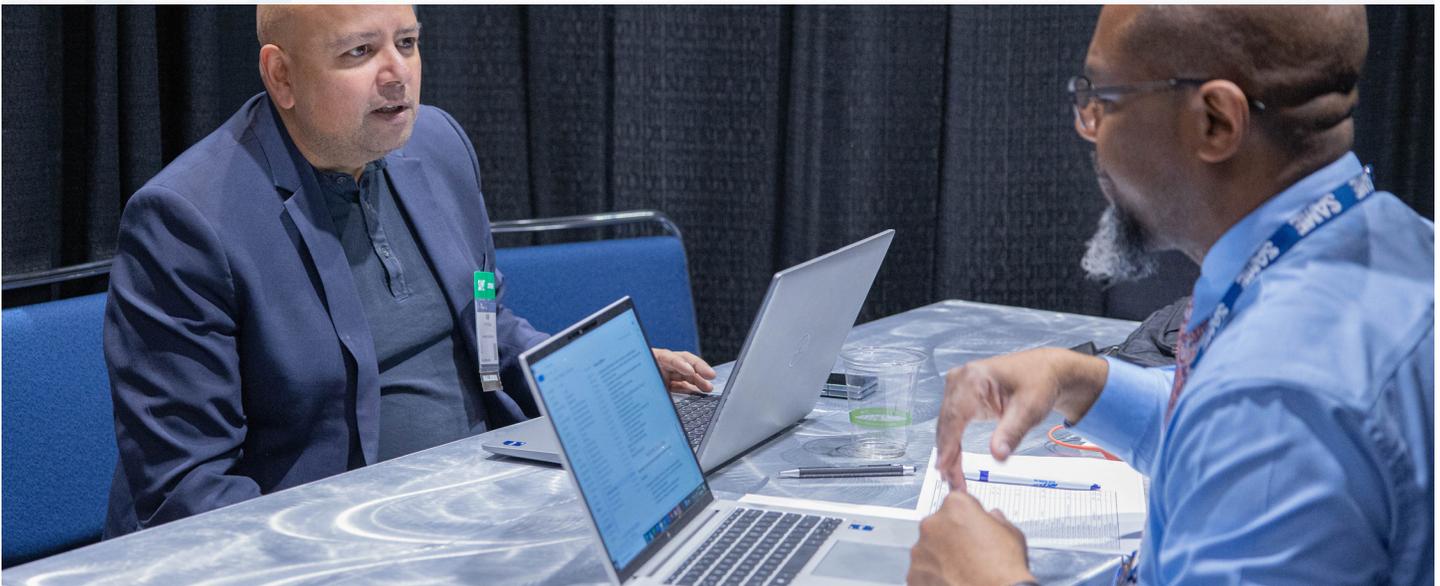
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## Connect with your APEX Accelerator

[www.apexaccelerators.us](http://www.apexaccelerators.us)

- APEX Accelerators provide:
  - Free training
  - One-on-one consulting
  - Networking opportunities.
- They will help you develop an approach to pursuing government contracts.
- Find your local APEX Accelerator:  
APEX Locator



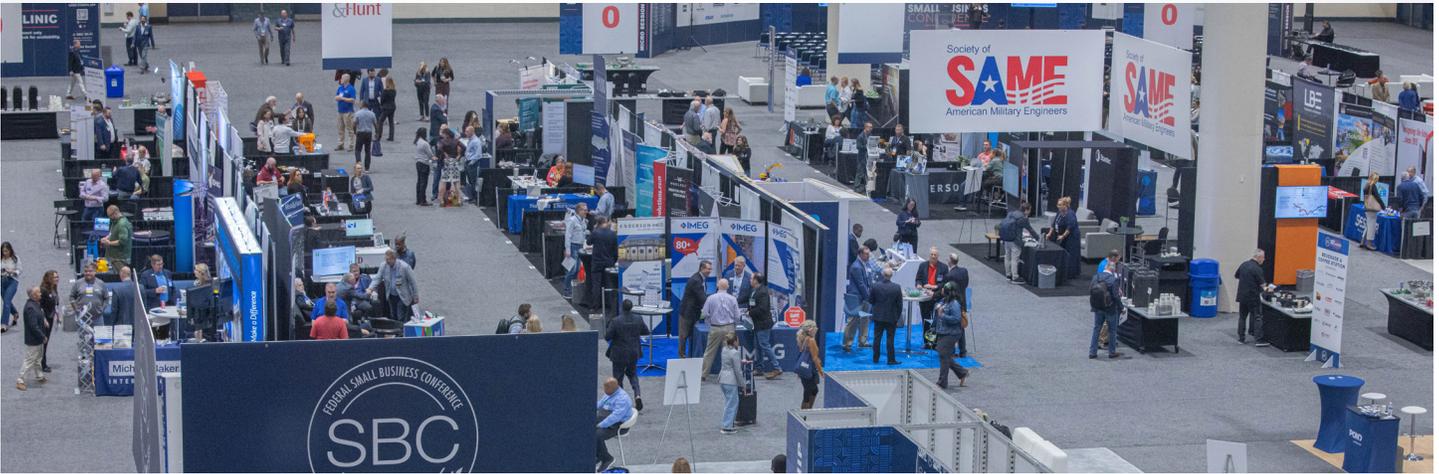
## How Agencies Use Certifications

- Target Agencies with Set Aside Goals
- Pursue Set-Aside/Sole-Source Opportunities
- Partner with Large Business Prime Contractors
- Gain Access to Exclusive Resources and Training



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## RESOURCES

### Use SAM.gov

- Register in SAM.gov
- Website where most federal procurements are posted
- Tailor your search
- Many APEX Accelerators will provide a search
- Research federal spending trends
- Connect with your APEX Accelerator (SBA Program)
- APEX Accelerators provide:
  - Free training
  - One-on-one consulting
  - Networking opportunities.
  - Marketing & Networking
  - Securing Registrations
  - Procurement Research
  - Identifying Bid Opportunities
  - Proposal Preparation
  - Determining Contracting Suitability
  - Getting Certified
  - Contract Performance & Audit Support
  - They will help you develop an approach to pursuing government contracts.