

# A better bid

Adam Deakin, Proposal Lead, Tunstall Healthcare

*Tunstall's Bids Team handles hundreds of tenders each year. Adam Deakin, one of the Proposal Leads, tells us more about what they do and how he's settled into his new role.*

## Early days

I'm still in my first year at Tunstall, so I'm learning something new every day. This role was a real change of direction for me, as I was previously an assistant head teacher at a primary school. I've always loved language, and actually there are some parallels, as writing policies and action plans was a big part of my last job. Tunstall is a major local employer, so I knew a few people who work here before I started. They told me all good things about the culture and working environment so when I applied for this position, I felt very positive, and fortunately I was successful. One of the things that sticks in my mind from the induction process is the amount of staff that have been here for such a long time; more than 25% have worked here for over 20 years. To me that's a sign of a good company. There are also chances to apply for roles in different areas of the business, so it's great for career progression, and they offer hybrid working which means I get to take my kids to school and walk the dog on my lunch break sometimes. It's a much healthier way of working, which I think also makes for more productive, positive employees. I was also attracted to the values of the company and its purpose. It genuinely feels like we make a real difference to people and their lives. Not only do our products support people wanting to maintain their independence, but they help those providing care and support too.

## Team work

The Bids Team's day starts with a daily catch up, where we update each other on progress, share information and make sure all current bids are on track as well as looking at those coming up. We'll also agree where we might submit clarification questions to make sure we have fully understood what is being asked of us. As a department, our work is pivotal to the customer being clear about what they can expect from us from day one.

One of the things I love about my job is that you get to see a tender through from start to finish. Because Tunstall offers everything from community alarms, warden call and telecare to access control, CCTV and fire systems, no two tenders are the same. We start with a kick off meeting with all relevant internal stakeholders, and consult with other departments to agree the best way to deliver what the customer needs. This also gives me good insight into the many areas of the business, which is really helpful when I'm crafting a submission. I really enjoy building up a full piece of work over time and honing it to make sure it's tailored to that particular tender.

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## **Setting standards**

We offer a really wide range of technology solutions and because of the nature of what we do it all has to meet rigorous standards. It's clearly important that we demonstrate our adherence to these standards, right across design, manufacture, supply, installation, monitoring and maintenance. But it's also about making our responses clear to read and easy to digest so our customers can find the information they need easily without encountering unnecessary technical jargon.

A lot of customers are moving to cloud-based solutions, such as our SaaS (Software as a Service) PNC call centre monitoring software. This has great advantages as it's really cost effective, saving some of the overheads associated with hardware and software by using a licence-based model. It also means operators can work from anywhere, which makes services much more agile. Multiple centres can also work together using a multi-tenancy SaaS platform, which brings efficiencies for smaller centres, but also means they can continue to run their local services.

## **Giving back**

Many of our tenders include questions about social value, and it's really rewarding to see the impact we can have on communities as part of the work we do. All Tunstall employees can take paid leave to volunteer for good causes, and many of us fundraise independently too. I recently walked the three peaks to raise awareness for Alzheimer's, and plan to do more this year. There are often events at head office and Tunstall Response which have charitable aims and the company itself contributes to national organisations as well as to the local area; for example, providing new laptops to the nearby primary school during lockdown.

From the moment I walked into Tunstall I was made to feel welcome, and that continues to be the case. The technology is advancing all the time and it's really exciting but most of all it's a great feeling to be part of connecting people to the support they need to live safely and as independently as possible.

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