

WORKPLACE

Federal Procurement Highlights





The Roadmap to AbilityOne: Working with SourceAmerica

Agencies are not just worried about budgets in FY15. With fears of additional budget cuts down the road, procurement leaders are increasingly looking to FY16. The time to prepare is now. For procurement leaders looking to work with SourceAmerica® and leverage the many benefits of AbilityOne®, there are five key steps to take today to prepare for tomorrow:

1. **Identify:** First, identify your need for one of AbilityOne's thousands of products and services that SourceAmerica can help procure.
2. **Engage:** Contact SourceAmerica early in your procurement planning process, as early as one year prior to the actual procurement. SourceAmerica's technical experts and network of experienced contractors can reduce the legwork in the procurement process.
3. **Assess:** Once you have identified your agency's needs, you will receive an itemized price proposal from SourceAmerica and an authorized contractor.

4. **Negotiate:** After reviewing the price proposal, work with SourceAmerica to negotiate a fair market price.

5. **Request:** Once the price is agreed upon, SourceAmerica will send a request on your behalf to the U.S. AbilityOne Commission® to add your product or service to the Procurement List.

Upon receiving the request, the U.S. AbilityOne Commission will determine if your product or service represents a valid addition to the Procurement List and a Fair Market Price. If the request is approved, the Commission will send a notice to the Contracting Officer, and then the contract begins.

As Federal agencies strain to keep up with mission demands in the face of dwindling resources, SourceAmerica and the population it serves are increasingly a vital resource.

Seeing Beyond a Disability

Working with SourceAmerica not only brings immediate cost savings to its partner agencies, but also to the U.S. economy at large by assisting individuals with significant disabilities into jobs. SourceAmerica is capable of providing services in a variety of areas to meet even the most complex needs of the Federal Government.



"Just because somebody has a disability, doesn't mean they are restricted to one type of work," said Nathan Short, a wounded Army Veteran who found work through SourceAmerica. "We can do a lot more."

Short, who was severely wounded in Iraq in a 2005 IED attack, recalled the long and difficult road back from being blown up in a Humvee to securing gainful employment in Austin, TX.

"They really didn't expect me to make it," said Short, recalling his injuries, which today make it difficult for him to sit for extended periods of time. After leaving Walter Reed Medical Center, Short returned home to Oklahoma City and found little available work for a veteran unable to perform physical labor. After years of struggling to find employment that would accommodate his disabilities, Short was about to give up. Then he found work as a contract officer with PSCI, a service-contracting firm in Austin, through SourceAmerica and the AbilityOne® Program.

"If it wasn't for SourceAmerica and PSCI making special accommodations, I would have really struggled. But they gave me a special chair so I can sit for longer periods of time, and they didn't count my doctor visits against my performance," said Short. "Without SourceAmerica, I'd probably be just collecting my VA check. I have a family of six with a new baby — I definitely wouldn't be able to provide for them."

Short's experience speaks to the mission and ever-widening breadth of SourceAmerica's services, said Dennis Fields, COO of SourceAmerica.

"Over the last half-dozen years, we've developed a number of new lines of business to serve people with disabilities," said Fields. "We serve people with developmental disabilities, intellectual disabilities, mental illness, and physical disabilities. But, in the end, these very different abilities allow us to help Federal agencies meet their needs — whether the function requires physical labor or someone capable of running an IT center."