

"Getting Your Proposal Moved to the Top of the Pile"

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By:

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Love your tender

Agenda

- Introductions
- Basic Boot Camp
- Technology Offerings
- Q&A

Always place an initial phone call (Do not send an email instead)

- Don't just talk about carrying out the work, speak to how your company can help them solve their problem or reach their goal
- Use specific mechanics to prove your business case, including testimonials, case studies, and results.

Identify The Business Problem

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Send a Pre-Proposal Letter

- This allows you to follow up on your initial phone call and clarify what you discovered.
- It also allows you to build rapport with you client which can only help you within the proposal process.

Do Research on the Company, Find Out Everything

- Some areas you may want to focus on include:
 - recent acquisitions
 - any companywide initiatives
 - new products being released

Follow Their Guidelines Precisely

- When you are tendering for a Government contract, there are always specific guidelines to follow.
- Be sure to follow these guidelines.
- Your tender needs to be structured in the order in which they called for each piece of information.

Make a List of Your Most Impressive Customers

- Most companies will buy just because it's what their competitors are using
- If you are a small company with an impressive list, it shows you can handle their business as well.
- Also, by doing this you are now only showing the stability of your company, but you are showing that your company is capable of handling a business of their size and scope.

Include Some Testimonials

- People want to hear things for themselves from your actual clients. Quotes can be used for this or case studies are also appropriate.
- Don't just say "references available."
- "We are saving 26% on our operating budget by having your solution" –
Director of Operations, ACME Corporation
 - Try to make the reference from a senior level person or one who your product has a direct impact on

Talk In Benefits

- People really want to know what is in it for them.
- They don't care as much about how big your company is or how long you have been in business.
- Be mindful of this and speak more often about how you are going to deliver results and what it will mean to THEM. You need to tell them.
- Talk benefits instead of talking features .
 - Tell them what you are going to do for them.

NEVER GIVE IN!

- Just because you lost a tender doesn't mean that company will not want to do business with you sometime in the future.
- Make sure you keep in touch and show your interest in them.

Golden Rules For Winning Work

1. First and foremost, a proposal is a sales document.
2. Customers do not buy what it is; they buy what it does for them. They buy benefits, not features.
3. In a proposal, you do not just sell here and there. You sell all the way through.
4. Virtual planning is virtually useless.
5. The audience, not the author, drives the design.
 - Tenders are 2.5 times more likely to win when they designed and delivered key messages directly to decision makers
6. Ease of evaluation is a very real factor of success.
7. In the early phases of evaluation, they are not looking for the winner. They are looking for losers.
8. In most cases, proposals do not win contracts, but they can lose them in a heartbeat.
9. When writing a proposal, writing is the last thing you should do.
10. Win or lose, always debrief with the customer. If you have to choose, debrief after a win.
11. When capability becomes commodity, competition becomes communication.

Let's Talk Technology...

- Content Database
- Using Graphs and Tables
- Key Text
- Concurrent Creation of Documents
- Web-based System

Benefits of a Content Database

- Multiple users can access the same document at the same time
- Contents of sub-documents and graphics can be cross referenced
- Content creation is trackable – no “visibility gap”
- Content is infinitely reusable
- Not having to reinvent the wheel - EVERY TIME!

Use Graphs and Tables

- Select or create graphics that demonstrate your understanding, emphasize your strategy and highlight your discriminators.
- Conceive the graphics before you write the text.
- Select graphics that best support your message.
- Design or modify graphics until they are understandable by all evaluators. (This may be as simple as making sure all graphics have meaningful captions that relate to the proposal.)
- Keep graphics simple, uncluttered, and easy to read.
- Integrate the graphics into the text.
- Orient the graphics vertically.
- Minimize cumbersome fold outs
- Minimize text in graphics. Concentrate text in an action caption.
- Number the graphics in order of appearance in major sections.
- Include an interpretative caption with every graphic.

What is Key Text?

The ACME
Widget Tool
gives our
customers a
45% emission
reduction

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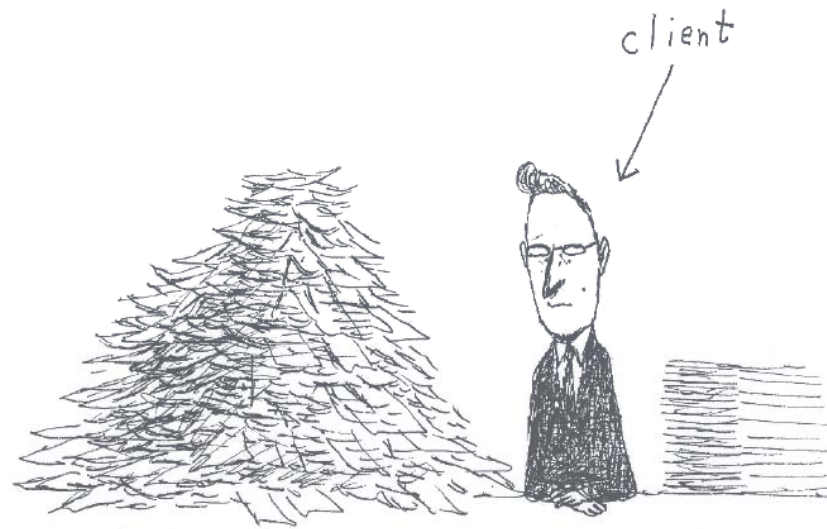
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Benefits of a Concurrent Creation

- Eliminate waiting time latency in create, review, edit, approve cycles
- Write in context
- Always work on the latest version
- Use consistent terminology
- View of comments

Benefits of a Centralized, Web Based System

- Work from anywhere
- Include partners and subcontractors
- Control access to information
- Minimum infrastructure cost
- Minimum administration cost



Which Document
Do You Want To Deliver?

In Closing, Being a Member of APMP Will Also Help You Write Winning Proposals!



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