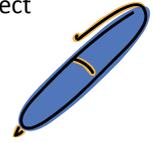


22 THINGS YOU MUST HAVE TO WIN YOUR NEXT PROPOSAL



What will it take to win? Start a list. Think about what you need to do for the customer to select you instead of the competition. This list not only provides you with a set of goals to achieve, but it also provides an objective definition for the quality of your proposal.



1. RFP compliance
2. The best score against the evaluation criteria
3. A competitive advantage over your competition that you can articulate
4. Acceptable contract terms in the RFP
5. Proposed contract terms that are acceptable to the customer
6. A set of compelling win strategies
7. Themes that reflect the win strategies and are properly allocated to the document
8. Clear articulation of the reasons why the customer should select you
9. Narrative that reflects an understanding of the customer beyond what is already in the RFP
10. A superior solution for meeting the customer's needs
11. Recognition of the client's issues, problems, and challenges to overcome
12. A credible proposal that mitigates risks and has the right processes to achieve quality
13. Highly relevant references that will sing your praises
14. Sufficient staffing/resources to execute a quality proposal
15. Excellent visual communication/graphics
16. A proposal document that is easy to navigate
17. Experience citations and examples throughout the text
18. Proposed approaches that reflect the best cost/benefit tradeoffs and the customer's preferences
19. Pricing data that is compliant, accurate, and properly structured
20. Explanations and assumptions that are acceptable and persuasive
21. Pricing that is competitive and within budget, while meeting your revenue/profit goals
22. A document that is free from disqualifying errors

Now prepare a list of action items based on achieving the items on your list. Make sure you look at each item and think about what it will take to get there. Doing this with some of them will carry you back in time all the way to before the RFP is released.

Instead of managing the proposal by simply crossing off the items on the outline and counting the days that remain until the deadline, measure your progress by how many of the items you have fulfilled on your list of what it will take to win.

You can also use this list to guide your review process. Instead of simply asking your reviewers whether the proposal is any "good," ask them to validate that you have achieved the items on your list (and therefore have achieved what it will take to win).