



DEVELOPING A WINNING PROPOSAL

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Karen Rainville
Contracting Officer

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Finding Information

- Read the ENTIRE Request for Proposal (RFP)
- SPAWAR E-Commerce Website
 - <https://e-commerce.spawar.navy.mil>
- Reading Rooms
- Local Policies and Procedures
 - Contract Management Process Guide (CMPG)
- Website: <http://farsite.hill.af.mil>
 - Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR)
 - Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR)
 - Navy Marine Corps Acquisition Regulation Supplement (NMCARS)
- When all else fails, ask the Contracting Officer. The PCO must provide the information if its referenced in the RFP.



Q&As During the Procurement

- All Q&As received in response to an RFP will be posted to industry
 - Be careful when you form your question ensuring the question does not include any information that may give away your strategy
 - Don't include proprietary data or restrictive markings
 - Don't wait until a day before closing to ask your questions because they might not get answered - the RFP will provide a deadline for questions
 - Make sure the question is precise and points to the specific area in the RFP in question
 - Read through all of the previous Q&As, your question may have already been answered
- Ask questions while the RFP is open. Once the RFP has closed and proposals have been received, questions will not be entertained unless discussions are held.
- Not all answers will require a change to the RFP. Revisions can only be made by issuing an amendment to the RFP. Nothing in a Q&A response constitutes a change to the RFP.



Writing the Proposal

- **Section L Instructions, Conditions and Notices to Offerors or Respondents**
 - **What does the Contracting Officer want to see in the proposal?**
 - Review the instructions carefully
 - Format the proposal so that it follows the structure provided in Section L
 - If providing a cost proposal, ensure it follows FAR 15.408 format
 - Keep to the page count. Pages submitted over the limitation will not be provided to the evaluators and will not be considered.
 - Check for grammatical/spelling errors
 - Don't include pricing information in your technical/management proposals
 - Make sure your past performance references are relevant
 - Don't submit information that wasn't requested
 - Don't hard code cells in Excel Spreadsheets – Include formulas used in the cost proposal



Writing the Proposal

- **Put your best effort forward the first time – never assume that you will be given an opportunity to have discussions/fine tune your proposal**
 - **Taking exception/putting conditions on your proposal is a risky business and may make your proposal unacceptable**
- **Ensure that your cost/price proposal is a reasonable reflection of your technical proposal**
 - **This admonition is particularly important for any cost type contract where the Contracting Officer must make an affirmative determination that your cost proposal is a REALISTIC representation of your technical approach**
- **Make sure your proposal is submitted ON TIME**
 - **A late proposal, with very rare exceptions, may not be evaluated and is usually returned unopened**



Understanding the Evaluation

- **Section M Evaluation Factors for Award**
 - The grading system – what you need to demonstrate to win
 - Federal regulations require the acquiring activity to inform all offerors of the criteria, and their relative importance, that will be used to evaluate proposals (Section M)
 - Government evaluators may only evaluate the proposal against the criteria listed in Section M
 - Government evaluators may only evaluate a proposal using the information provided within the proposal itself
 - The only exception is information relating to past performance



Understanding the Evaluation

- **Read Section M very carefully**
 - It contains the criteria that will be used to evaluate your proposal
 - It specifies the relative importance of those criteria
 - It (frequently) provides information on how the criteria will be applied (e.g., what constitutes an outstanding vice satisfactory rating)
- **Use this information when deciding where and how to focus the efforts of your proposal writing team**



Must Haves in a Proposal

- **Ensure your proposal is signed and that it includes an acknowledgement of the receipt and acceptance of all the solicitation amendments**
- **Pricing Schedule/Section B must be complete and should reflect the information in the cost proposal.**
- **Representation and Certifications (Section K) must be complete**
- **All the information requested in Section L is provided**
- **Past performance references**
- **Company must be registered in Central Contractor Registration (CCR)**
- **Point of Contacts for your company**

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DEBRIEFS



Debriefs

- **Request a debriefing**
 - **To ensure that you get a debriefing, it must be requested, in writing, within 3 days of being notified of the award decision**
- **Debriefings can be a learning opportunity**
 - **Solicit information on what you can improve on for next time**

Areas covered in the debriefing (FAR 15.506) :

- **Summary of the rationale for award**
- **The process used to perform the evaluation**
- **Evaluation findings for the proposal of the debriefed offeror**
 - **Proposal's significant weaknesses or deficiencies**
- **Government evaluated "most probable amount" and overall technical non-cost factor ratings for the debriefed offeror and successful offeror**
- **Overall ranking of offerors**
- **Questions relevant to the evaluation process**

- **Areas Not covered in debriefing:**
 - **Point-by-point comparison of the offeror being debriefed and successful awardee**
 - **Information that may not be disclosed under a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, including:**
 - **proprietary data**
 - **trade secrets**
 - **privileged or confidential processes and techniques**
 - **cost breakdowns, profits, indirect cost/rates, or similar information**
 - **Inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters**
 - **names of individuals providing reference information regarding past performance**



If You Remember Nothing Else...

- **Take advantage of posted pre-RFP released information such as draft SOW, Spec and draft RFPs to ensure that you have a thorough understanding of the requirement**
- **Read the solicitation when it is released– all of it (even the boring parts)**
- **If you have any questions – ask BEFORE the solicitation closes, don't assume**
- **Have someone (not the preparer) check the proposal against the solicitation requirements**
- **Submit your proposal ON TIME**

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QUESTIONS?