7 STEPS TO CREATING WINNING RFP RESPONSES

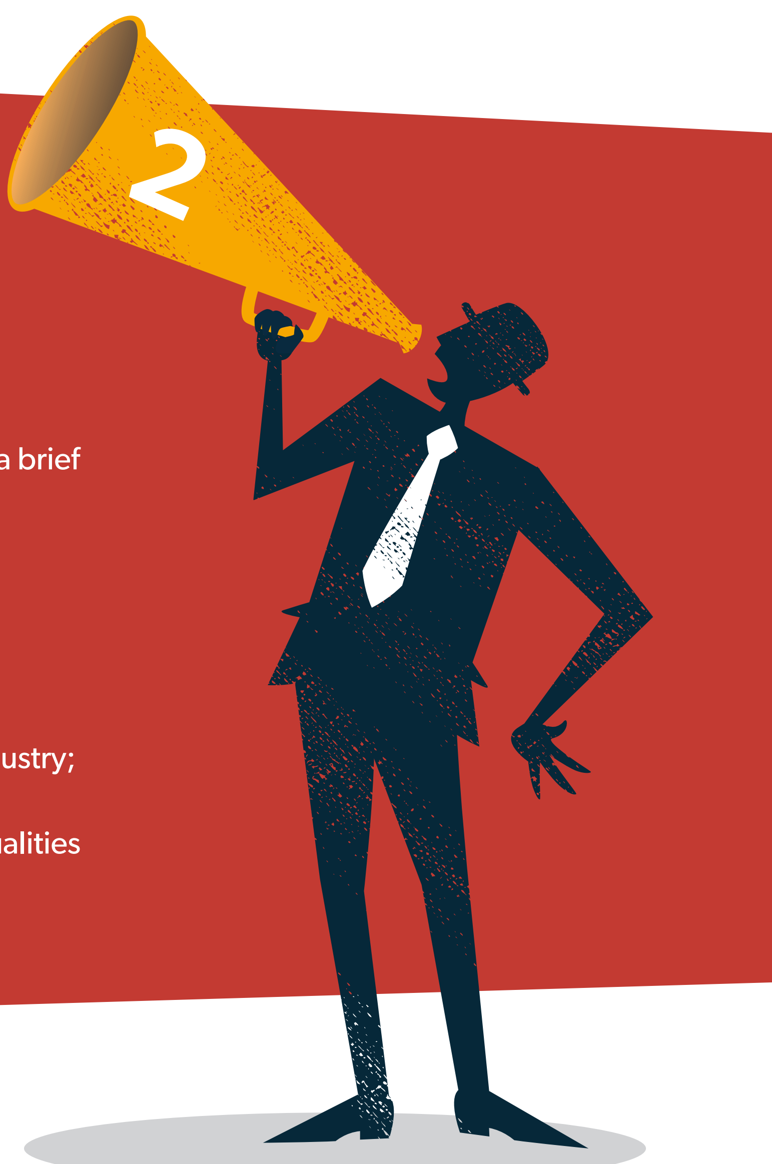
There's no 'one-size-fits-all' solution for responding to proposals, but there are ways to ensure your response stands out across proposals. Take advice from the experts on how to approach responses to standard sections often found in RFPs.

OVERVIEW

First and foremost—show the client you understand the problem at hand.

Paint a clear picture by restating known objectives and providing a winning preview of your solution and approach. It's important to let the client know you have knowledge of the current landscape and will provide the best solution.

While the overview is often the first section, **experts suggest you write it last**. That way, you can pull out the main points from your overall RFP response to craft a more effective summary. Remember to keep it clear and concise.



ABOUT US

The "About Us" section, also known as the "Company Overview," is a brief history of your company and how you are uniquely qualified.

Brag about yourself.

Set yourself apart from the competition by being creative about your strengths. You aren't small; you're adaptive. You aren't new to an industry; you bring a fresh perspective. **Be proud of your accomplishments.** This is your section to shine, so use it to describe all the wonderful qualities that make you stand out.

PRODUCT AND SERVICES OVERVIEW

Use this section to **demonstrate why your product and services are the best in the market**. This is the perfect time and space to differentiate your business with your unique offering(s) and approach.

Highlight all the reasons you are more valuable than the competition. Take this opportunity to clearly articulate terms for products and services.

SCHEDULE

Lay out the contract schedule using key milestones and dates. This will help the client visualize where they'll be in the future. What will their world look like?

Cite when you will finish each track of work and the outcomes the client can expect. Be careful not to get into specifics just yet. These details are best received in the implementation plan.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

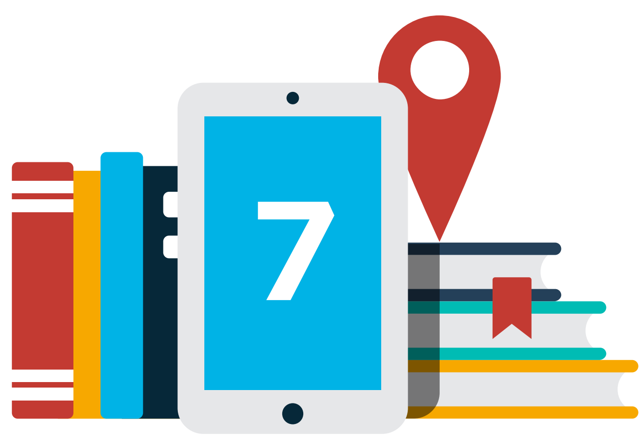
The implementation plan should tie into the overall schedule and will likely include assumptions and time estimates. **A matrix works as an effective way to display this information.**

Experts like to use week 0, week 1, etc. instead of specific dates. This is especially helpful if you don't have a firm start date.

ADDRESSING BIAS

While answering required questions, be on the lookout for bias. **Pay close attention to the language used** in each question to determine if the client seems to favor one approach versus another.

If so, it may be an indication that your competitor got to the client first. If this is the case, see if you can overcome bias through education and awareness.



REFERENCES & CASE STUDIES

Everyone likes to read about past successes. Potential clients may want to talk to or visit references, so ensure you have a handful of clients who are ready to rave about you.

Other times clients are looking for companies that had similar needs and want to read case studies. Experts advise you have a **library of written case studies** that clearly articulate how your solutions and services have successfully solved your clients' problems.

STREAMLINING THE PROCESS

RFP 360

After you formulate winning responses to each of these sections for one client, experts agree that you shouldn't just copy and paste and move on. **Your clients want custom responses** that pertain to their business and their specific project. However, there's no need to reinvent the wheel with each RFP.

RFP360 helps automate your RFP process and allows you to easily deliver winning content. Find what you need when you need it, collaborate online and manage tasks with automation so you and your team can drive more wins in less time.

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