

Top 10 Steps to Help Your Proposal Olympians Bring Home the Gold

1. **Free them from the encumbrances of proposal minutia**
2. **Give them the authority to make decisions to guide the solution**
3. **Provide positive, actionable feedback with sound justification**
4. **Shield them from burdensome process and organizational drama**
5. **Nurture their innovative approaches and creative processes**
6. **Shape their perspectives with validated client insights**
7. **Equip them with relevant technical information and expert advice**
8. **Promote teamwork and collaboration with a best idea wins mentality**
9. **Reward valued contributors and weed out agitators and under-performers**
10. **Provide coaching from qualified SMEs and mentoring from proposal veterans**

Who Are Your Proposal Olympians?

- 🐾 Proposal development highlights content creators' skills in the same way the Olympic Games showcase high-caliber athletes' talents
- 🐾 Without the content creators, there would be no submission to place into competition, no chance to medal and win work
- 🐾 Enabling your proposal athletes to develop winning solutions takes a coordinated team of supporters, advisors, and coaches
- 🐾 Producing a winning proposal is often less about overcoming barriers to entry than overcoming barriers teams place on themselves
- 🐾 Unlike the Olympic Games, winning the day, not just partaking in the event, is critical in the hyper-competitive GOVCON environment
- 🐾 Proposal tanks are the thought leaders' arena, where you should cheer them on, help them succeed, and recognize their achievements

Join the Team

With the two year budget deal in place, contractors are once again readying capture and proposal organizations to go head-to-head with their competitors in the marketplace. Proposal efforts are generally staffed with those who know the client, the technical domain, or have managed short duration projects. Many times, they also include ill-equipped or uninterested bench warmers who find themselves press-ganged into participating. However, the proposal's true athletes are the content creators, who synthesize bid requirements, client hot buttons, and technical innovations into compelling cases. While the proposal staff may help with logistics, your athletes require support from account executives, coaching from the growth organization, and endorsements from the delivery teams to carry the day.

Train Hard

Capable solution architects and content creators are a rare breed. Some are born with natural graphics development and writing abilities but need nurturing to focus on bid specifics. Others are steeped in client and program details but need coaching and guidance to craft a compliant response. In either case, to hone their skills for the next competition, champions must make the upfront investment. Prior to an RFP, solution architects should be supported in their efforts to learn of advances in technology and service delivery. As sales support for business development, they should be introduced to customers to gain program insights, practice delivery concepts, and validate prospective solutions. Continued iteration on value proposition, proposal themes, and anchor graphics will prepare your content creators for a gold-worthy performance when the RFP drops.

Give it Your All

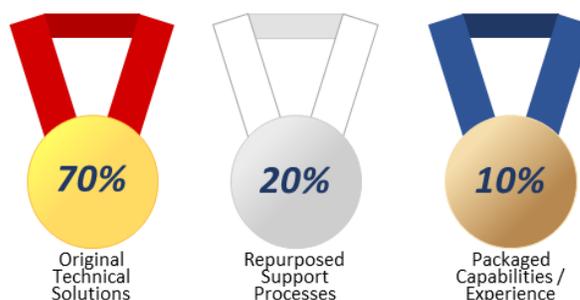
The RFP short program gives 30 days for your proposal staff to help the content creators excel. The pressure to perform, from the complexity of the bid to the must-win business environment, needs to be taken in stride. The proposal team should be united by the will to win – there is no time for personalities to surface that require coddling or sap the sense of urgency required to succeed. They must all pull together to choreograph response activities, solutioning sessions, and technical reviews that

enable the content creators to commit the best ideas to paper. Collectively, your team must deliver a performance that will be judged for presentation (i.e., compliance) and that achieves the highest points for technical merit. Having given it your all, the resulting submission should leave everything on the ice.

Get Ready to Go Again

While many people will seek credit for successful bids, few will accept responsibility for failure. Certainly no one wins alone, but credit belongs to those in the arena, giving form to ideas, defining solutions, and promoting your firm's capabilities. Unfortunately, even the best prepared and fully-committed competitors feel the sting of defeat and must swallow their pride to ask for an award decision debrief. But win or lose, the competition comes around every five years. For winners, the re-compete starts upon contract award. For others, gaining insights into the judging and recognizing the weaknesses of your bid is critical to your next campaign. Either way, it is essential that content creators, with their supporters and coaches, maintain the fortitude and stamina to recover and go again. In the end, it is content creators who will land you a spot on top of the podium.

Proposal Mettle
Relative Value of Proposal Materials



Based on size of response in terms of page count, weighted importance as a function of evaluation criteria, and the level of B&P invested in the materials, from samples of Wolf Den Associates proposal submissions.