

Five Ways to Build your RFP Chops

Jake Smithwick, PhD, MPA



Goal:
Become a
“Client of Choice”

Reality of the Situation

- Contract performance (construction, design, FM work, IT, business services) **has been proven to NOT correlate** to contract types, delivery methods, software, design quality, etc.
- Performance **HAS BEEN PROVEN to highly correlate** to the capability, skill, and experience of the people doing the work – the critical personnel on a project – PM, SS, Client Lead

Importance of the People

The ability to realize

innovation,

risk minimization,

value creation, &

cost reduction

will not exceed the capability
of the people doing the work

Limited Pool of Expertise

- There is a limited pool of high performing experts and experienced personnel
- *Also varies by*
 - Moment in time (when the solicitation/work is needed)
 - Location (geography)
 - Market/Sector
- Organizations also commonly underestimate the cost of working with average and low performing vendors

KEY TAKEAWAY

Clients & Buyers
are in competition with each other
for the same
limited pool
of skilled personnel

Importance of a High-Performing RFP

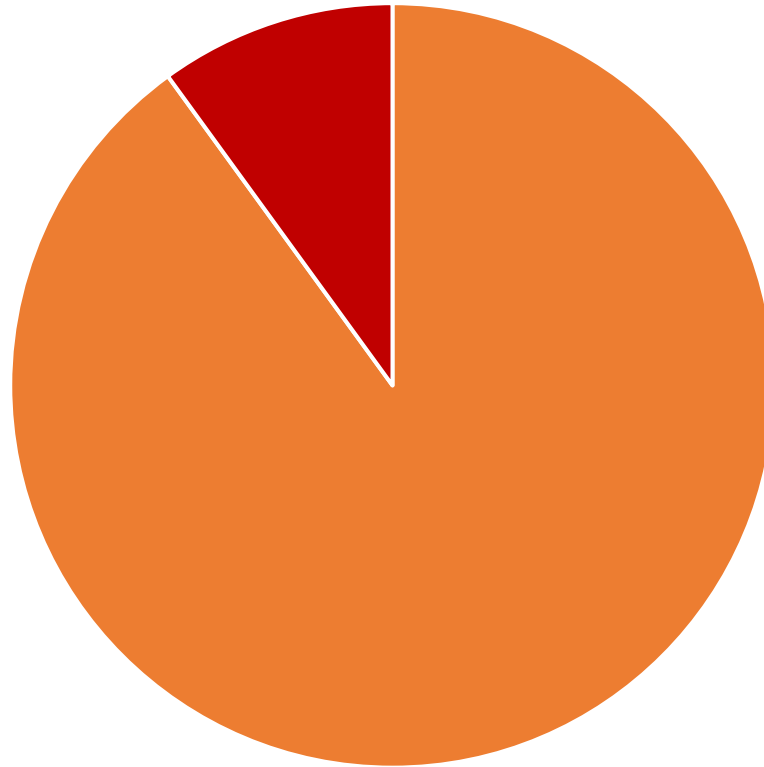
RFPs are a direct reflection of your organization and project.

Is your RFP...

- Organized vs. Scattered?
- Professional vs. “Thrown Together”
- Easy-to-Follow vs. Confusing?
- Tailored vs. Recycled?
- High-Performing vs. “Same Old”?

All Procurements Are Urgent!

10% Extremely Urgent



90% Urgent

RFP vs. SOW: How are they Related?

RFP

Request for Proposal



Information Technology (IT)
Software Implementation Template

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RFP vs. SOW: How are they Related?

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1 Statement of Work

2 Current Conditions

3 Proposal
Requirements

4 Evaluation
Procedures

5 Administrative
Requirements

6 Proposal Forms

7 Attachments
& Exhibits

Organizing a High-Performing RFP

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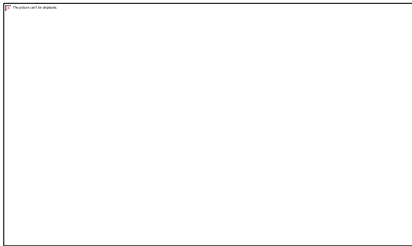
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What the Client
is Purchasing

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What the Client
is Purchasing

How the Client will
Evaluate and Select
the vendor

Five Recommendations for a Better RFP

- 1. Use the Foundations of Procurement Excellence**
- 2. Organize a High-performing RFP**
- 3. Share your budget**
- 4. Streamline your evaluation practices**
- 5. Strive to become a Client of Choice**

Foundations of Procurement Excellence

Handout



5 Foundations of RFP Excellence

CPE supports these 5 Foundations of RFP Excellence in all procurement processes as they enable organizations to become a “Client of Choice” and attract High-Performing Vendors across their entire project portfolio

Fair: provide all vendors with an equal opportunity to win

Highlighted Practices from CPE:

- ♦ Protect the good of the public and the organization
- ♦ Follow a realistic procurement schedule
- ♦ Minimize bias in evaluations

Open: encourage & maximize competition

Highlighted Practices from CPE:

- ♦ Reduce “upstream” restrictions on who can propose
- ♦ Avoid burdensome submittal requirements



Foundations of Procurement Excellence

- Fair
- Open
- Transparent
- Value
- Integrity

Foundations of Procurement Excellence

- **Fair:** provide all vendors with an equal opportunity to win.
- Open
- Transparent
- Value
- Integrity

Fair: Equal Opportunity to Win

Perceptions of Owner being Unfair or Unequal

- Pre-Conceived
- Restrictive
- Too Fast
- Unrealistic
- Too Much
- Biased
- Misunderstands Needs
- *Discourages Vendors!*



Impact

- Fewer proposals
- Lower quality proposals
- Less qualified teams
- Less competitive pricing
- Less consistent pricing
- Open to interpretation
- Have to believe the vendor
- *Brings Risk to the Project!*

Foundations of Procurement Excellence

- **Fair:** provide all vendors with an equal opportunity to win.
- Open
- Transparent
- Value
- Integrity

Foundations of Procurement Excellence

- **Fair:** provide all vendors with an equal opportunity to win.
- **Open:** encourage and maximize competition.
- **Transparent**
- **Value**
- **Integrity**

Open: Encourage and Maximize Competition

Who knows the most about delivering the required services?

**An Expert
Vendor**

Foundations of Procurement Excellence

- **Fair:** provide all vendors with an equal opportunity to win.
- **Open:** encourage and maximize competition.
- **Transparent**
- **Value**
- **Integrity**

Foundations of Procurement Excellence

- **Fair:** provide all vendors with an equal opportunity to win.
- **Open:** encourage and maximize competition.
- **Transparent:** provide a clear, concise & accurate process.
- **Value**
- **Integrity**

Transparent: Clear, Concise, and Accurate

Highlighted Practices from CPE:

- Clear: release your budget and schedule constraints.
- Concise: define what you want (with maximum limits).
- Accurate: seek to maximize differentiation.

Foundations of Procurement Excellence

- **Fair:** provide all vendors with an equal opportunity to win.
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Foundations of Procurement Excellence

- **Fair:** provide all vendors with an equal opportunity to win.
- **Open:** encourage and maximize competition.
- **Transparent:** provide a clear, concise & accurate process.
- **Value:** optimize the organization's return for the spend.
- **Integrity**

Value: Optimal Return for the Spend

Low-Bid and
Overly Price-Focused RFPs
both squeeze out value
and increase change orders.

Foundations of Procurement Excellence

- **Fair:** provide all vendors with an equal opportunity to win.
- **Open:** encourage and maximize competition.
- **Transparent:** provide a clear, concise & accurate process.
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- **Integrity**

Foundations of Procurement Excellence

- **Fair:** provide all vendors with an equal opportunity to win.
- **Open:** encourage and maximize competition.
- **Transparent:** provide a clear, concise & accurate process.
- **Value:** optimize the organization's return for the spend.
- **Integrity:** ensure confidence & trust with high ethical standards.

Integrity: Ensure Confidence and Trust



Foundations of Procurement Excellence

- **Fair:** provide all vendors with an equal opportunity to win.
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- **Integrity:** ensure confidence & trust with high ethical standards.

Five Recommendations for a Better RFP

- 1. Use the Foundations of Procurement Excellence**
- 2. Organize a High-performing RFP**

Center for Procurement Excellence RFP Templates

RFP

Request for Proposal



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Our Goal:

Organize & Simplify
a **High-Performing RFP**
for every Industry Sector
and Project Type



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Keep In Mind:

Different Projects
require Different RFP Specifics.

Yet the RFP **Structure & Organization**
can remain the same!



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Why is this Important?

Your RFP is a “first view” for the
Vendor Community

The RFP **structure & content**
drives the RFP outcome!



The background of the slide features a dynamic pattern of numerous thin, radiating lines in shades of white and light blue, creating a sense of high speed or light rays emanating from a central point.

What can we do
to move procurement
into LIGHT speed?

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Goal: Organize a High-Performing RFP

- ⚠ • Difficult to determine what to submit?
- ⚠ • Increase the odds of missing a requirement?
- ⚠ • Unreasonable and superfluous requests?
- ⚠ • Necessitate lots of time to review?
- ⚠ • Frustrate vendors?



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Goal: Organize a High-Performing RFP

- ✓ • Easy to determine what to submit
- ✓ • Avoid disqualification
- ✓ • Highly organized and professional
- ✓ • Simple and fast for vendors to review
- ✓ • Less frustrating

How we want Vendors to react to our RFP...

I'm so excited.



Ooooh,
I ♥ a good
RFP Template!



**But
sometimes,
we run out
of grape jelly**



Organizing a High-Performing RFP

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What Will Be Evaluated

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How the Client will Score & Award



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General Instructions, Dates & Contact



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Forms for Vendors to Complete

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Supplemental Information



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What goes in
each section?

Common Mistake: Mixing the Sections

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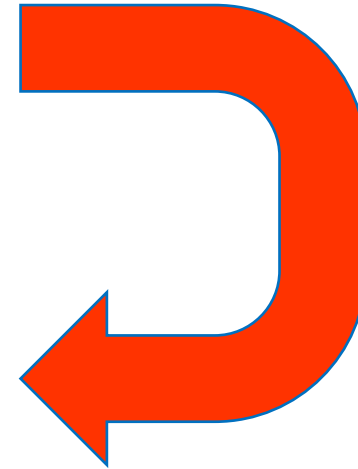
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What can we do
to move procurement
into **warp speed**?

Common Mistake: Mixing the Sections



4.4 GOALS

The property adjacent to the Campbell Reservoir #2, has been identified for the Campbell Sedimentation Plant. The location provides access to the City system for pretreatment that is downstream of North Thomas Reservoir. An additional water source, State Water Project East Project (SWP-E), is anticipated to be accessible upon successful completion and permitted demonstration of the Grant Pump Station, which will pump SWP-E into the City upstream of the Campbell Reservoir #2.

Campbell Reservoir #2 was constructed in 1982 and is fully lined with asphalt. The lining has not been replaced since its construction and has deteriorated to the extent that maintenance of the reservoir has become difficult. The identified and targeted contaminant concentrations for CITY source water are below:

Arsenic

- Ranges: 10 µg/L to 85 µg/L
- Dates: Dec. 2011 – Jan. 2018

Turbidity

- Ranges: 0.5 NTU to 67 NTU
- Dates: Dec. 2011 – Jan. 2018

Total Organic Carbons

- Ranges: 2.3 µg/L to 4.2 µg/L
- Dates: Oct. 2016, May 2017

In the response, the Proposer shall identify the form of business (i.e., individual, sole proprietor, corporation, non-profit corporation, partnership, limited liability company) and business location (physical location or domicile). The Proposer should identify how they will meet these goals.

**Mixing Proposal & SOW
Requirements
throughout the Document
(e.g. Proposal Requirements
embedded in the SOW)**



Common Mistake: Duplication



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

FOR CONSTRUCTION MANAGER AT RISK SERVICES FOR THE MIAMI BEACH CONVENTION CENTER RENOVATION AND EXPANSION PROJECT

RFP No. 2015-129-ME

RFP ISSUANCE DATE: MARCH 12, 2015

PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING DATE: MARCH 19, 2015 AT 2:00 PM LOCAL TIME

PROPOSAL DUE DATE: APRIL 9, 2015 AT 3:00 PM LOCAL TIME

ISSUED BY:

MIAMIBEACH

Maria Estevez, Assistant Director
DEPARTMENT OF PROCUREMENT MANAGEMENT
1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, FL 33139
305.673.7000 x 7490 | MariaEstevez@miamibeachfl.gov
www.miamibeachfl.gov

majority of the MBCC renovation completed.

- l) By the fall of 2018, the Project must be complete.

The dates set forth above for completion of design packages are being verified by Fentress and are subject to change.

8. **Anticipated RFP Timetable.** The tentative schedule for this solicitation is as follows:

Issuance of RFP	March 2, 2015
Pre-Submittal Meeting	March 19, 2015 at 2:00 pm local time
Deadline for Receipt of Questions	March 30, 2015 at 5:00 pm local time
Proposal Due	April 9, 2015 at 3:00 pm local time
Evaluation Committee Meeting	April 16, 2015
City Commission Approval Selection	April 29, 2015

9. The City reserves the right to postpone the date for receipt and opening of proposals and will make a reasonable effort to give at least five (5) calendar days written notice of any such postponement to each prospective proposer.

10. **Proposal Submission:** One (1) unbound original proposal, 20 copies, and one electronic PDF (in one file) on a flash drive or CD must be received on or before the date stipulated in the **Anticipated RFP Timetable** section. The original proposal and all copies must be submitted to the Department of Procurement Management in a sealed envelope or container stating on the outside, the Proposer's name, address, telephone number, RFP number, title, and due date. Any proposals received after time and date specified will be returned to the Proposer unopened. The responsibility for submitting a proposal before the stated time and date is solely and strictly the responsibility of the Proposer. The City is not responsible for delays caused by mail, courier service, traffic, weather or any other occurrence.

11. **Pre-Proposal Conference:** A Pre-Proposal Conference will be held on the date and time specified in the **Anticipated RFP Timetable** section. The pre-proposal conference will be held at a location to be determined location (issued via addendum). Attendance (in person or via telephone) to this meeting is not mandatory but strongly encouraged. Proposers interested in participating in the meeting via a webinar can log into Web Address: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/882827709>; Dial +1 (872) 240-3212; Access Code: 882-827-709.

12. **Procurement Contact:** Any questions or clarifications concerning this solicitation shall be submitted to **Maria Estevez**, 305-673-7490, mestevez@miamibeachfl.gov via email or in writing, with a copy to the City Clerk's Office, Rafael E. Granado via e-mail: RafaelGranado@miamibeachfl.gov; or facsimile: 786-394-4188. The RFP title/number shall be referenced on all correspondence. All questions or requests for clarification must be received no later than the date and time in the **Anticipated RFP Timetable** section. All responses to questions/clarifications will be sent to all prospective Proposers in the form of an addendum.

13. **Documents.** All documents released in connection with this RFP, including all appendices and addenda, whether included herein or released under separate cover, comprise the solicitation, and are

City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, Florida 33139,
www.miamibeachfl.gov
DEPARTMENT OF PROCUREMENT MANAGEMENT
Tel: 305.673.7490, Fax: 786.394.4006

PUBLIC NOTICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) No. 2015-129-ME (the "RFP") FOR CONSTRUCTION MANAGER AT RISK SERVICES FOR THE MIAMI BEACH CONVENTION CENTER RENOVATION AND EXPANSION PROJECT Miami Beach, Florida

The City is seeking proposals from capable construction managers interested in submitting a proposal for Construction Manager At-Risk services for the Miami Beach Convention Center Renovation and Expansion Project (as hereinafter defined), which, among other things, includes: 1) the complete renovation of the Miami Beach Convention Center ("MBCC" or "Convention Center") with an expansion of a ballroom and auxiliary spaces; 2) parking above portions of the Convention Center; 3) exterior landscaping improvements and a 6.5 acre public park; and 4) a renovation of Convention Center Drive, including relocation of utilities.

A **Non-Mandatory** Pre-Proposal Conference is scheduled for **March 19, 2015 at 2:00 pm** local time at the following location:

To be determined - Addendum will be issued with location.

Attendance (in person or via telephone) to this meeting is **not mandatory but strongly encouraged**. Proposers interested in participating in the meeting via telephone must follow these steps:

Web Address: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/882827709>

To join the conference call:
Dial +1 (872) 240-3212
Access Code: 882-827-709

Sealed proposals in response to this RFP must be received by the City of Miami Beach Department of Procurement Management, 3rd Floor, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, Florida 33139, by **April 9, 2015 at 3:00 pm** local time.

- a) On February 11, 2015, Fentress was authorized to proceed with completion of design development and all technical and other drawings, shop drawings, schedules, diagrams, and specifications, setting forth in detail the requirements for the construction of the Project ("Construction Documents" or "CDs").

- b) On or about April 29, 2015, it is anticipated that the City Commission will consider the selection of the CMR.

- c) On or about May 20, 2015, it is anticipated that the City Commission will consider a CMR contract to, among other things, fix the CMR's fee and provide for CMR services through the proposed date for establishing a GMP amendment (on or about October 31, 2015).

- d) On or about May 20, 2015 the Construction Documents for an early demolition of certain structures on the north side of the MBCC and site work package for a portion of the Project are to be completed, to permit the CMR to bid the package, obtain all appropriate permits, and enable demolition and site work to begin in the areas north of the MBCC on or about October 1, 2015.

- e) On or about September 15, 2015, Fentress will produce Construction Documents (anticipated to be approximately 65-75% complete) for the purposes of establishing the GMP. These CD packages will be provided to the CMR, Fentress's cost estimator, and the City's cost estimator.

- f) On or about September 15, 2015 the CDs for the foundations, structure and building enclosure package are to be completed to enable bidding and permitting for a December 10, 2015 commencement of construction, following the conclusion of the December 4-7, 2015 Art Basel events scheduled to take place at the Convention Center.

- g) On or about September 30, 2015 the CMR will propose its GMP. Such GMP will include the estimate for all trade costs, general conditions, bonds & insurance, a 5% bidding contingency, a 6.75% escalation contingency, and the CMR fee. **The GMP cannot exceed the Project Construction Budget of \$471.9 million.**

- h) Provided the City's budget and design objectives are met, on or about October 15, 2015, the City Commission will consider approval of an amendment to the CMR contract incorporating the GMP. If the Project is completed within or at the GMP, any bid buy-out savings realized through the bidding and construction process shall be shared at the conclusion of the Project, with 75% retained by the City and 25% paid to the CMR as an additional fee.

- i) On or about December 10, 2015, Phase I of the construction shall commence.

- j) On or about November 20, 2016, the MBCC will reopen for Art Basel, and 100% of the MBCC exhibit halls and other spaces within the MBCC must be made available for this event (partially renovated and partially in existing condition).

- k) On or about November 20, 2017, the MBCC will reopen for Art Basel, and 100% of the MBCC exhibit hall renovations must be complete, the north junior ballroom must be complete, and the

Organizing a High-Performing RFP

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See yesterday's session 😊



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What Will Be Evaluated

Proposal Requirements

- Provide brief, clear instructions of what you are looking for (what information & content you want to evaluate)
- Refer Vendors to the corresponding Proposal Forms.
- Keep it brief. Define Maximum Page Limits.

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General Instructions, Dates & Contact



Administrative Requirements

- Questions & Inquiries
- Addenda
- Procurement AND Evaluation Schedule
- Single Point of Contact
- Method of Submission
- General Terms
 - Ethics
 - Expenses
 - Rights & Disclaimers
 - Confidentiality
 - Debriefings
 - Etc.

Administrative Requirements

- Questions & Inquiries
- Addenda
- **Procurement AND Evaluation Schedule!!!**
- Single Point of Contact
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Forms to Complete



Take Charge: Client-Defined Proposal Forms!!!

- Know what you are looking for... and ask for it!!!
- Eliminate all other marketing fluff. **It does not add value.**
- Make it easy!!!
- RFPs can be large documents.
- Vendors only have so much time to spend!

Take Charge: Client-Defined Submittal Forms!!!

SUBMITTAL FORM C-2	
Experience (Critical Project Team Members)	
<i>Instructions: Refer to Section 3.2 for format and roles & responsibilities for each Critical Project Team Member. All responses must be required to be anonymous. The only response required is the name of the member.</i>	
Insert Critical Project Team Member Name	
Anticipated Time Allocation to the Project	
Brief Narrative of Roles and Responsibilities Insert (add space as needed)	
Resume Insert (add space as needed)	

Example from Public-Private-Partnership
Design-Build-Finance Project

SUBMITTAL FORM B			
Experience & Qualifications			
Software Company Experience Provide information regarding the experience of the Software Company. The information below must ONLY apply to the current version of the Software Solution being proposed <u>and</u> which your Software Company has performed over the past five years. Only solutions that are 100% complete and operational can be counted (on-analysis).			
Software solution	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1-4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10-19 <input type="checkbox"/> 20+		
Software solution purchased the	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1-4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10-19 <input type="checkbox"/> 20+		
Implementation Company Experience Provide information regarding the experience of the Implementation Company. The information below must ONLY apply to the current version of the Software Solution being proposed <u>and</u> which the Implementation Company has performed over the past five years. Only solutions that are 100% complete and the system is operational can be counted in this analysis).			
Software solution	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1-4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10-19 <input type="checkbox"/> 20+		
Software solution purchased the	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1-4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10-19 <input type="checkbox"/> 20+		
Team Members proposed in Submittal Form A:			
Project Manager	Solution Architect	Func./Bus. Lead	Tech./Data Lead
Software solution managed/led using the same software product & version being proposed (#)			

Example from
Software Implementation Project

Common Mistake: Mixing Requirements



3.8 Method of Operation

3.8.1 The Contractor should be able to provide the recommended items that are listed in Attachment 1 of this RFP. Additional and/or comparable products should also be offered.

3.8.2 UH has the option of selecting any Grab-and-Go items from the recommended listed items (see Attachment 1). The selection of Grab-and-Go items and quantities will vary based on UH volume of sales and customer requests. If Contractor no longer offers a product listed in this RFP, Contractor shall notify UH and provide a comparable alternative.

3.8.3 The Contractor and the Department of Food and Nutrition Services will monitor together the volume and sales of the Grab-and-Go items and determine from the recommended list which items will be offered for sale in the UH cafeteria (and possibly other locations at UH).

3.8.4 The Contractor must provide an invoice for every order to the Department of Food and Nutrition Services and the Department of Accounts Payable. All invoices must include the UH Purchase Order Number.

3.8.5 The Contractor must provide, upon request of the Department of Food and Nutrition Services, weekly, monthly or yearly reports of all the Grab-and-Go items that were purchased including quantity and pricing.

WE HAVE READ AND SHALL FULFILL THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 3.8
The bidder must indicate by putting a check mark in the appropriate box marked
____Y (Yes) ____N (No).

**Avoid fill-in-the-blanks
throughout
other sections of the RFP.**

**Keep everything in the
Submittal Forms
(fill-in-the-blank & checkboxes
are great there!)**

Organizing a High-Performing RFP

RFP

Request for Proposal



Information Technology (IT)
Software Implementation Template

RFP Number: #####
RFP Release Date: MM/DD/YYYY
RFP Due Date: MM/DD/YYYY

- 1 Statement of Work
- 2 Current Conditions
- 3 Proposal Requirements
- 4 Evaluation Procedures
- 5 Administrative Requirements
- 6 Proposal Forms
- 7 Attachments & Exhibits

Supplemental Information



Organizing a High-Performing RFP

RFP

Request for Proposal



Information Technology (IT) Software Implementation Template

RFP Number: #####

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1 Statement of Work

2 Current Conditions

3 Proposal
Requirements

4 Evaluation
Procedures

5 Administrative
Requirements

6 Proposal Forms

7 Attachments
& Exhibits

**Additional Information that
may be helpful to Vendors.**

But don't want to "clog up"
the other sections.

Supplemental Information



Attachments & Exhibits

- **Examples of Supplemental Information (IT Software):**

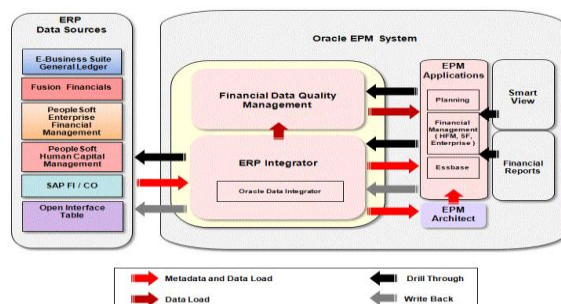
List of Pain Points

Use Cases

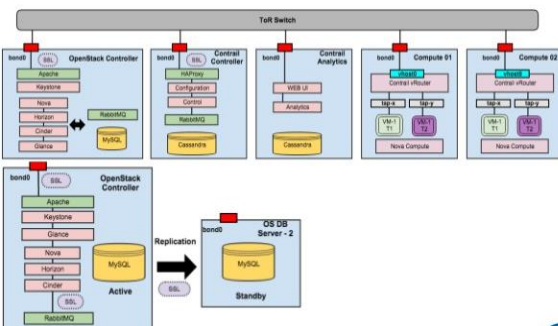
Workflows

Architecture Diagrams

Current State:



Future State:



Dashboards & Forms

FIGURE 3: CASHFLOW CONTD.

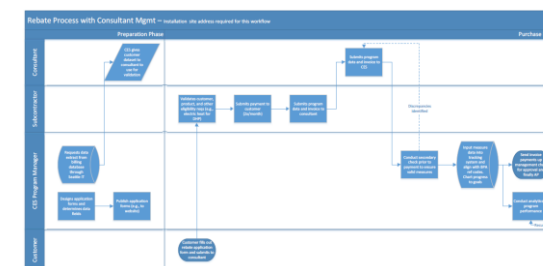
What can we do
to move procurement
into **warp speed**?

[illegible]

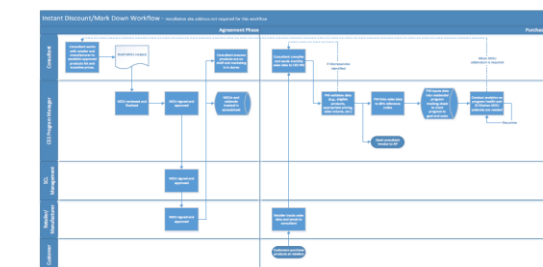
Glossary of Terms

		Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) used by homes and businesses to use information. The meters will communication between the meter and the utility.
		Average Megawatt. One megawatt is 1,000 kilowatts (8,760 megawatt hours)
		Agreements & Rebate Processors. Solutions work group that tracks agreements, and contracts.
Baseline		Within Conservation Field Operations energy conservation are assessed what will be done with funding (the "b" be done without funding (the "b" for example, the baseline is the Energy Code.
		Business Customer Database. Our understanding non-residential database. It is a data output file ability to easily search, view, and data.
		Bonneville Power Administration agency that administers conservation Northwest.
CATS		Conservation Acquisition Tracking tracking system used by the Snohomish Common Area Lighting, and Municipal programs. Contains historical data.
CCB		Customer Care & Billing system Seattle City Light
CCSS		Consolidated Customer Service system used by Seattle City Light
CES		Customer Energy Solutions. The responsible for assisting customers efficiency projects within their facilities.

Rebate Workflow:



Discount Workflow:



Organizing a High-Performing RFP

RFP

Request for Proposal



Information Technology (IT)
Software Implementation Template

RFP Number: #####

RFP Release Date: MM/DD/YYYY

RFP Due Date: MM/DD/YYYY

1 Statement of Work

What You Want to Achieve

2 Current Conditions

Where You Are At

3 Proposal Requirements

What Will Be Evaluated

4 Evaluation Procedures

How the Client will Score & Award

5 Administrative Requirements

General Instructions, Dates & Contact

6 Proposal Forms

Forms to Complete

7 Attachments & Exhibits

Supplemental Information



High-Performing RFPs for Every Project Type

RFP

Request for Proposal



Information Technology (IT)
Software Implementation Template

RFP Number: #####

RFP Release Date: MM/DD/YYYY

RFP Due Date: MM/DD/YYYY

1 Statement of Work

2 Current Conditions

3 Proposal Requirements

4 Evaluation Procedures

5 Administrative Requirements

6 Proposal Forms

7 Attachments & Exhibits

Our Goal:

CPE's Organized & Simplified Structure Remains the Same!

But the content, details & language are tailored to each specific Project Type!

High-Performing RFPs for Every Project Type

CPE's Expertise Includes...

- Information Technology

- Typical Software Implementation
- Major Software Implementation (ERP, etc.)
- System Integrator
- Hardware
- Organizational Change Management
- Professional Services

- Facility Management & Operations

- Food/Dining Services
- Janitorial/Custodial
- Waste Hauling/Waste Management
- Operations & Maintenance
 - e.g. MEP/HVAC, Elevators, Safety Valves, Pest Control, Cold Beverage/Pouring Rights, Snow Removal, AMI, Underground Locates, Wireless Telecom, Furniture, Cleaning Products, Security, Landscape, Parking, etc.

- Business & Professional Services

- General Business Services
 - e.g. Audio-Visual, Audit, Banking, Bookstore, Customs, Insurance, Marketing, Medical, Moving, Pensions, Printing, etc.

- Design & Construction

- Architecture/Engineering Services
- D-B-B General Contractor
- D-B-B Construction Roofing
- Design-Build (DB)
- Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR)
- Public-Private-Partnership (P3)
- IDIQ / JOC / On-Call / VoR / Standing Order

See the handout for industry-specific insights!



Industry Insights

Information Technology

Examples: Software Implementation / ERPs, System Integrator, Hardware, Organizational Change Management, Professional Services

- Highest Failure Rate of any Industry Sector
- Relatively New / Young Industry Sector
- Relatively “Busy” Industry Sector
- Wide Variation in Pricing Structures
- Buying a Mixture of Services (Impl/Support) + Product (Software/Hardware)
- Demonstrations are critical but widely misused.
- Temptation to match RFP/Eval complexity to Technology Complexity
- Vendors & Clients often fundamentally

Business & Professional Services

Examples: Audio-Visual, Audit, Banking, Bookstore, Customs, Insurance, Marketing, Medical, Moving, Pensions, Printing

- Challenging due to the infrequent and “one-off” nature.
- Wide range of scale and budget value.
- Must know how to handle Cost-Based vs. Revenue-Generating, both in terms of upfront evaluation and performance over live of the contract.
- Lots of variables in play. Financials can be complex.
- Most likely project type to have high political ramifications.



Five Recommendations for a Better RFP

1. **Use the Foundations of Procurement Excellence**
2. **Organize a High-performing RFP**
3. **Share your budget**

Should We Share the Budget?

- Let's look at the scenarios (and the data)

There are two possible scenarios:

- Scenario #1 = More Budget than We Need
- Scenario #2 = We Don't Have Enough Budget

Scenario #1: More Budget than We Need

- Potential Risk:

Client's Budget (\$\$) _____

Vendor Proposals? _____

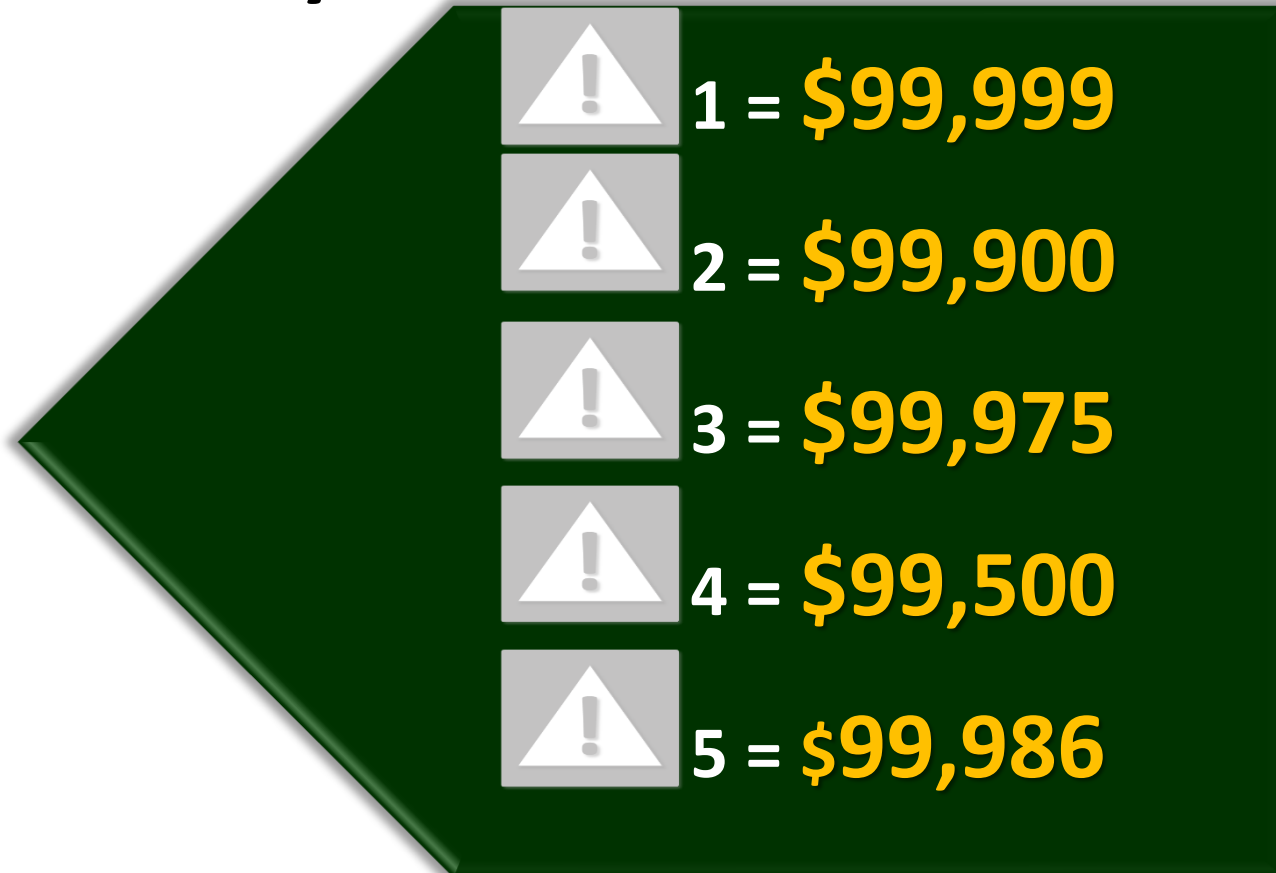
↑ (+\$ inflated cost?)

Client's SOW _____

Scenario #1: More Budget than We Need

- But let's say we do have more money than we need.
- Price gouging is a possibility in these scenarios.

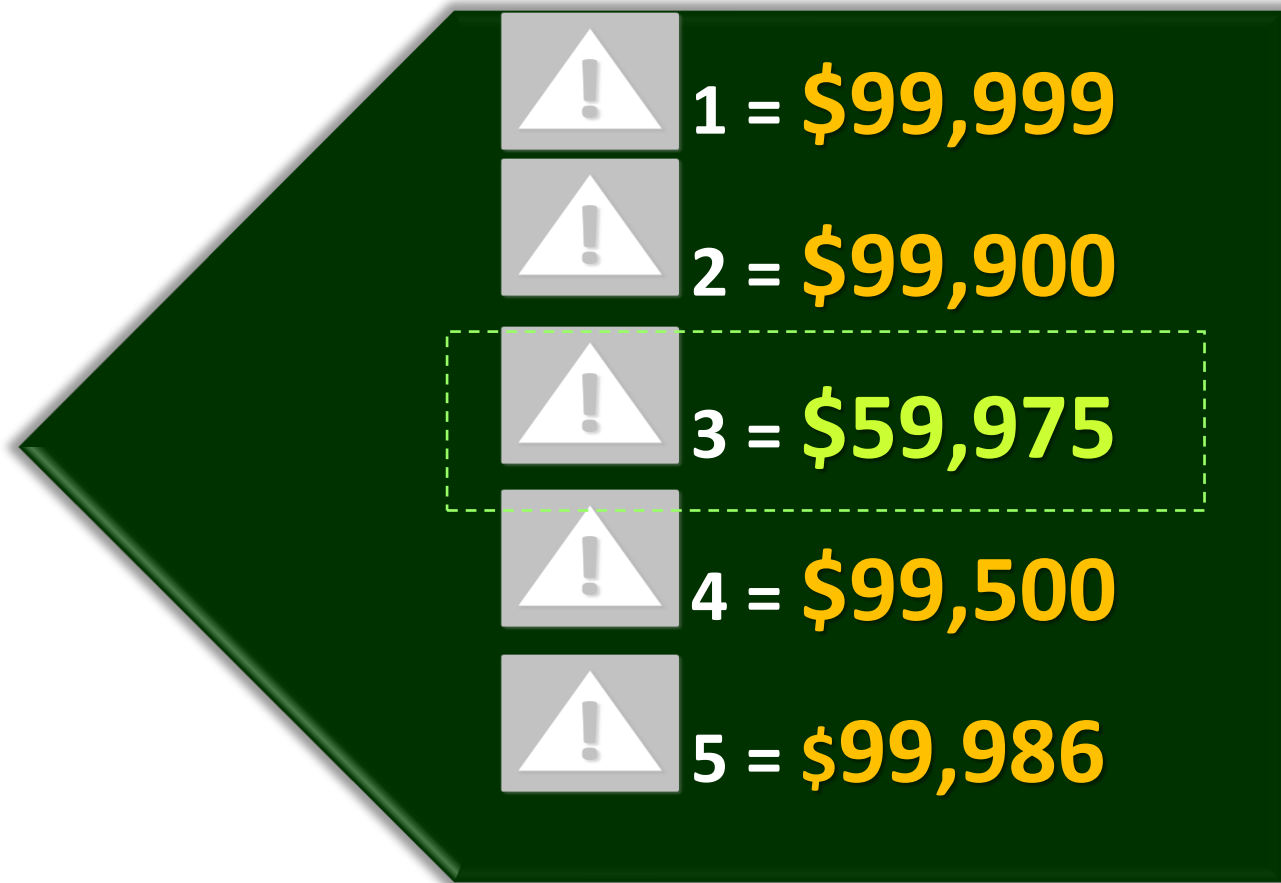
Your Budget
\$100,000



!	1 = \$99,999
!	2 = \$99,900
!	3 = \$99,975
!	4 = \$99,500
!	5 = \$99,986

It Only Takes **1** Vendor To Be Honest!!!

Your Budget
\$100,000



Scenario #1: More Budget than We Need

- Not the most common scenario.
- Lots of reasons why price gouging may not occur.
 - Still have price competition.
 - Only takes 1 honest vendor to negate price gouging.
 - Low performers may be tempted, but their advantage is price.
- Data shows that price gouging does not occur very often.
- Budget information is only an advantage to High Performers.
- Vendors are much more likely to raise prices due to...
 - Their perceived level of risk
 - How much they need the work
 - **And their perception of the Client!**

Should We Share the Budget?


- Let's look at the scenarios and the data.

There are two possible scenarios:

- Scenario #1 = More Budget than We Need
- Scenario #2 = We Don't Have Enough Budget

Scenario #2: We Don't Have Enough Budget

Client's SOW

Client's Budget (\$\$)  (-\$ fake prices?)

Scenario #2: We Don't Have Enough Budget

- Now the budget is critical – whole project is at risk!

Scenario #2: We Don't Have Enough Budget

- Now the budget is critical – whole project is at risk!
 - What happens if we **do** (or **don't**) share the budget?

Scenario #2: We Don't Have Enough Budget

- Now the budget is critical – whole project is at risk!
- What happens if we don't share the budget:
 - Vendors can't offer solutions to a problem they don't know
 - Increases the chance of cancelling the project
 - “blame game” and frustrations (prices are too high and we don't have options!”)
 - Gives advantage to low performers who “promise” a low cost (initially)
 - Slows everything down!

Scenario #2: We Don't Have Enough Budget

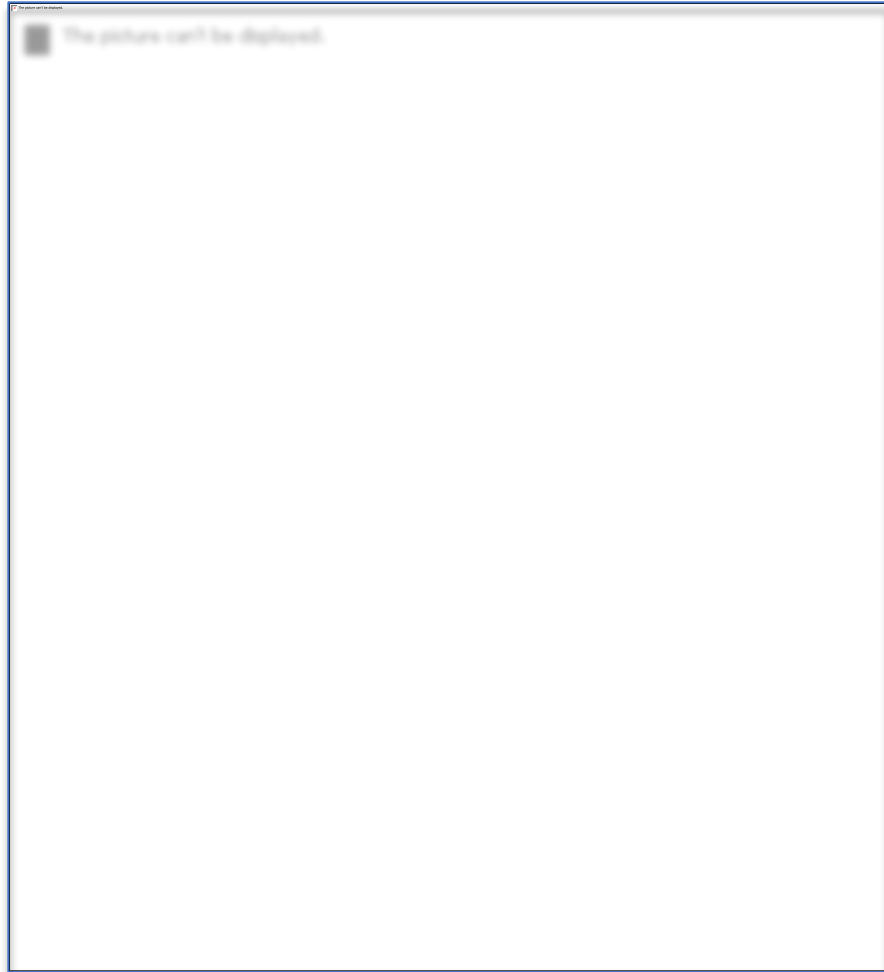
- Now the budget is critical – whole project is at risk!
- What happens if we do share the budget:
 - High-Performing Vendors can help minimize the risk.
 - Gives High-Performing Vendors a chance to stand out.
 - Helps all Vendors better understand the intent of the SOW.
 - Helps you learn why the budget is “off” (vendors can explain in detail by their estimate differs from your budget)
 - Speeds things up (you have options, ideas, and “proof”)

Should We Share the Budget?

- Yes! It is a best practice because it...
 - Minimizes risk
 - Helps high-performing vendors stand out
 - Makes you a more attractive client
 - Is supported by the data
- Of course, not every organization is comfortable.
 - That is normal! Training & awareness helps!

Handout: The Budget

To Share or Not to Share? That is the Question!



**Review the
major
Pros & Cons
of releasing the
budget.**

Five Recommendations for a Better RFP

- 1. Use the Foundations of Procurement Excellence**
- 2. Organize a High-performing RFP**
- 3. Share your budget**
- 4. Streamline your evaluation practices**

Two Tips to Improve Proposal Evaluations

1. Recognize that Evaluators have Bias

Recognize that Evaluators have Bias

- Bias is not always so “**forward**” or “**shocking**”
- Usually, bias comes from Evaluators who:
 - Think they “already know” the best vendor
 - Look at logo/brand more than resources/approach
 - Have pre-conceived notions about the “right” approach
 - Are not open to new ideas

Ten Tips to Improve Proposal Evaluations

1. Recognize that Evaluators have Bias

2. Avoid Consensus Meetings!

Avoid Consensus Meetings!

- Example #1: Tax-Accounting system for a State
- 3 vendors proposed. 5 evaluators.
- During consensus meeting, the internal IT “expert” stated:
 - “Vendor 1’s proposal may sound great....but they actually don’t have a major component of what the State needs (data warehousing)”.
 - This individual had done “a lot” of background research (outside of the proposals) and determined that this vendor is not capable of doing the work.
- So the evaluators all adjusted their scores based on what their internal expert said (scores dropped by 25-35%) – yikes!

Avoid Consensus Meetings!

- Example #1: Tax-Accounting system for a State
- However, since only 3 vendors, all were shortlisted to Interviews.
- During interviews, Vendor 1 was asked about their **inability to perform 'data warehousing'**.
 - The vendor laughed at the question!
 - Said that they have one of the largest data warehousing systems in North America. They went on to list major institutions that were using their systems.
- After the interviews were over...the IT expert apologized to everyone and said that they were not aware.

Avoid Consensus Meetings!

- **Example #2: Personal Push for a Score**
- **7 evaluators. Scores were shown. One evaluator argued for 2hrs.**
 - Eventually 4 evaluators said:
“OK, fine, I give up, just change our score to whatever you want, I don’t care any more, I just want to get out of this meeting!”
- **Procurement intervened:**
 - “Please provide justification for these changes so we can defend your actions in court.”

Avoid Consensus Meetings!

- It's amazing what actually happens behind the scenes!!!!
- These examples are not unique...they happen frequently.
- Which is why we NEVER recommend consensus meetings.
- They result in a lot of time being wasted, but more importantly, it encourages evaluator influence which goes against core procurement principles!
- If you want to streamline your evaluation process, and improve the fairness, just use the average evaluator scores. This is simple, takes less time, and is much easier to justify.

Individual Evaluations

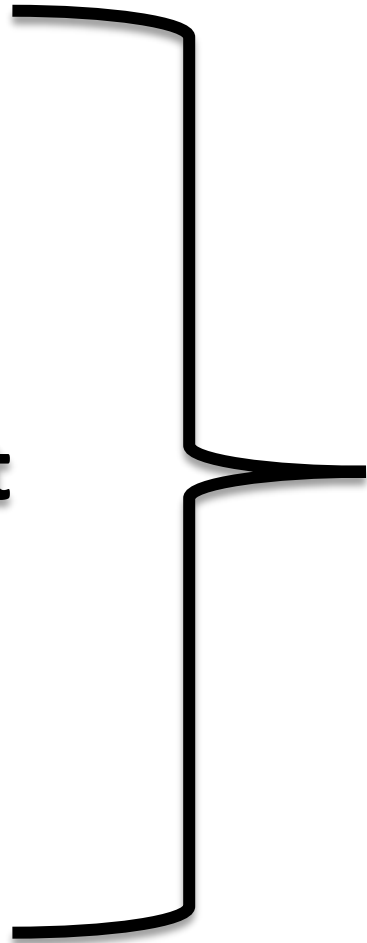
- Evaluations must be performed **individually** (not group consensus)
- Evaluators must **not discuss** with anyone (only contact Buyer for clarification)
- Evaluations should be **non-biased** (use logic and/or verifiable performance documentation to assist in determining the rating.)
- Evaluators must be **honest and fair** as possible with the rating (with the understanding that these ratings are not being used to award an actual project, but to pre-qualify vendors into an overall program).
- The Buyer reserves the right to **clarify any ratings**, request additional evaluator comments, or modify/reject a rating.

Five Recommendations for a Better RFP

- 1. Use the Foundations of Procurement Excellence**
- 2. Organize a High-performing RFP**
- 3. Share your budget**
- 4. Streamline your evaluation practices**
- 5. Strive to become a Client of Choice**

Putting RFP Excellence Into Practice

- Fair
- Open
- Transparent
- Value
- Integrity



Strategic Objective:

Become a “**Client of Choice**”
and attract
High-Performing Vendors
across your RFPs

Kodiak Launch Facility



Minotaur Rockets



“Mishap”





Kickoff Planning – Increasing Transparency

(Demolition & Site Prep)

- The contractor proposed an alternative procedure for removing damaged steel panels:
 - ***\$1 Million cheaper** than the specified process*
 - ***Faster** than the specified process*
 - ***Safer** than the specified process*



Final Result

- Finished **ahead of schedule**
- **0 change orders** or cost increases
- User saved **60% in cost** compared to the average



Update



Free Webinar Series!

3rd Thursdays every month

@ 12pm Central

AGENDA

15min Teaching Moment

(learn a new tip, trick, or tool)

30min Virtual Peer Group

(network with professionals across the world)

Office Hours

(open Q&A until the questions run out!)



center4procurement.org/rfp-doctor

20
October

← Next Month!

Announcing CPE's New RFP Library

Our RFP Library contains more than 3,000 RFPs & SOWs issued in the last 15 years. We'll showcase how to navigate the RFP Library, which is organized into 4 collections of IT, AEC, FM, and Business Services.

✓ Add to Calendar

20
October

Announcing CPE's New RFP Library

Our RFP Library contains more than 3,000 RFPs & SOWs issued in the last 15 years. We'll showcase how to navigate the RFP Library, which is organized into 4 collections of IT, AEC, FM, and Business Services.

✓ Add to Calendar

17
November

The Administrative Burdens of Reference Checks

There are many ways to perform reference checks on proposing firms... so how can we do this as efficiently as possible? We'll recommend ways to streamline your procedures.

✓ Add to Calendar

15
December

Document Deficiencies During the RFP Process

Research shows that contractors discover nearly two-thirds of document deficiencies during the proposal phase. Yet owners usually don't learn of these until after the contract is signed. So what can we do in the RFP phase to encourage earlier—and more transparent—feedback from our contractors?

✓ Add to Calendar

19
January

Can you evaluate Fee in A/E Procurements?

Architecture & engineering (A/E) professionals have traditionally been procured by QBS, yet clients are increasingly seeking to evaluate fees. Is this OK? Let's scratch the surface of this hot-button topic!

✓ Add to Calendar

16
February

What is Cost Worth?

Remember the joys of mathematical proofs from grade school? The RFP Doctors are whipping out their calculators to PROVE the fundamental equation of cost evaluations (Cost > 35% = LOW BID)

✓ Add to Calendar

16
March

What are the "Best" Evaluation Criteria?

The fundamental purpose of evaluation criteria is to differentiate between competing proposals. But which criteria do this the best? We'll breakdown a study that investigated this question across 1,850 proposals.

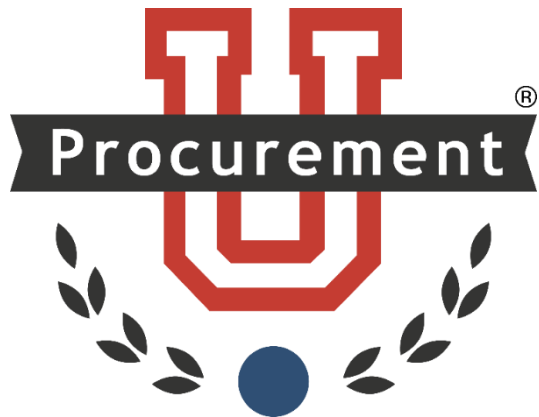
✓ Add to Calendar



Upcoming Topics!
Register at: center4procurement.org/rfp-doctor



***FREE* Online Course!** **Coming in 2023!**



Better RFPs = Better Projects

- Session #1 = Organizing a High-Performing RFP
- Session #2 = Effective Statements of Work (SOWs)
- Session #3 = Evaluation Best Practices & RFP Admin
- Session #4 = RFP Ethics & Vendor Debriefings

Register via NASPO's Procurement U

- Log on to the Procurement U Learning Management System (LMS) to register, access the course and materials.
 - www.naspo.org/procurement-u/
- Open to all (even non-members of NASPO)
- Limited to first 100 participants.



We can help!

- **CPE provides...**
 - **RFP templates**
 - **Legislative opinions**
 - **Advocacy**
- **Our team also provides:**
 - **Hands-on project support**
 - **Procurement strategy support**
 - **Procurement team training sessions (on-site or virtual)**
 - **Planning for challenging RFPs**

In Summary...

- An organized RFP can go a long way
- Being seen as a “client of choice” is CRITICAL in today’s market
- Start small. Good → Better → Best
- Copy of the Slides or Handouts? Send me an email:

Jake.Smithwick@uncc.edu