

Free Webinar Series

3rd Thursdays every month
@ 12pm Central

15-min Teaching Moment

(learn a new tip, trick, or tool)

30-min Virtual Peer Group

(network with professionals)

Office Hours

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



How to Do Market Research More Effectively



One Of The Greatest Challenges In Any Procurement....

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Solicitation

RFP

Contents

| | |
|-----------|------------------------------------|
| Section 1 | Scope of Work |
| Section 2 | Evaluation Criteria and Procedures |
| Section 3 | Administrative Requirements |
| Section 4 | Submittal Forms & Exhibits |

Solicitation

ITB

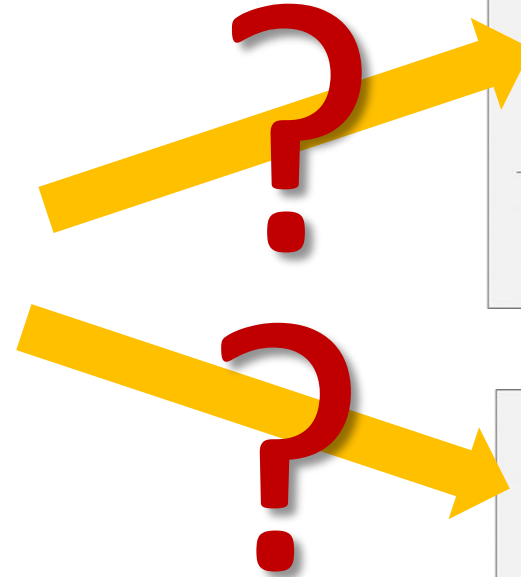
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One Of The Greatest Challenges In Any Procurement....

SCOPE

- Expectations
- Requirements
- Objectives
- Constraints
- Existing Conditions



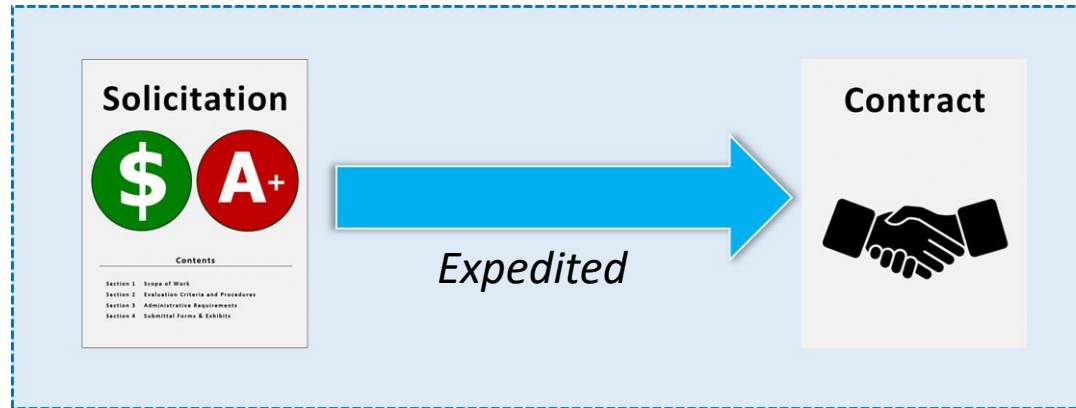
| Solicitation | |
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Quality of Scope

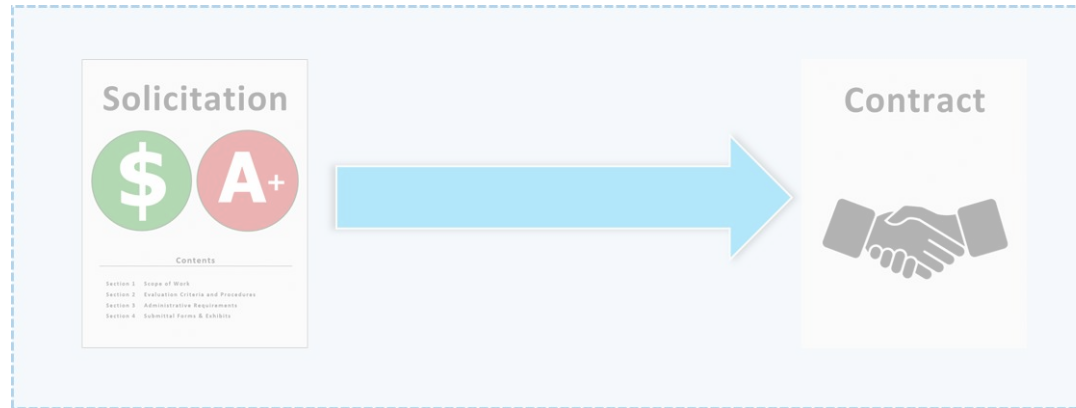
Ability to Meet Targeted Dates & Outcomes

High Quality Scope
(Complete, Concise, & Accurate)

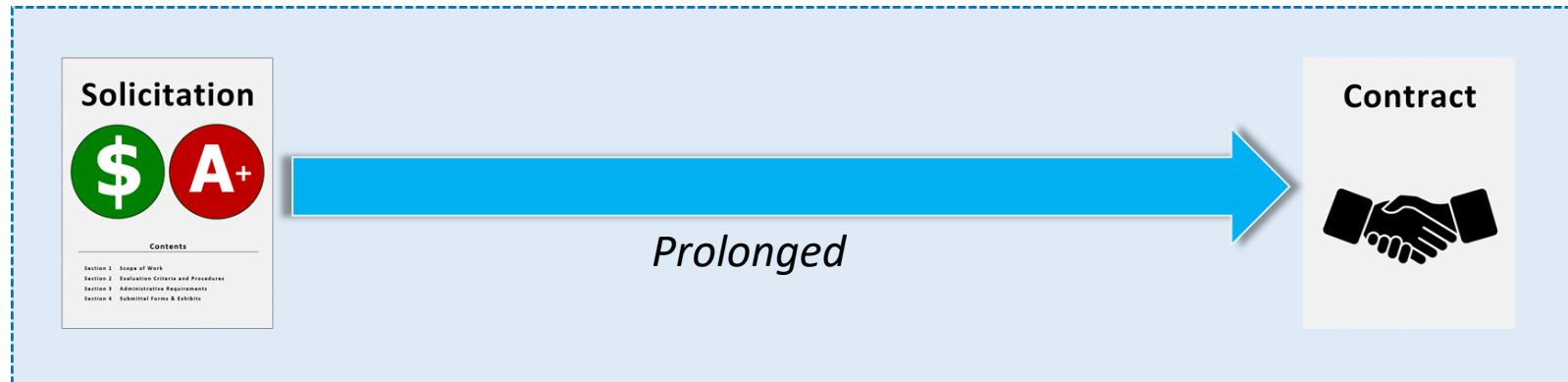


Quality of Scope

High Quality Scope
(Complete, Concise, & Accurate)



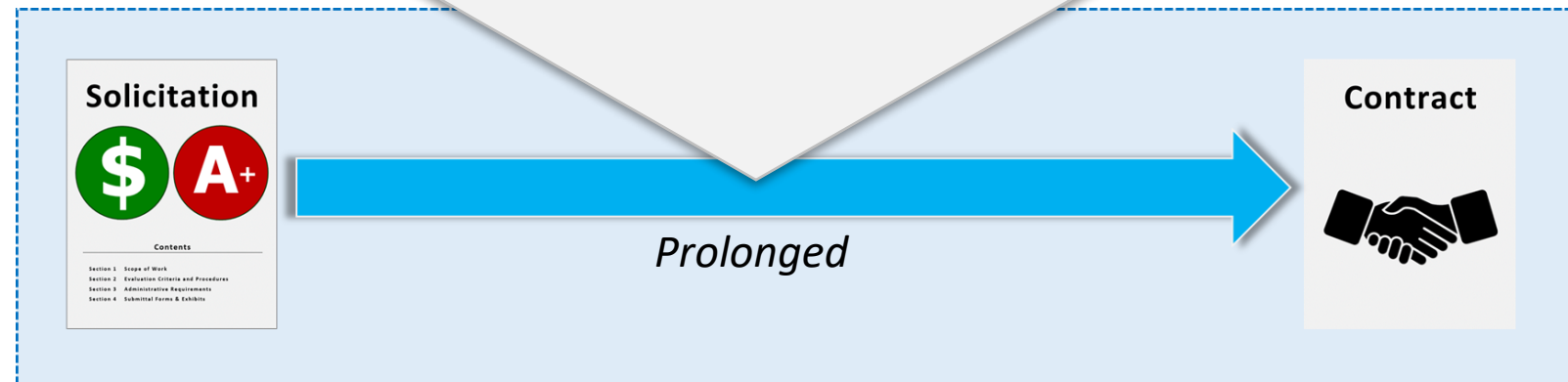
Low Quality Scope
(Complete, Concise, & Accurate)



Prolonged Timeline

- Significant Q&A
- Proposal Time Extension
- Evaluation Difficulty (Apples-to-Oranges)
- Contract Negotiation (Scope Adjustment)

Low Quality Scope
(Complete, Concise, & Accurate)



Workshop – Purchasing A Vehicle



Workshop – Purchasing A Vehicle

Scenario 1

- I need to purchase a vehicle.
- What is the best deal that you can offer me?



Workshop – Purchasing A Vehicle

Scenario 1

- I need to purchase a vehicle.
- What is the best deal that you can offer me?



Scenario 6

- The vehicle should get great MPG
- The vehicle must come with synthetic engine oil
- The vehicle must have windshield wipers
- I would like a new car, not used
- I really like my current vehicle
- I get headaches from the smell of cigarettes
- Do you think I need a tow package
- I do not want a red or yellow vehicle
- I have set aside extra funds for the 'right' vehicle
- Vehicle must have a 4-speed automatic or better
- Vehicle must come with 2 sets of keys
- Vehicle must come with full tank of gas
- I am open to any color vehicle
- I've never been camping
- How do you take a shower in the forest?
- If I get a vehicle, is 5-star better than 4?
- Would like to purchase by end of the week
- Would really like a luxury sedan
- I think SUV's are really cool
- I currently drive a 4-door sedan
- I really like Thai food, but not sushi
- My maximum budget is \$29,000
- The vehicle must have Firestone tires
- The vehicle should have chrome wheels
- Would like the vehicle to have tinted windows
- The vehicle must have great lights for night driving

Balancing Act

(What to put in or leave out of the SOW)



Impact of a Poor SOW

Perceptions of Owner SOWs

- **Unclear**
- Information is missing
- **Overly prescriptive**
- Unrealistic
- **Discourages innovation**
- The owner is “fishing”
- **Misunderstands Needs**
- *Procurement is Not Fair*

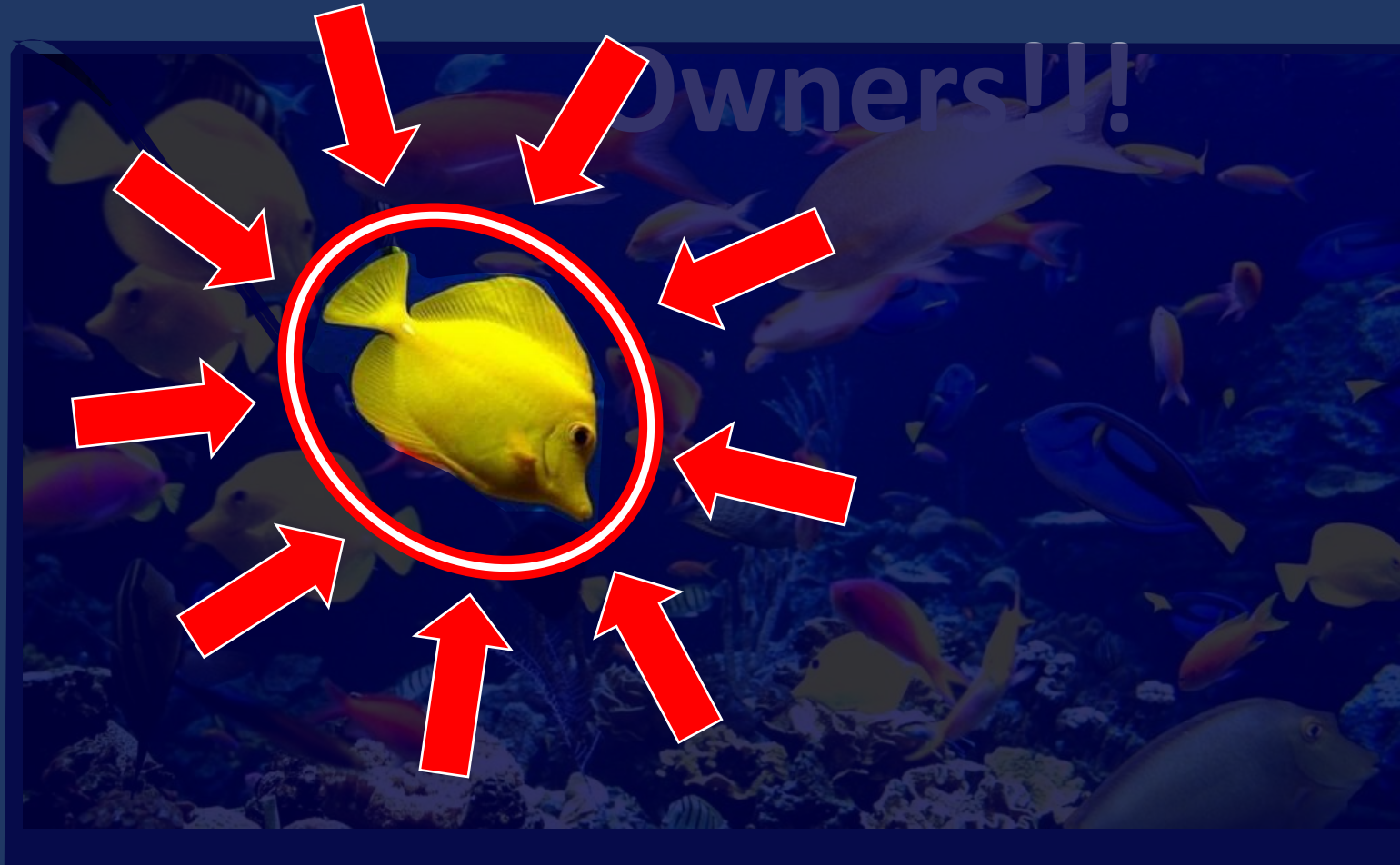
Impact

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

You Are Not The Only “Fish” In The Sea... Vendors Have Options!



Your Goal: You Want To Look More Attractive Than All Other Current



If You Look Dangerous....



What Type Of Suppliers Do You Want To Attract?

Supplier A



Supplier B



Benefits of a Strong Scope

- Critical tool in **communicating** your needs, goals, outcomes, etc.
- Allows you to receive “**apples-to-apples**” pricing
- Assists vendors in minimizing their **contingencies**
- Assists in keeping vendors **engaged** (not walking away or saying “*we are too busy right now*”)

Vendor Impacts of Poor Scope

- Frustrated & willing to walk away



Case Study

- SIMPLAR: what is the budget or estimated size of this contract

Case Study

- SIMPLAR: what is the budget or estimated size of this contract
- SME: Good question. Does anyone know? Have we gotten approval yet to proceed?

Making Up Requirement

- SIMPLAR: You have identified a mandatory requirement that:
The system shall ensure that records, documents and metadata are easily accessible and retrieved in a timely manner. The system shall have a Query system latency/response time no greater than _ TBD .
- What is the TBD?

Making Up Requirement

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- SME #1: Umm....well, vendors should now what it should be

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- SME #2: Honestly, as long as I can get up and go make coffee, and come back to my desk and the data is there, that is all I need.

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- Group: **okay**

Prior to Releasing RFP

- SIMPLAR: You should probably soften language regarding that the new system must do machine learning

Prior to Releasing RFP

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- SME: We think it is okay

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- SME: We think it is okay
- PRE-PROPOSAL VENDOR: We don't understand what you mean by machine learning

Prior to Releasing RFP

- SIMPLAR: You should probably soften language regarding that the new system must do machine learning
- SME: We think it is okay
- PRE-PROPOSAL VENDOR: We don't understand what you mean by machine learning
- SME: Hahahaha...I have no clue

SOW

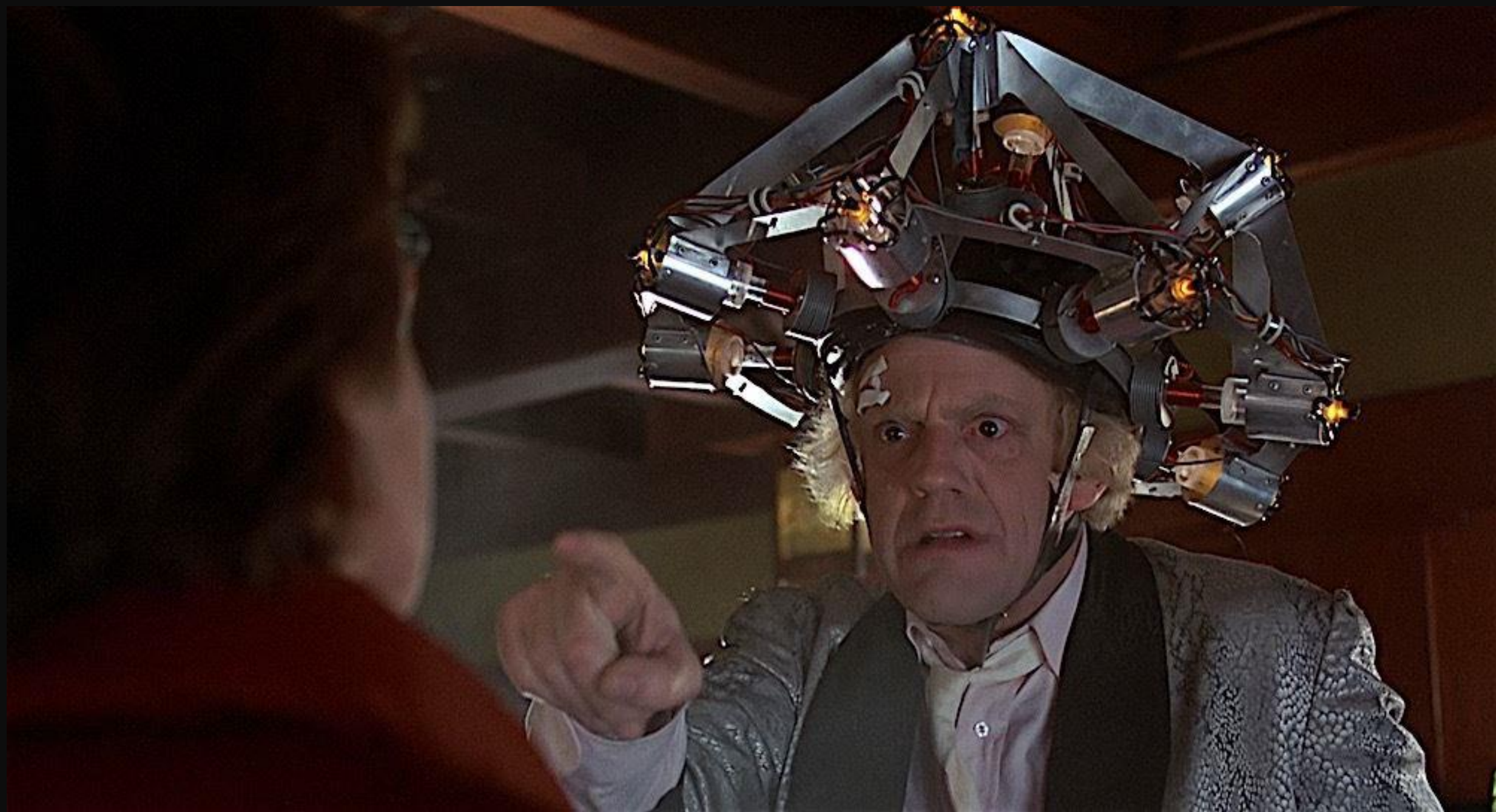
- 63 questions (4 were non-SOW related)

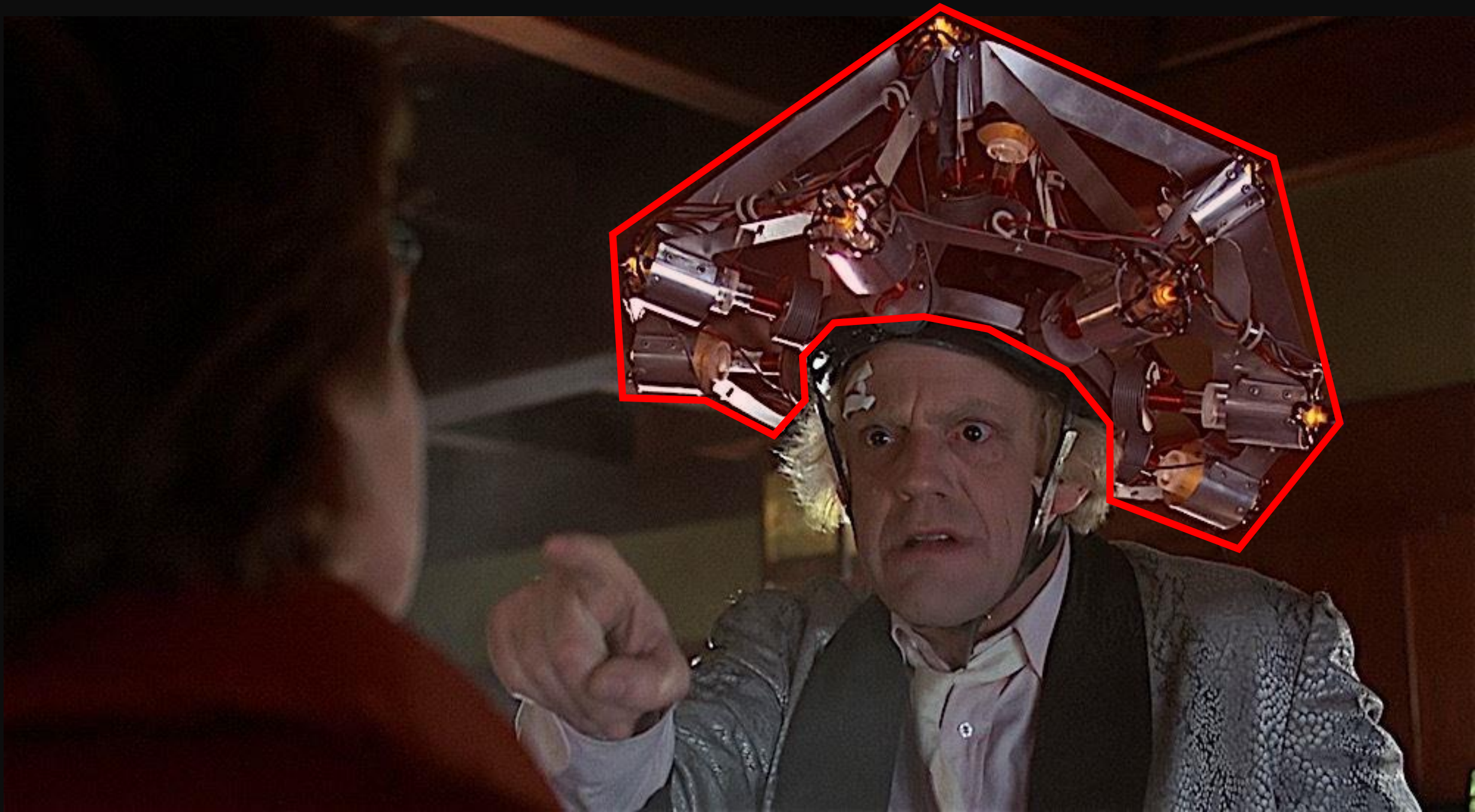
Costs

- 11 Proposals

- FIRM 102 \$488,435
- FIRM 107 \$1,301,514
- FIRM 105 \$2,131,800
- FIRM 104 \$2,359,122
- FIRM 103 \$2,932,985
- FIRM 109 \$3,253,863
- FIRM 101 \$4,210,000
- FIRM 110 \$4,694,650
- FIRM 106 \$5,049,816
- FIRM 108 \$20,102,522

How Can You Improve Your SOW?





Traditional Approach

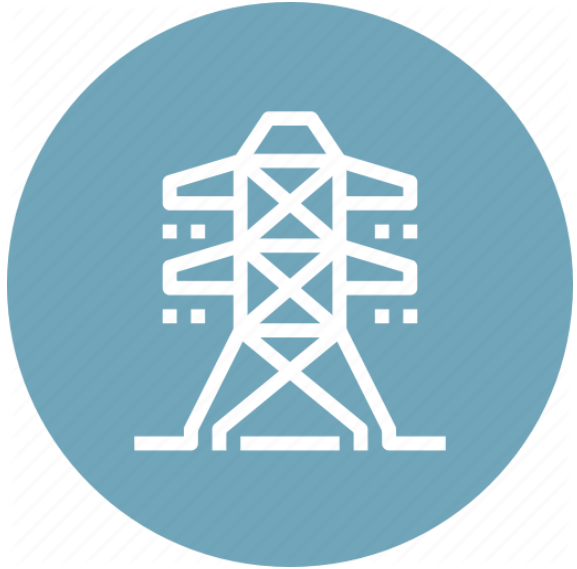
- Re-use our last similar SOW
- Attempt to prepare on our own
- Hire consultants

Traditional Approach

- Re-use our last similar SOW
- Attempt to prepare on our own
- Hire consultants

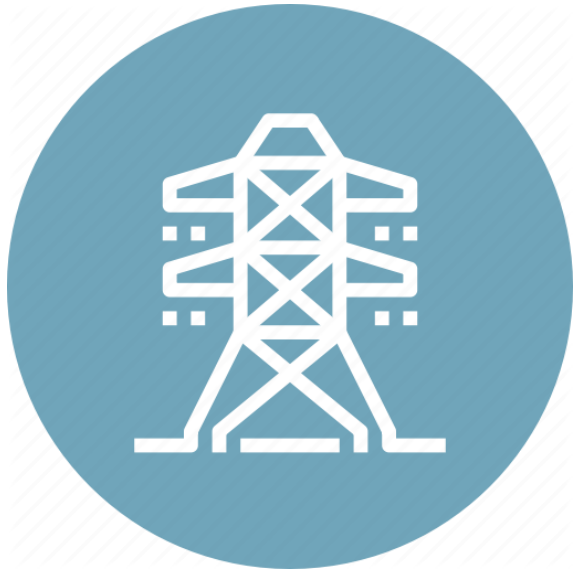
Sometimes this works...
Sometimes it doesn't

Real Example



- **Large Utility Procurement**
- **IT/ERP**
- **Client hired a consultant to prepare the Scope of Work**

Real Example



- Large Utility Procurement
- IT/ERP
- Client hired a consultant to prepare the Scope of Work
- **Resulted in over 1,500 pages!!!**

Real Example



- Large Utility Procurement
- IT/ERP
- Client hired a consultant to prepare the Scope of Work
- **Resulted in over 1,500 pages!!!**
(That's 3 reams of paper)

What If You've Never Procured The Service?

What If You've Never Procured The Service?

- Where do you start?
- How do you know what to put in the scope?
- What does not need to put in the scope?
- How much background information to include?
- What background information do they need?

Simple Solution

Simple
Solution

**Ask Your
Suppliers!**

Request For Information

RFI

- Informal process that allows the owner/client to obtain critical information
- Traditional market research tool

Perception of RFI's?

Industry Perception on RFI's

Poor Perception of RFI's



R F I

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Improperly Structured RFI's

- ✗ Can increase the time to procure the project or service

Improperly Structured RFI's

- ✗ Can increase the time to procure the project or service
- ✗ Can increase the amount of effort and resources to solicit

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- ✗ Can increase the amount of resources required to review the responses

Improperly Structured RFI's

- ✗ Can increase the time to procure the project or service
- ✗ Can increase the amount of effort and resources to solicit
- ✗ Can increase the amount of resources required to review the responses
- ✗ May not result in helpful or useful information

Common “Mistakes”

Most Common “Mistakes”

- ✗ Request ‘trade secrets’
- ✗ Request ‘costing’
- ✗ Request ‘too much’ information
- ✗ Request ‘irrelevant’ information



Services ▾ Industries ▾ Insights ▾ Careers ▾

Search


US-EN

2020 Global Human Capital Trends

The social enterprise at work: Paradox as a path forward

How can organizations remain distinctly human in a technology-driven world? This year's Global Human Capital Trends report calls upon...

Read more >




Insights

2020 Global Blockchain Survey

From promise to reality

Read more >




Perspectives

Modernized IT systems can help retail and consumer thrive post-COVID-19

Recovery and resilience for retailers and other businesses

Read more >

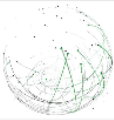


Perspectives

Technology Business Management

Solutions for aligning people, process, and technology


Read more >



Analysis

HX in times of uncertainty

How does the human experience (HX™) change in the face of widespread uncertainty?



Ecosystems & Alliances relationships

we help business leaders design and implement solutions to improve operations and performance.

Core Business Operations Services

Bringing new efficiencies to the heart of your business.

Digital Strategy Consulting

Public Sector Consulting

Retail, Wholesale & Distribution

Cyber Strategy



Example – State of XXXXX

| RFI #32110-SWC | |
|------------------------------|---|
| TECHNICAL INFORMATIONAL FORM | |
| Company Information | 1. RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME: |
| | 2. RESPONDENT CONTACT PERSON: Name: Title: Address: Phone Number: Email: |
| | 3. Provide a description of your company (number of employees, annual revenues, locations, years in existence, etc.). a. Specify how many employees you have for administrative staff, scanning services, etc. b. How many trucks do you own or lease that would be used in performance of the scope of services? |
| | 4. How many physical locations does your company have throughout the State of Tennessee? Other states? Please provide address for each location, how many employees are at each location, and a detailed explanation of the type of facility at this location; i.e. warehouse with inventory personnel, office building with administrative employees, storage facility, etc. |
| | 5. Describe your company's insurance capabilities. a. What are the minimum levels for each the State should require from companies for these services? b. If the State considered requiring Professional Liability Insurance and an intellectual property, cyber-risk/network security/privacy Insurance, what impact would that have for companies who provide this service? |
| | 6. Does your company perform background checks on employees? a. If so, detail the process and list the organization or governmental entity used to check or verify backgrounds. b. How frequently is a background check performed for each employee? c. What level of background checks have customers requested in the past? |
| | 7. Have you ever been asked to use a customer's training materials regarding confidentiality of their documents? For instance, employees would sign a training log, watch a video, and sign an acknowledgement agreement annually. If not, what considerations would a company require to accommodate this request? Would this require an additional cost? |
| | 8. Describe your company's experience with IRS documents, PII (Personally identifiable information), HIPPA and a detailed explanation of the process used to ensure the security and confidentiality of highly sensitive documents. Please include any specific federal or state policies that you may follow or have used to implement your process. Also, describe how your company would modify its processes if federal or state policies |

Example – State of XXXXX

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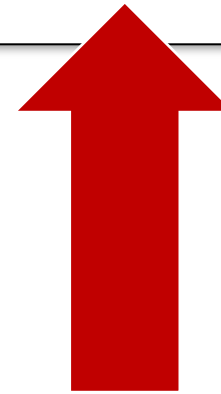
- RFI asked 82 questions
- Asked for general information, or 'proposal-type' information

What Will You Do With This Information?

3. Provide a description of your company (number of employees, annual revenues, locations, years in existence, etc.).
 - a. Specify how many employees you have for administrative staff, scanning services, etc.
 - b. How many trucks do you own or lease that would be used in performance of the scope of services?

What Will You Do With This Information?

3. Provide a description of your company (number of employees, annual revenues, locations, years in existence, etc.).
 - a. Specify how many employees you have for administrative staff, scanning services, etc.
 - b. How many trucks do you own or lease that would be used in performance of the scope of services?



FIRM A

58 employees
7 owned trucks

FIRM B

79 employees
3 leased trucks

What Will You Do With This Information?

*What are we gaining....
How does this help us refine
Scope?*

FIRM A

58 employees
7 owned trucks



FIRM B

79 employees
3 leased trucks

What Will You Do With This Information?

4. How many physical locations does your company have throughout the State of Tennessee? Other states?

Please provide address for each location, how many employees are at each location, and a detailed explanation of the type of facility at this location; i.e. warehouse with inventory personnel, office building with administrative employees, storage facility, etc.

What Will You Do With This Information?

4. How many physical locations does your company have throughout the State of Tennessee? Other states?

Please provide address for each location, how many employees are at each location, and a detailed explanation of the type of facility at this location; i.e. warehouse with inventory personnel, office building with administrative employees, storage facility, etc.

FIRM A

17 locations

Warehouse (7)

Office building (2)

Storage (17)

FIRM B

8 locations

Warehouse (8)

Office building (8)

Storage (8)

What Will You Do With This Information?

*What are we gaining....
How does this help us refine
Scope?*

FIRM A

17 locations
Warehouse (7)
Office building (2)
Storage (17)



FIRM B

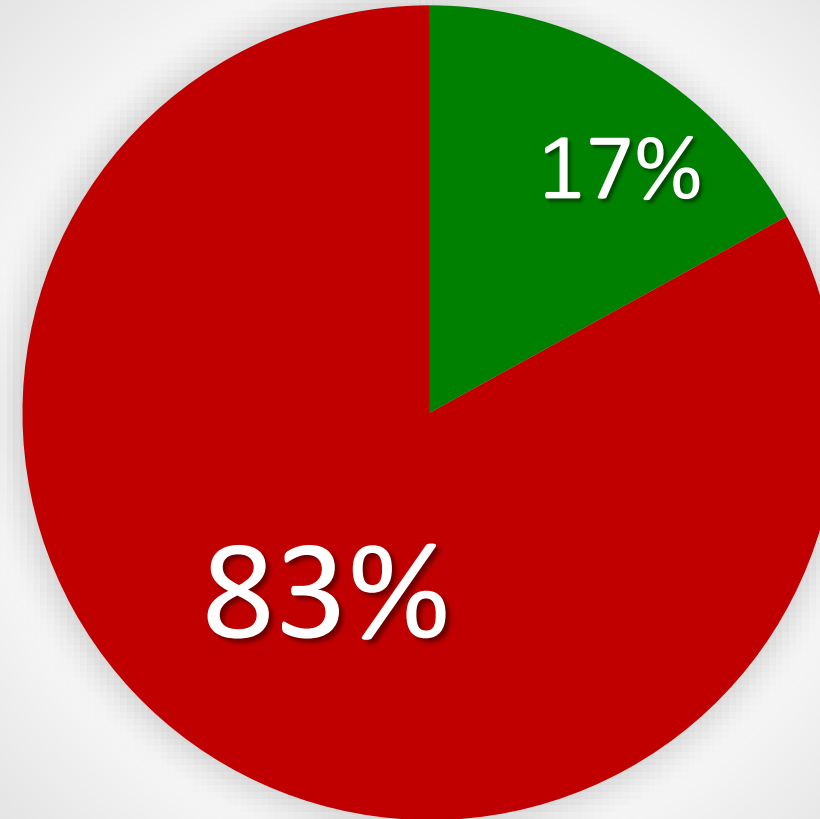
8 locations
Warehouse (8)
Office building (8)
Storage (8)

Results

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- Client spends **2-months**
- **42 page** response (average)
- 99% of responses were marketing / **cut and paste**
- Client does **not know how** to utilize this information in the RFP Scope

Majority Of
Clients Do NOT
Use The RFI
Response In
Developing
Their SOW



Request For Needs



National Association of
State Procurement Officials

A large, circular award seal with a dark blue background and a white border. The seal has a serrated, gear-like edge. At the top center of the seal is a white graphic of a stylized sunburst or gear. Below this graphic, the text "GEORGE CRONIN" is written in a white, sans-serif font. Underneath that, the words "★ awards for ★" are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the seal, the words "Procurement Excellence" are written in a white, italicized, serif font. A small "TM" trademark symbol is located at the bottom right of the seal.

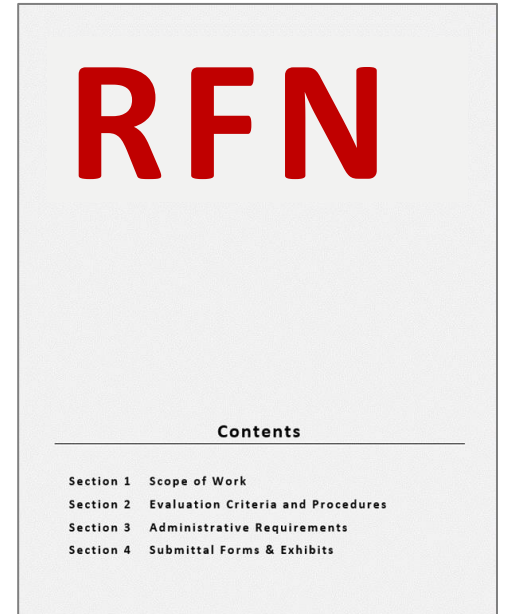
GEORGE CRONIN
★ awards for ★
*Procurement
Excellence*

TM



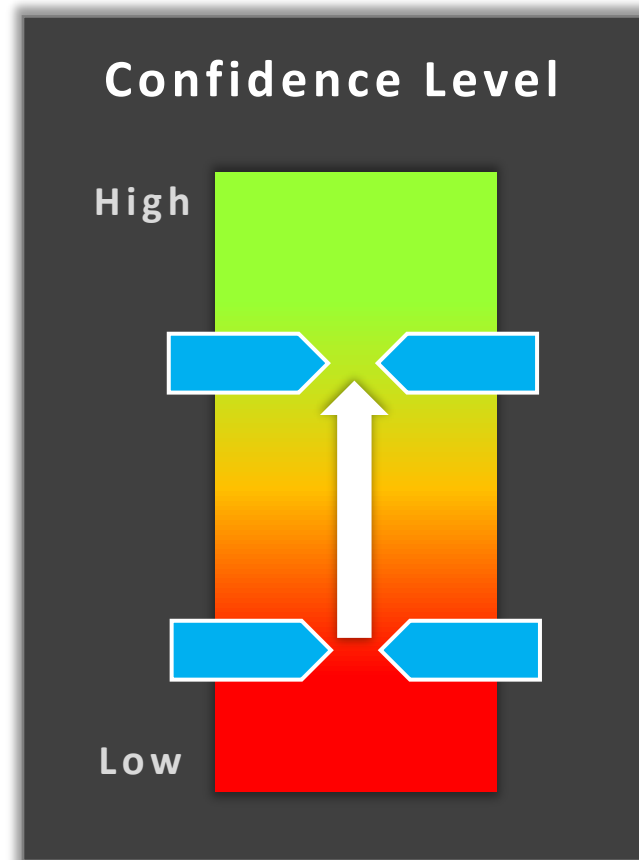
Request For Needs

- Informal Process
- Used to conduct market research
- Used as a preliminary fact-finding document
- Gather supplier feedback or advice
- Better define a problem, need, or solution
- Help define the next steps (with ITB, RFQ, or RFP)

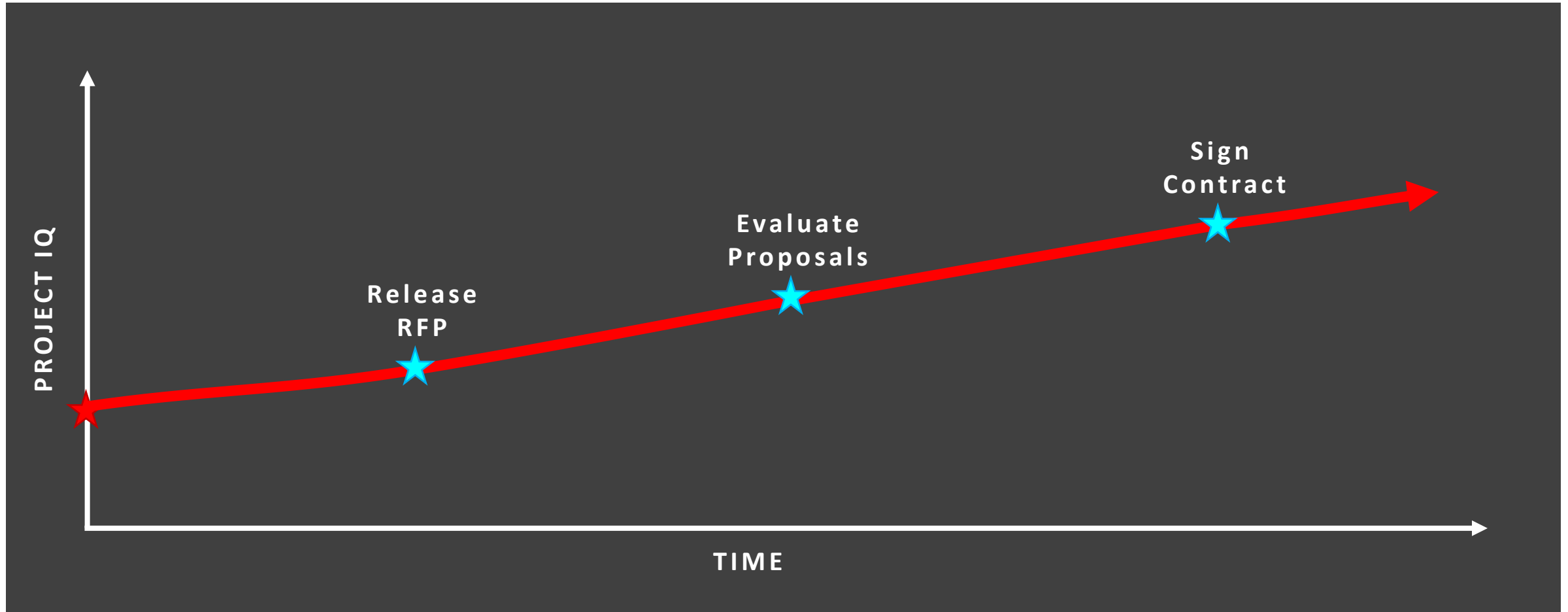


An RFN can be utilized to
improve solicitations for any
type of project or service

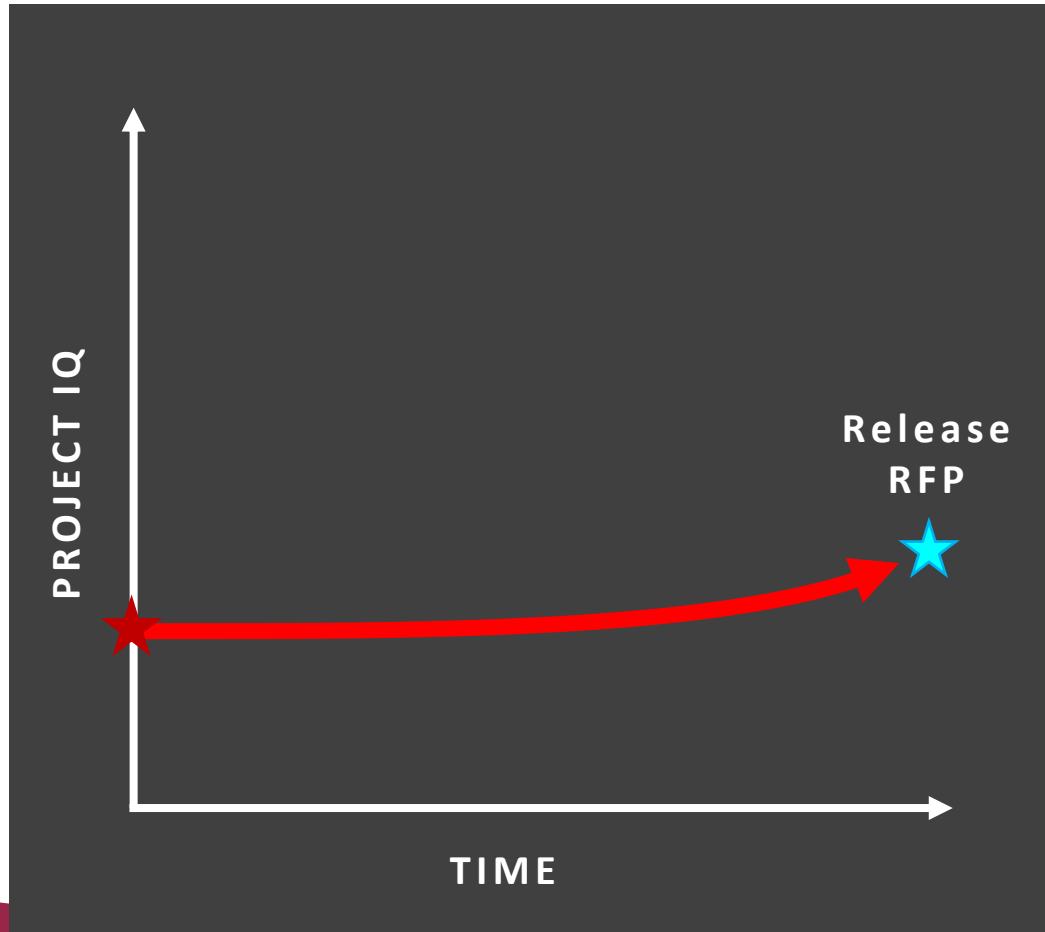
Goal of RFN?



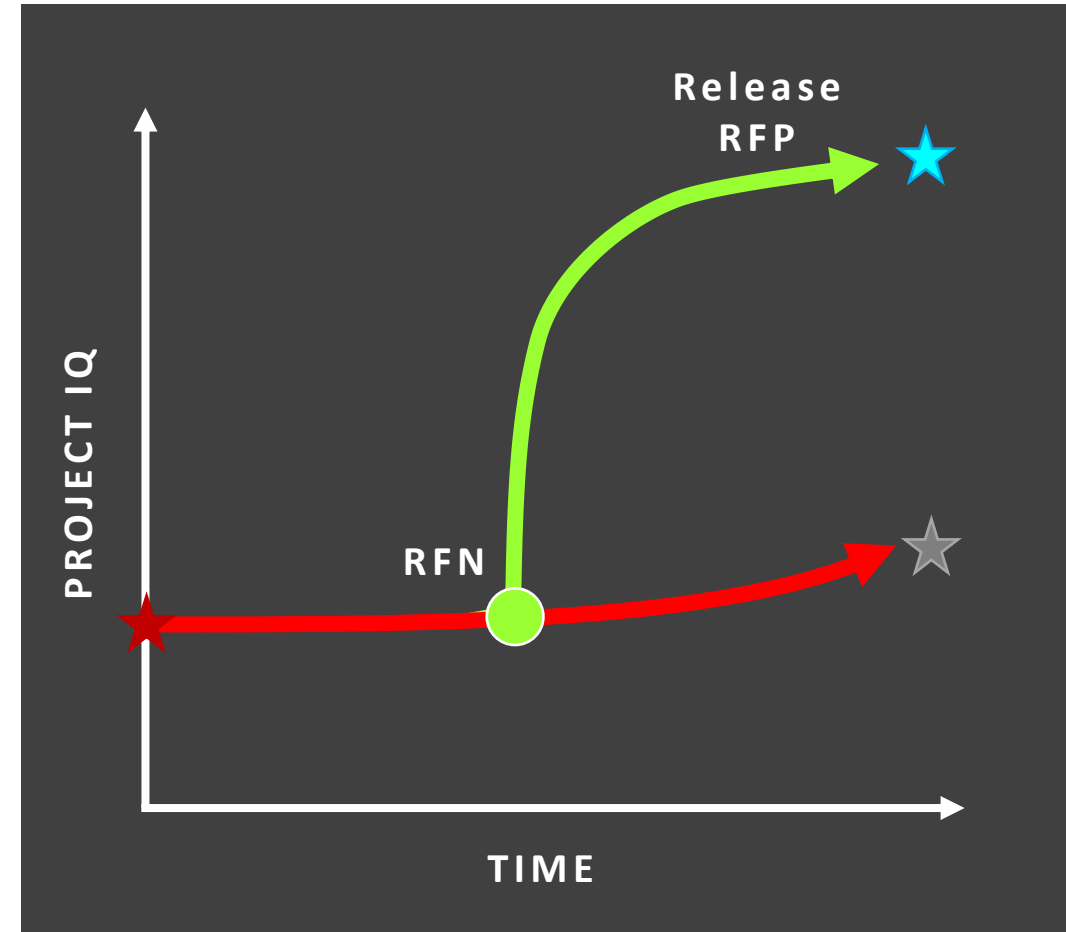
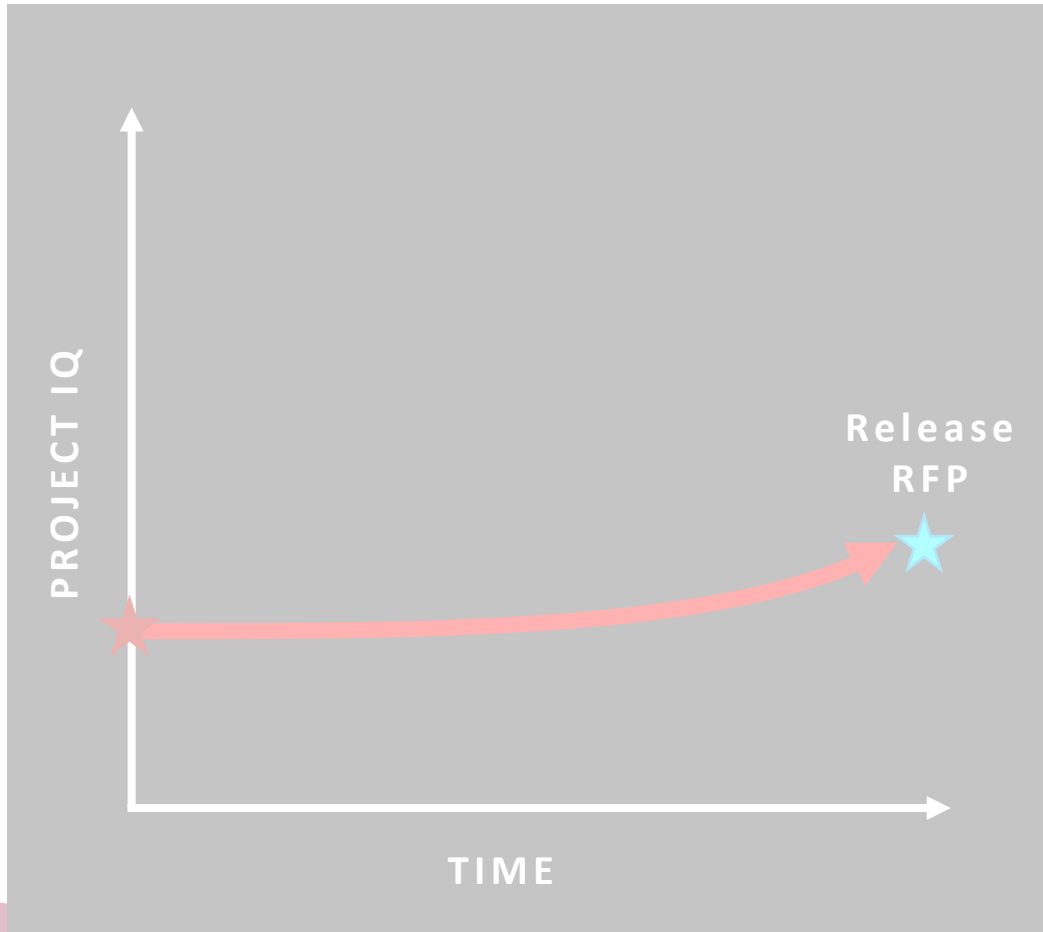
Typical Project IQ



Typical Project IQ



What Is Our Goal?



Developing the RFN



Document Size Matters!!!

If your RFN is over 10-pages...Vendors may be:

- **Less likely to read**
- **Less likely to provide a specific response & more likely to provide 'copy-and-paste' material**

Remember...Vendor is not getting paid for this!

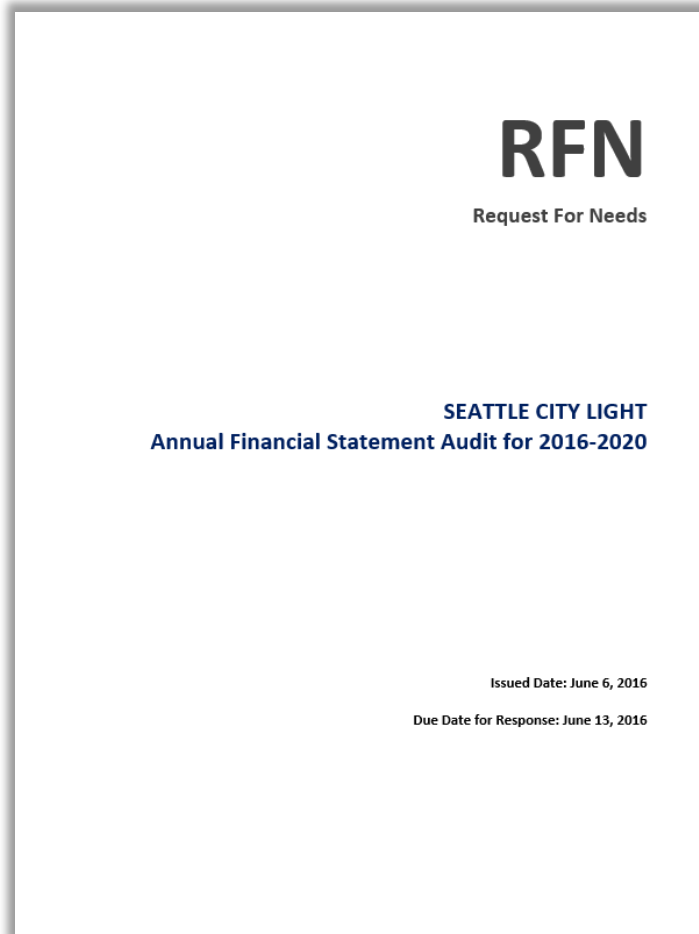


Document Size Matters!!!

If your RFN is over 10-pages...Vendors may be:

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Format & Structure



■ Administrative Items (1-2 Pages)

- RFN Purpose
- Format for Response
- Dates & Times
- Contact

■ Project Background (1-4 Pages)

- Existing Conditions
- Desired Outcomes, Goals, Objectives, etc. (focus on what is different, unique, unknown, etc. Don't need excessive details)

■ Questions / Script (1-Page)

TRADITIONAL APPROACH



- Owner creates & issues RFI document
- Suppliers prepare written responses
- Owner SME's read & interpret responses
- Scope is updated

TRADITIONAL APPROACH



- Owner creates & issues RFI document
- Suppliers prepare **written responses**
- Owner SME's read & interpret responses
- Scope is updated

ACCELERATED APPROACH



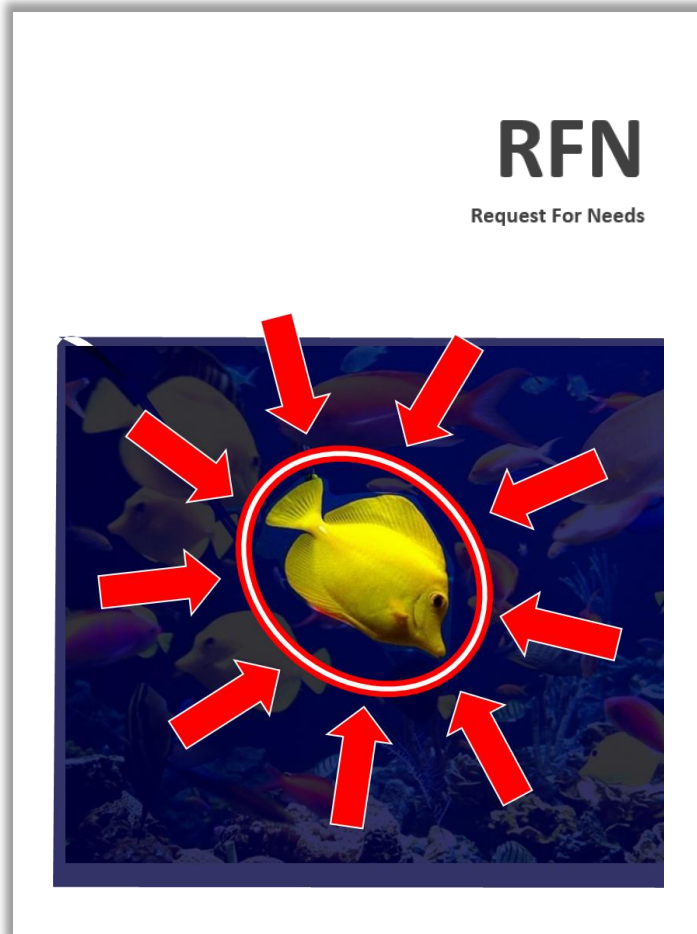
- Owner creates & issues RFN document
- Suppliers **present responses online**
- Owner SME's ask follow-up questions
- Scope is updated

Accelerated RFN

- Rather than requesting a written response, perform entire RFN **online** (through video)
- Greatly **minimizes vendor time** (which encourages participation, and minimizes cut-and-paste material)
- Minimizes **owner time** (less time to prepare RFN, but much less time to participate in the proposals versus reading and digesting)
- 1-hour conversation can provide **more value** than 20-30 page document



Format & Structure



■ Administrative Items (1-2 Pages)

- RFN Purpose
- Format for Response
- Dates & Times
- Contact

■ Project Background (1-4 Pages)

- Existing Conditions
- Desired Outcomes, Goals, Objectives, etc. (focus on what is different, unique, unknown, etc. Don't need excessive details)

■ Questions / Script (1-Page)

Sample Language

SECTION 2 - FORMAT

- The University will conduct these informal strategy discussions via a virtual conference call (via Zoom). If the Supplier cannot participate virtually, the University may consider phone conferencing. The discussions will be performed individually on a “1-on-1” basis between each interested Supplier and the University. The University anticipates spending about 1-hour on each call. The content & topics of the strategy discussions are provided in Section 7. The University is NOT requesting or seeking a formal written response to these questions or topics. All information will be collected and discussed via the virtual call.
- The University anticipates that the Supplier will have 1-3 personnel in attendance for this discussion, which may include: the primary point of contact such as an Account Representative or Project Manager; and at least one representative who can speak to technical and functional aspects of this project (Subject Matter Expert). However, there are no minimum or maximum requirements on Supplier personnel that can attend and participate in this meeting.

Sample Language

SECTION 5 - ALLOTTED TIME SLOTS

- Suppliers that would like to participate in these Strategy Discussions must complete and submit Attachment A to RSVP. Due to time and resource constraints, the University anticipates performing discussions with the **first 5 Suppliers** that submit an RSVP. The University reserves the right to conduct discussions with additional suppliers if necessary. Time-slots will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Once your time-slot is confirmed, the University will provide a link to the conference-call or video-call.

Properly Structured RFN's

- ✓ Can be extremely quickly (with no impact to procurement timeline)
- ✓ Can minimize the amount of effort and resources to solicit and review responses
- ✓ Can provide very valuable and useful information

Examples



Request for Needs

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Software Solution

Issued Date: November 2, 2022

SECTION 1 - PURPOSE

The University of Saskatchewan (University) is issuing this 'Request for Needs' (RFN) document to schedule strategy discussions from interested Suppliers with experience in Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Software Solutions. The intent of these discussions are to gather information and obtain feedback from Suppliers to assist University in developing a more accurate Scope of Work and overall approach for an upcoming Request for Proposal (RFP). This RFN will not result in a contract award, constitute a commitment by the University to procure any goods or services, or form a legally binding "Contract A". Supplier participation in these discussions are completely voluntary and not mandatory. Supplier participation is not required in order to participate in a future RFP that is directly related to this project.

SECTION 2 - FORMAT

The University prefers to conduct these informal strategy discussions via a virtual conference call (via Zoom). If the Supplier cannot participate virtually, the University may consider phone conferencing. The discussions will be performed individually on a "1-on-1" basis between each interested Supplier and the University. The University anticipates spending about 1-hour on each call. The content & topics of the strategy discussions are provided in Section 7. The University is NOT requesting or seeking a formal written response to these questions or topics. All information will be collected and discussed via the virtual call.

The University anticipates that the Supplier will have 1-3 personnel in attendance for this discussion, which may include: the primary point of contact such as an Account Representative or Project Manager; and at least one representative who can speak to technical and functional aspects of this project (Subject Matter Expert). However, there are no minimum or maximum requirements on Supplier personnel that can attend and participate in this meeting.

SECTION 3 - KEY DATES

The critical dates for this RFN are shown below. These dates may be changed/adjusted by the University if necessary.

Issue Date of RFN: November 2, 2022
RSVP Deadline: November 14, 2022

Page 1 of 5

SECTION 4 – UNIVERSITY CONTACT

All questions, inquires, or communications regarding this RFN must be directed to the Contact listed below. Suppliers must not contact any other University employee. For communication of all RFN information, ~~USask~~ will use the Bonfire Hub website (<https://usask.bonfirehub.ca>)

Kyle Jurgens
Procurement Specialist

SECTION 5 - ALLOTTED TIME SLOTS

Suppliers that would like to participate in these Strategy Discussions must complete and submit Attachment A to RSVP. Due to time and resource constraints, the University anticipates performing discussions with the first **1** Suppliers that submit an RSVP. The University reserves the right to conduct discussions with additional suppliers if necessary. Time-slots will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Once your time-slot is confirmed, the University will provide a link to the conference-call or video-call.

SECTION 6 - ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Parties to Bear Their Own Costs: The University will not be liable for any expenses incurred by a Supplier, including the expenses associated with the cost of participating in the discussions to this RFN. The parties will bear their own costs associated with or incurred through this RFN process.

Disclosure of Information: The University does not intend to disclose the individual contents of each Supplier discussion, but rather use the information gathered from each discussion to help shape the strategy and path forward on a future RFP. However, information provided by a Supplier may be released in accordance with governing laws. Therefore, the Supplier should not include information in their response that is proprietary or confidential.

Future RFP: The University may elect to proceed, by way of open tender, where all potential Suppliers, including those that did not respond to this RFN, are eligible to compete for the award of a contract for the supply of any good or service; or may elect not to procure the good or service that is the subject of this RFN.

Additional Clarification: The University may conduct another round of RFN Strategy Discussions with the same or different Suppliers, or may seek subsequent information or clarification with any of the Suppliers that initially participate in this RFN.

Page 2 of 5

SECTION 7 - PROJECT BACKGROUND

This section provides a brief overview of the outcomes, objectives and expectations of the future state or scope of work of the upcoming project. The information provided in this section is for general background to assist with the strategy discussions. USask makes no representation, warranty, or guarantee as to the accuracy of this information.

USask is expecting to issue a competitive bid to solicit proposals from qualified and experienced firms to provide and implement a complete Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution to replace and modernize its existing systems and business processes to support Human Resources, Finance, and Procurement services.

USask also has a related need to replace our current Enterprise Service Management systems. Additional information is highlighted below:

- USask anticipates awarding an overall contract for ERP software and implementation services in early 2024. The University would like the ERP implementation to be completed with a target of 2026.
- Unique Condition: Some of USask's HR, Finance and Procurement functions have been centralized using a shared services model which includes:
 - o Centers of Excellence: Accountable for service strategy, policy and operating models;
 - o ConnectionPoint: Transaction processing center; and
 - o Professional Advisors (SBAs): Providing HR and Finance support to nearly all units across campus.Across USask, many units have opted into this model but some have not, choosing instead to maintain separate resources, processes, procedures, and workflows to varying degrees.
- Technology current state: The current state of the technology environment is costly to maintain, risky to change, cumbersome to use, and provides limited ability to collaborate across operations. ERP systems were implemented over 20 years ago, selected independently as "best of breed" offerings without consideration for cross functional processes and have been heavily customized over the years to address evolving business practices. In addition, hundreds of manual and automated integrations have been established. Many of the systems are also incompatible with one another which has prevented the university from creating efficiencies in administrative tasks and from building comprehensive transactional service models. Administrative teams are challenged by the inflexibility of our systems to deliver efficient and effective services.

SECTION 8 - SCRIPT FOR STRATEGY DISCUSSIONS

The University intends to discuss the following items during the "Strategy Discussions" with each Supplier. Note: A written response is NOT required or requested.

.1 Problem Statement: To enable efficient request processing/tracking by the "transactional hub" of the shared services team, USask end-users submit requests through Jira Service Management (JSM). In this way, JSM acts as an Enterprise Service Management (ESM) layer for USask, using ITSM principles and capabilities (ie, request management, workflow, knowledge management, incident/problem management, and automation) to support our enterprise business functions (ie, Human Resource, Finance, IT, Procurement, Library, Student Services) and provide a record of what changes should be made to core ERP systems.

- a) How do shared services teams interact with your ERP, and is an enterprise service management (ESM) recommended?
- b) What is the boundary between ERPs and ESM products?
- c) What ESM capabilities such as workflow or request management are offered directly within your ERP?
- d) What integration capabilities does your ERP have with leading ESM vendors?
- e) Do you have established partnerships for ESM?
- f) Do you have any examples of exemplar clients who have ERP and ESM working well together?
(About 25-30 Minutes)

.2 To enable your firm to prepare an accurate proposal at the RFP stage, what is the most critical information for the University to provide about our Current Conditions (Current State Environment) as it relates to a potential new ERP? Specifically, what information would help you understand our size, complexity and the activity across our Human Resource, Finance, and Procurement functions (such as user counts, roles, process volumes, others?) (About 5-10 Minutes)

.3 To enable your firm to prepare an accurate proposal at the RFP stage, what is the most critical information for the University to provide about our Future State Requirements as it relates to a potential new ERP? And our overall vision/goals/objectives/desired outcomes? (About 5-10 Minutes)

.4 Are there any other factors/issues/items the University should be considering at this time? (About 5-10 Minutes)

SECTION 7 - PR

This section provides of the upcoming pro discussions. USask m

USask is expecting to implement a comple business processes to

USask also has a relat Additional informatio

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.4 Are there any other factors/issues/items the University should be considering at this time? (About 5-10 Minutes)

Comments

- *We typically expect to get 1-2 responses on Software RFI's (versus 6 requests within 1 week)*
- *The quality of the information was exceptional and more useful than the traditional RFI proposals*
- *The marketing and sales took 1-2 minutes, followed by 55 minutes of usable information (versus the opposite in a traditional RFI)*
- *The University should run all RFI's this way in the future*

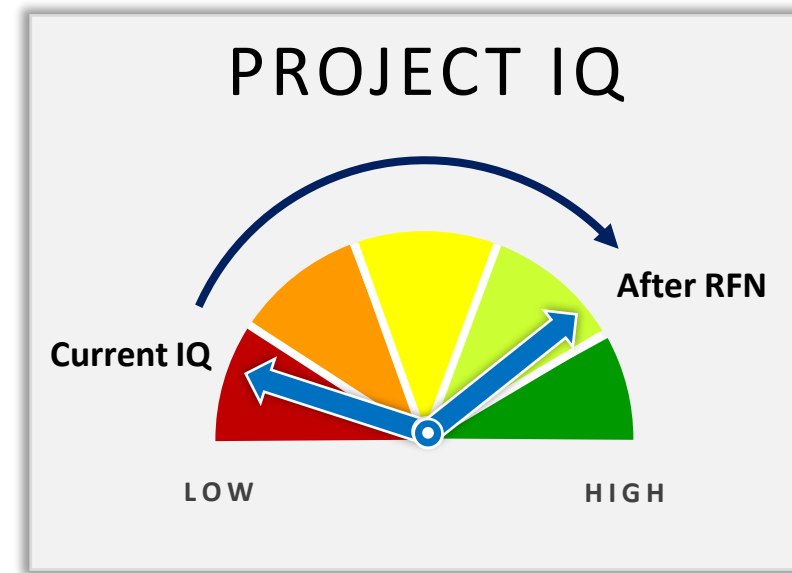


Internal Client Questions

- Are we on the right path?
- Have we collected all the information that the Suppliers need?
- Is there anything else that they need to give us an accurate cost proposal?
- How should we structure the 'fit-gap' phase?

Purpose of the RFN

- RFN is an advanced RFI (request for information) approach
- Goal = Help strengthen your scope of work and increase your overall project IQ
- Informal process
- Not mandatory
- No contract



Accelerated RFN Approach

- Developed a brief RFN document (2 pages of scope – 9 total pages)
- Developed 8 questions
- Requested online presentations

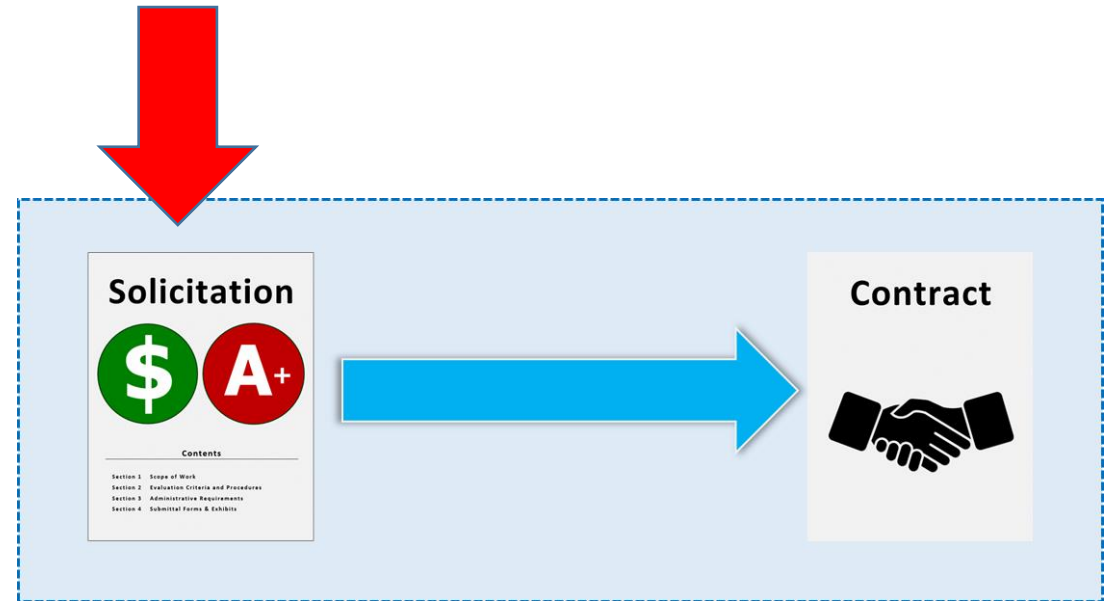


Questions

1. To enable your firm to prepare an accurate proposal at the RFP stage, what is the most critical information for the University to provide about our **Current Conditions?**
2. To enable your firm to prepare an accurate proposal at the RFP stage, what is the most critical information for the University to provide about our **Future State Requirements?**
3. In general, who are the key 3-5 personnel (from the Supplier side) that are critical to the success of the overall solution?
4. The University is considering a multi-step award process (as discussed below). Do you see any challenges or concerns with this approach?
5. What would be a reasonable amount of time to set aside to perform the **“Fit-Gap” phase?**
6. What would be a reasonable budget for the University to set aside to perform the **“Fit-Gap” phase?**
7. Are there any other factors/issues/items the University be considering at this time?
8. Could you provide us a few examples of **costing templates** previously used for ERP implementations in Higher Education?

Timeline

Issue the RFP

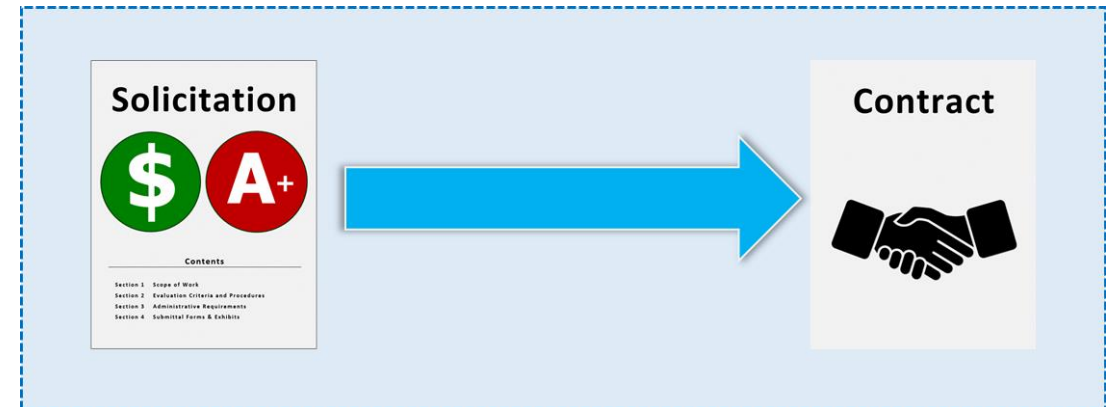


Timeline

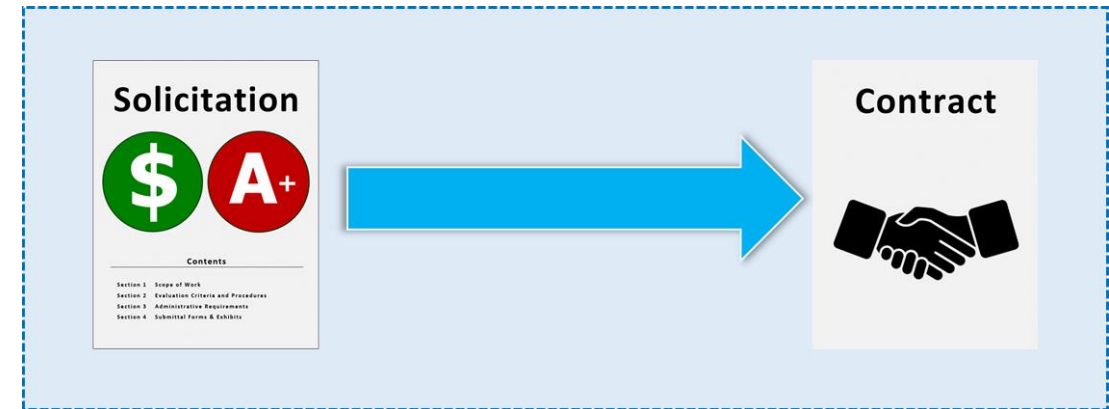
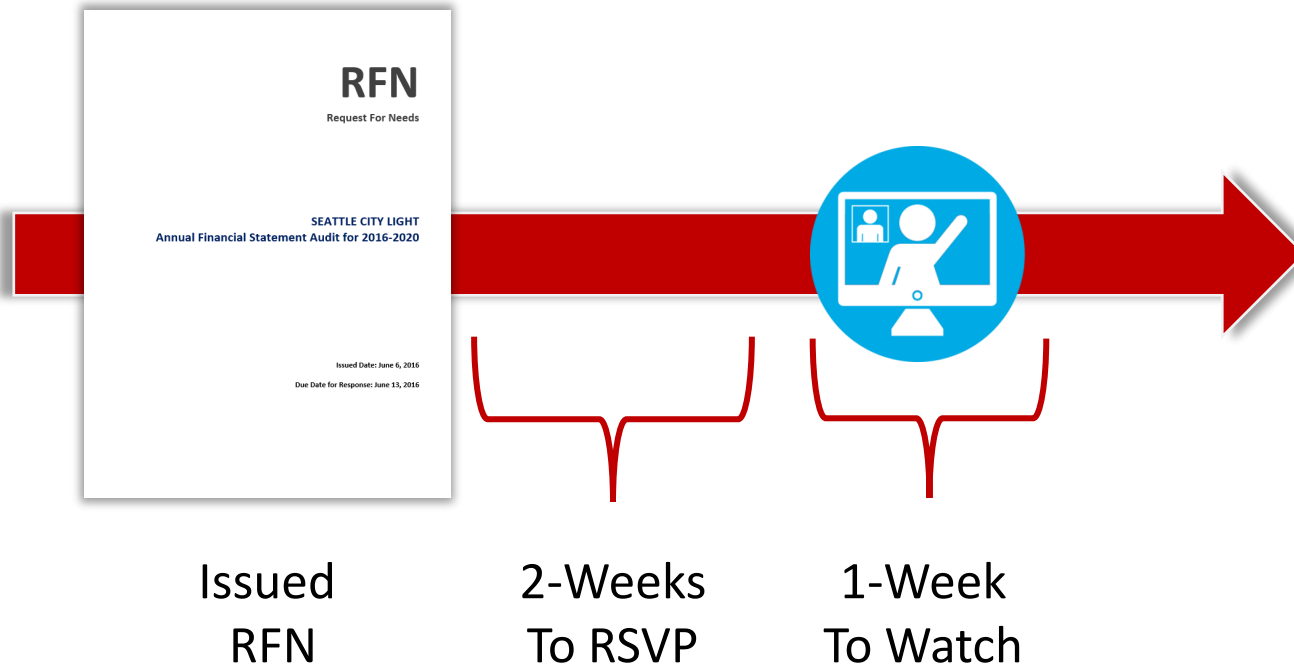
Preparation Period



Prepare the Scope
Obtain Approvals
Finalize Schedule
Coordinate with Evaluators
Prepare Solicitation



Timeline



Impact of RFN Request

Would Suppliers be more or less interested in having phone conversations?

- Issued RFI
- 53 suppliers downloaded the document
- University only expected to talk to 2-3 suppliers, but within 2 days of posting we had over 8 vendors request time
- All remaining suppliers were put on waiting list

Results

- After the RFN discussions, the University was able to very quickly:
 - Confirm that the Scope was not missing any critical information
 - Confirm that there was nothing unusual or unique about the scope that would be a major issue or concern for Suppliers
 - Confirmed that the pricing template was reasonable to industry standards
 - Confirm that Suppliers were unclear with our expectations of the “fit-gap” phase (“Fit-Gap” was an industry term that meant different things to Suppliers, so Core Team realized that they needed to address this in the RFP)

Comment

This is a real procurement innovation...most RFI's I have participated in will get 1-2 responses since the amount of work is too great on the suppliers... but a 1hr call is a no-brainer!

Comment

We got more valuable information during RFI calls than what our original consultant provided to us

Comment

We should run this process on every IT project the University does in the future

What Projects Are Best Suited?

What Projects Are Best Suited?

- Projects that the organization does not have a lot of experience with (low repetition, first time procuring, or first time in 10 years)
- Projects that have failed in past or have high failure rate
- Projects where Client has a lot of uncertainties about Scope
- Immature industries



Examples

(Assume The Owner Is A University)

Scope: Client is seeking to renovate an existing office space in a building.

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1. Client Experience: **High** (has performed 13 similar renovations this year)

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2. Previous Success Rate: **High** (no significant performance issues)

Examples

(Assume The Owner Is A University)

Scope: Client is seeking to renovate an existing office space in a building.

1. Client Experience: **High** (has performed 13 similar renovations this year)
2. Previous Success Rate: **High** (no significant performance issues)
3. Clarity of Scope: **High** (no concerns with the Scope)

Examples

(Assume The Owner Is A University)

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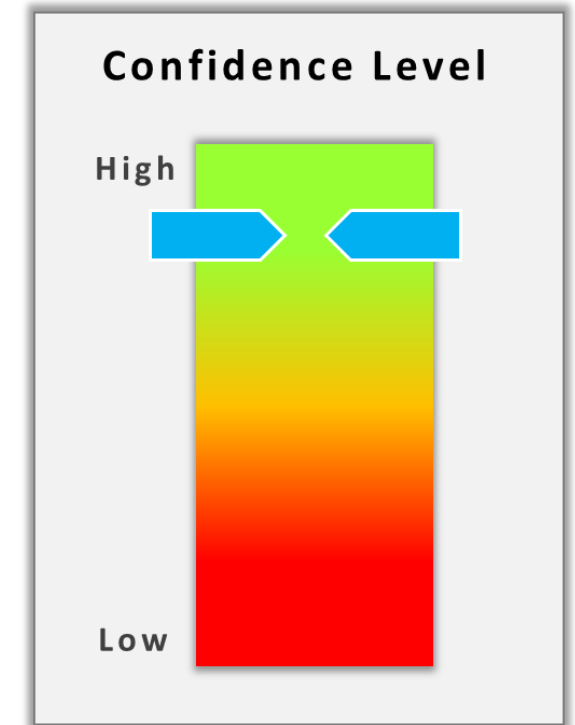
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***RFN
Unlikely***

Examples

(Assume The Owner Is A University)

Scope: Client is seeking to renovate electrical/lighting in a dormitory.

Examples

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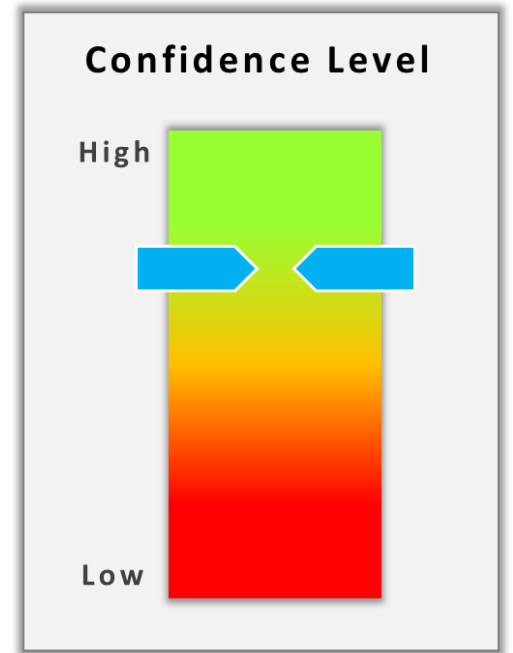
1. Client Experience: **High** (has performed 5 similar renovations this year)
2. Previous Success Rate: **Moderate** (challenges, but no significant issues)
3. Clarity of Scope: **Moderate** (some unknowns, but not concerned)
4. Industry Maturity: **High**

Examples

(Assume The Owner Is A University)

Scope: Client is seeking to renovate electrical/lighting in a dormitory.

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***RFN
Unlikely***

Examples

(Assume The Owner Is A University)

Scope: Client needs to re-procure janitorial contract that will be expiring this year.
Current contract has been in place for 5-years.

1. Client Experience: **Low** (has performed 2 in last 10 years)
2. Previous Success Rate: **High** (challenges, but no significant issues)
3. Clarity of Scope: **High** (very complete scope)
4. Industry Maturity: **High**

Examples

(Assume The Owner Is A University)

Scope: Client needs to re-procure janitorial contract that will be expiring this year.
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***RFN
Unlikely***

Examples

(Assume The Owner Is A University)

Scope: Client needs to procure a new food-service contract. This is currently being done in-house and will be the first time outsourcing this service.

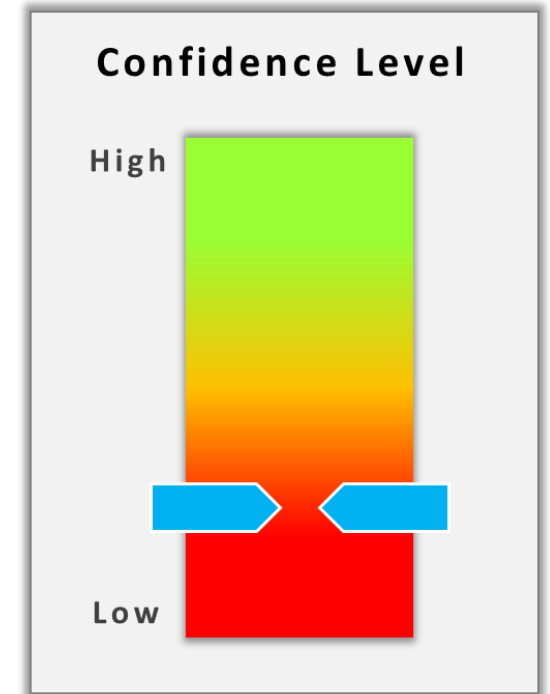
1. Client Experience: **Low** (never been performed)
2. Previous Success Rate: **n/a**
3. Clarity of Scope: **Low** (not exactly sure what needs to be included)
4. Industry Maturity: **High**

Examples

(Assume The Owner Is A University)

Scope: Client needs to procure a new food-service contract. This is currently being done in-house and will be the first time outsourcing this service.

1. Client Experience: **Low** (never been performed)
2. Previous Success Rate: **n/a**
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Examples

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Scope: Client needs to procure a new food-service contract. This is currently being done in-house and will be the first time outsourcing this service.

1. Client Experience: **Low** (never been performed)
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4. Industry Maturity: **High**

***RFN
LIKELY***

Examples

(Assume The Owner Is A University)

Scope: Client is looking to purchase a new Travel Management System to bring more consistency in the organization. This will be a new service.

1. Client Experience: **Low** (never been performed)
2. Previous Success Rate: **n/a**
3. Clarity of Scope: **Low** (not exactly sure what needs to be included)
4. Industry Maturity: **Low** (IT related project)

Examples

(Assume The Owner Is A University)

Scope: Client is looking to purchase a new Travel Management System to bring more consistency in the organization. This will be a new service.

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4. Industry Maturity: **Low** (IT related project)

***RFN
LIKELY***

Examples

(Assume The Owner Is A University)

Scope: Client is looking to renew an existing HR Software contract. The current contract has been in place for 3-years and the client wants to purchase a different system.

1. Client Experience: **Low** (2 times in the past 10 years)
2. Previous Success Rate: **Low-Moderate** (many performance challenges)
3. Clarity of Scope: **Moderate** (client feels good, but has some questions)
4. Industry Maturity: **Low** (IT related project)

Examples







(Assume The Owner Is A University)

Scope: Client is looking to renew an existing HR Software contract. The current contract has been in place for 3-years and the client wants to purchase a different system.


1. Client Experience: **Low** (3 times in the past 10 years)
2. Previous Success Rate: **Low-Moderate** (many performance challenges)
3. Clarity of Scope: **Moderate** (client feels good, but has some questions)
4. Industry Maturity: **Low** (IT related project)

***RFN
LIKELY***

Summary

| PROJECT SCOPE | Experience | Previous Success Rate | SOW Clarity | Industry Maturity | |
|---|------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------------|---|
| Renovating office space in a building? | High | High | High | High |  <i>Unlikely</i> |
| Renovating lighting in a dormitory? | High | Moderate | Moderate | High |  <i>Unlikely</i> |
| Procuring a janitorial contract (renewal)? | Moderate | Moderate | High | High |  <i>Unlikely</i> |
| Procuring a new food service contract (new)? | Low | n/a | Low | High |  <i>LIKELY</i> |
| Procuring a new travel management system (new)? | Low | n/a | Low | Low |  <i>LIKELY</i> |
| Procuring a HR software contract (renewal)? | Low | Moderate | Moderate | Low |  <i>LIKELY</i> |

Solicitations Contents

| | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <p>RFP</p> <p>Request For Proposals</p>  <p>Project Name Date Issued</p> | 1 | Scope of Work | What The Awarded Supplier Will Do |
| | 2 | Evaluation Procedures | |
| | 3 | Proposal Instructions | |
| | 4 | Administrative Requirements | |
| | 5 | Submittal Forms & Attachments | |

High Performing SOW

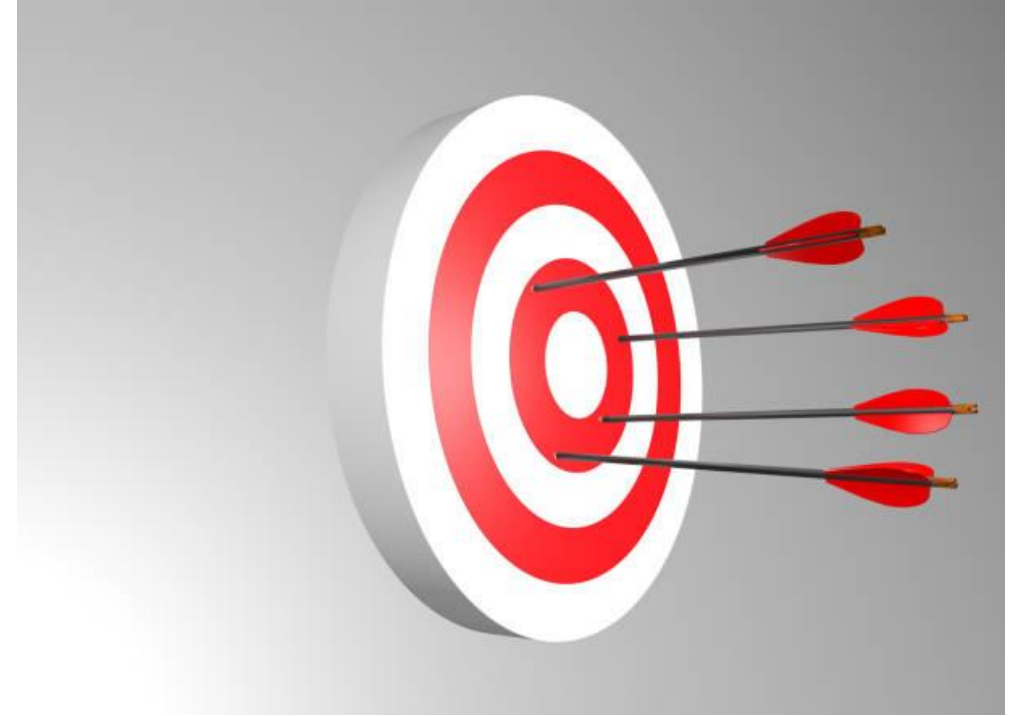
- **Core Objective:** What would a High-Performing Vendor need (or want) to know?
- ALWAYS question whether the SOW....
 - Prevents vendors from **walking away**?
 - Allows vendors to provide the **best price**?
 - Enables vendors to **minimize contingency**?
 - Gives vendors information to **plan their approach**?
 - Enables **'apples-to-apples'** proposals

SOW Content & Structure

Scope Of Work

- 1 Overview
- 2 Goals & Purpose
- 3 Schedule Expectations
- 4 Budget Expectations
- 5 Unique Considerations
- 6 Itemized Requirements

***Goal Is Not
Perfection!***



***Do Our Best
Within Resource
Constraints***



***...But We
Can't Totally
Miss The
Target!!!***

What If...

- Not sure exactly what to put in, or keep out, of your SOW
- Not sure if you have accurately captured everything
- Not sure if your approach is reasonable or not
- Not sure if the suppliers will need more information

Request for Needs (RFN)

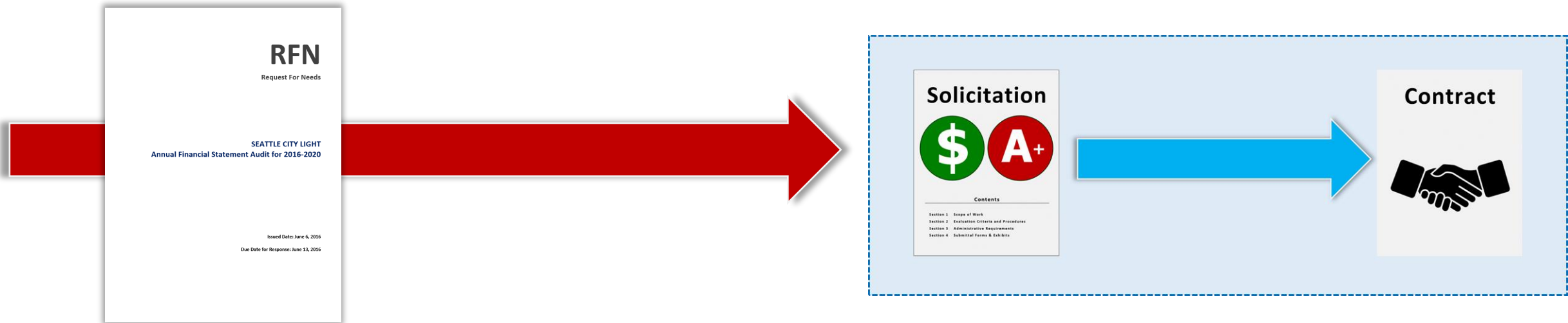
- The “Silver Bullet” of SOW Development
- Use an RFN when...
 - The User/Business doesn't know what to do
 - You (PM/Procurement) don't feel comfortable with what the User/Business prepared
 - The project is new, unusual, risky, or complex
 - You have an IT project of ANY kind!

Most Common “Mistakes”

- ✗ Request ‘trade secrets’
- ✗ Request ‘costing’
- ✗ Request ‘too much’ information
- ✗ Request ‘irrelevant’ information



For Large/Complex/Risky Projects...RFN is a Great Tool To Pre-Advertise



Want today's Presentation?

White papers?
Toolkits?
Templates?

<https://center4procurement.org/cappo/>



Free Webinar Series

3rd Thursdays every month
@ 12pm Central

15-min Teaching Moment

(learn a new tip, trick, or tool)

30-min Virtual Peer Group

(network with professionals)

Office Hours

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



Previous Recordings Available Online!

Handling Large IT
Hardware Buys
With Different Scope Packages

October 21, 2021



Vendor of
Record Programs

November 18, 2021



7 Most Deadly
Marketing Phrases

December 16, 2021



It's a New Year -
Ready for the
Next Level?

January 20, 2022



Best Practices for
Evaluator Training

February 17, 2022



Got RFP Soft Skills?

March 17, 2022



Best Practices for
Evaluator Training

February 17, 2022



Got RFP Soft Skills?

March 17, 2022



IT Software
Demonstrations

June 16, 2022



Amazing Pre-Proposal
Meetings

July 21, 2022



Responding to
Vendor RFIs

August 18, 2022



Human Dimensions
of Procurement
Professionals

September, 15 2022



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