

Creating a Winning Proposal



In today's ever competitive and complex landscape, marketing and sales need to write more (and better!) proposals than ever before. Although every proposal is different, there are specific techniques you can incorporate to ensure that your materials are effective selling documents.

Your proposals must be more than a compilation of data, tables and boilerplate text. They need to focus on the prioritized business issues the client cares about, the key strengths you bring to the business relationship, and the value-added benefits of selecting your company.

Here are 4 categories of content that winning proposals must contain:

1. Prove you understand the client's business problem or need.

People view major buying decisions with anxiety. Reduce anxiety and minimize any perception of risk by demonstrating that you understand their problems, issues, needs, opportunities, objectives, or values. Whatever is driving the client's interest, show that you understand it and have based your solution on it.

2. A recommendation for a specific approach, program, system design, or application that will solve the problem and produce positive results.

Surprisingly, most proposals contain no recommendation at all, and instead contain descriptions of products or services. A recommendation explicitly links the features of a product or service to the client's needs and show how the client will obtain positive results.

3. A compelling reason for the client to choose your recommendation over any others.

This is your value proposition. Remember that you may write a proposal that is completely compliant with the customer's requirements, that recommends the right solution, that even offers the lowest price, and still lose. Why? Because a competitor made a stronger case that their approach offered something that happened to matter more to the customer.

4. Evidence of your ability to deliver on time and on budget.

You want to show the substantiating evidence that answers the question: "Can they really do this?" Good evidence includes case studies, references, testimonials, and resumes of key personnel. Avoid throwing in everything -stay focused on the areas the customer cares about.

Every scrap of data and carefully chosen phrase must contain proof you understand their needs, unique recommendations, your unique value proposition, and evidence you can deliver on time and within budget. You're now equipped with the key ingredients of a winning proposal - **Happy Selling!**

Qvidian offers a platform to *deliver on the stuff that works* – providing a means to continually measure what's working, what's not working and adapt as necessary. Qvidian solutions manifest as the "go to" resource center for guiding sales reps through a deal, guiding them through the best course of action, and delivering the right technology and content to move the opportunity forwards. And here's the neat bit, it's completely situational – guidance and available assets will adapt based on the deal dynamics.

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