



How You Compare With Others



Category	Your Proposal	All Sector Average
Compliance	6.1	7.6
Responsiveness	7.2	8.0
Strategic Focus	7.8	8.1
Competitive Focus	6.7	7.8
Quality of Writing	7.8	7.8
Visualisation	7.2	7.6
Document Design	6.7	6.7

Buyer Industry: Education

Seller Industry: Computing, IT and Telecoms



Responsiveness

Responsiveness means understanding and responding to the underlying business issues behind the proposal request. If “Compliance” is about answering the question, then “Responsiveness” is about knowing why the question was asked in the first place. Demonstrating solutions to the customer’s underlying business issues provides you with competitive advantage over those who may be compliant in technical requirements only. If you want to give the customer a simple reason to reject you then ignore the business issues behind their proposal request.

Responsiveness Best Practice 1 of 3


Use a customer-focused Executive or Management Summary to clearly and succinctly demonstrate that your solution solves the customer’s underlying business issues. A significant proportion of customer decision makers will only read this summary and most will not understand or care about the technical detail.

Your assessment	Likely Customer Response	Recommendation	Illustration
<p>Your proposal has an Executive Summary that identifies the customer’s business issues and provides a high-level matching solution.</p>	<p>“They clearly know the business issues that I am trying to solve and they have provided a matching solution.”</p>	<p>This is best practice. Continue to create Executive Summaries that are written for business decision-makers in your future proposals. It is also important to recognise that Executive Summaries are usually the only part of the proposal read by everyone.</p>	



Strategic Focus Best Practice 2 of 3

Emphasise your strengths. Emphasising your successes on previous projects will reduce your perceived risk to the customer.

Your assessment	Likely Customer Response	Recommendation	Illustration
Your proposal quotes previous customer references about relevant past project successes that substantiate your capability.	<p>"I can see that they have done this before, this reduces our risk."</p>	This is best practice. Continue to present relevant customer reference material on future proposals - ensuring that you have the customer's permission.	 <p>"Your construction team has delivered on time and with few surprises - we will certainly be using you again" World Chemicals Health Division Laboratory</p>

Strategic Focus Best Practice 3 of 3

All buying involves risk. Explicitly state in the proposal how you are going to manage the customer's risk. This will display a "partnering" rather than an "over the wall" approach to managing risk.

Your assessment	Likely Customer Response	Recommendation	Illustration															
Your proposal has at least one paragraph on how you will manage the customer's risk in the proposal's main body.	<p>"I thought I saw something on risk but can't remember where."</p>	Build on this foundation. Elevate the discussion on risk management to the Executive Summary to make sure that it is read by the business decision-maker.	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Risk Area</td> <td>Key personnel not available</td> <td>Limited construction on site</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Risk Assessment</td> <td>Medium</td> <td>Low</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Impact</td> <td>Low</td> <td>Low</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Summary of Approach</td> <td>All positions filled & backups identified</td> <td>Use modular design, construct modules offsite, then assemble on site</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Discussed in Proposal Section</td> <td>4.5</td> <td>2.3</td> </tr> </table>	Risk Area	Key personnel not available	Limited construction on site	Risk Assessment	Medium	Low	Impact	Low	Low	Summary of Approach	All positions filled & backups identified	Use modular design, construct modules offsite, then assemble on site	Discussed in Proposal Section	4.5	2.3
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Quality of Writing

Quality of Writing is about having a sales message and stating it clearly in the minimum number of grammatically correct words. If you want to give the customer a simple reason to reject you make your proposal as convoluted and as difficult to read as possible.

Quality of Writing Best Practice 1 of 3			
Don't let the customer be the first person to proof read your proposal. Poor standards of grammar and spelling will tell the customer something about your attention to detail.			
Your assessment	Likely Customer Response	Recommendation	Illustration
After carefully proof-reading the first 2 pages of your proposal you cannot find any spelling or grammatical mistakes.	"I did not find any errors in the proposal - I'm encouraged that they will deliver the project to a similar standard."	This is best practice. Continue to have your future proposals independently proof read.	

Quality of Writing Best Practice 2 of 3			
Avoid long, complex, convoluted phrases. Use regular paragraphs, and keep them to less than 50 words. Putting the effort into writing will reduce the effort involved in reading.			
Your assessment	Likely Customer Response	Recommendation	Illustration
After counting the number of words in 5 randomly selected paragraphs, the average paragraph length is less than 50 words.	"I only had to read the paragraph once to understand it."	This is best practice. Keep it simple and clear with many, short paragraphs rather than few, long paragraphs.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>Original version If no major issues arise, existing regulations remain fixed, the required skilled professionals are available, weather remains suitable for construction, war does not commence, all subcontractors and suppliers perform as promised, and all payments arrive as promised, we should complete the vaccine manufacturing facility on schedule.</p> <p>Improved version We will complete the vaccine manufacturing facility on time, unless one of the following unlikely events occurs: . . .</p> </div>