



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
Northwestern Division



# **10 Tips to Improve Your Proposal**

**OCTOBER 2005**



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# 1. Read the RFP

- **Thoroughly**
- **How will source selection be accomplished?**
  - ◆ **Lowest Priced Technically Acceptable**
  - ◆ **Best Value Trade Off**
- **Pay attention to the criteria order and weights – it shows what's important to us**
- **Ask questions early to ensure there is sufficient time to respond**



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## 2. Address all aspects of the Criteria



- Create a **matrix** of sections L&M (or Section 00100's if Corps of Engineers) and Scope of Work, by paragraph with each requirement to use as a **checklist** to ensure your proposal is complete.
- Include your checklist with your proposal.



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# 3. Be succinct

- **Avoid being too wordy**
- **Use bullets, underlines, bolding**
- **If there is a page count – stick to it!**



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# 4. Experience should relate to the project



- **In terms of scope, size, \$ value, complexity**
- **Should be recent – within the past 5-10 years or as required by RFP**
- **Be clear – is it experience of firm or people? Or, is it experience or sub or mentor?**



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# 5. Make sure qualifications of staff match RFP



- **Ensure each team member's quals. address EACH ASPECT of the criteria**
- **List relevant experience of team members**
- **Make sure team members are available (not on a job that just started or is only half way completed)**



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# 6. Organization Chart – who's in charge?



- **Identify one person to be in charge of entire team**
- **Person should be from YOUR company, not a sub or your mentor**
- **Clear lines of communication**
- **Identify person and company (with location) for each role**



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# 7. Address Quality



- **Include the quality team on Organization Chart – even if it's not asked for**
- **Quality is important to us – this shows it's important to you**
- **Show/describe how the quality control team interacts with the execution team**



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# 8. Address Performance Problems head-on



- **Get copies of your CCASS evaluations (503-808-4590) ([www.nwp.usace.army.mil](http://www.nwp.usace.army.mil))**
- **Explain any marginal or unsat. items within the evaluation as well as overall ratings.**
- **Check out the past performance of your proposed subs.**



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# 9. QC your Proposal



- **Have an outside reviewer ensure everything is covered (someone not involved in putting the proposal together).**
- **If you copy another proposal, make sure you only refer to the current project.**
- **Use spell check!**



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# 10. Be a Learning Organization



- **Ask for a debriefing (in writing)**
  
- **Attitude is everything – go to the debriefing to LEARN:**
  - ◆ **How were you rated?**
  - ◆ **What did you do well?**
  - ◆ **What areas can you improve?**



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# CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES



- **Kansas City District**  
<http://nwk-ebs.nwk.usace.army.mil/ebs/advertisedsollicitations.asp>
- **Omaha District**  
<http://ebs-nwo.wes.army.mil>
- **Seattle District**  
<http://www.nws.usace.army.mil/ct/ebs/AdvertisedSollicitations.asp>
- **FedBizOpps** <http://fbo.gov>  
**USACE-wide postings today**  
[http://fbo.gov/spg/USA/COE/postdateToday\\_1.html](http://fbo.gov/spg/USA/COE/postdateToday_1.html)  
**USACE-wide postings earlier**  
[http://fbo.gov/spg/USA/COE/postdatePrevDays\\_1.html](http://fbo.gov/spg/USA/COE/postdatePrevDays_1.html)