

GUIDE

10 top tips for winning RFPs with proposal writing

Write compelling proposals faster and with greater compliance.



Introduction

Did you know that public procurement accounts for 13-20% of GDP for countries worldwide, amounting to \$9.5 trillion? In the United States alone, government contracts account for [spending of more than \\$500 billion](#) each year.

So it's vital that busy proposal teams get the most from their efforts. Here are our top tips for winning more RFPs with high-quality proposal writing.

1. Choosing the RFPs you can win

Competition for government contracts is fierce and comes with an added compliance burden. There can be reams of regulations to meet and extra layers of bureaucracy. The commitment of time and resources to pursuing an RFP can be massive. So it's important that you choose the right ones to pursue. It's crucial to your success to prioritize government contracts your company is in a strong position to deliver on. Chase the RFPs you have the [best chance of winning](#).

2. Understanding the requirements

Government contracts are lucrative – but winning them can be an arduous process. Your proposal writing must demonstrate that you have a thorough understanding of what the department or agency needs. And that you meet every compliance requirement. Proposals are often vague or unclear. Missing a single requirement on an RFP can be a fatal mistake that disqualifies you. It's important to address every requirement in writing, so make sure to shred the RFP accurately. [VT Docs](#) does this in under three minutes.

3. Make a good first impression

In a competitive RFP process, making a strong first impression is crucial. The opening sections often include a cover letter and an Executive Summary. While these come first in your presentation, it's often helpful to put them last in the proposal writing process. Use these sections to focus on what's different about your organization. Highlight why you're best placed to help the department address its challenges.



4. Use irrefutable proof points and case studies

How do you ensure that you are not only compliant with this proposal, but that your capabilities and past performance align perfectly with it? It's easy to make big claims about how you will meet a government agency's needs but how does the hiring team know that you can deliver?

Proof points are important – provide solid examples of where you've carried out similar projects in the past. Introduce the team that will handle the contract and highlight how their experience has prepared them for the project. Use detailed [case studies](#), statistics and examples to back up your promises and showcase your ability to deliver.

5. Include visual aids

Use visuals to present big or complicated ideas in a way that's easy to digest. They can help visualize a journey, as well as breaking up sections of dense text. Tables, charts, maps, or infographics can illustrate data and are useful storytelling aids. Photos, videography, and animations can also play a role, depending on your budget and the scope of the project.

6. Outline your strategy to meet deliverables

Most government RFPs will offer a clear set of deliverables the contractor must meet. Give a clear overview of how you'll hit them, including your strategy and timelines. Flag any challenges or opportunities you see, and how you will address them. You should [outline the team members who will work on the project](#) and the resources you intend to allocate.

7. Personalize any boilerplate content

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"I just wanted to let you know that VisibleThread is rocking our world. It has dramatically helped improve the quality and readability of our documents. It saves editing time and helps to flag problem areas quickly."

Patricia A Fieldson
Manager, Capture Advancement Team



8. Write with a single voice

For major government contracts, it's likely that you'll have a whole team of people involved in the RFP response. You might have input from Marketing, Finance, Project Management, and Subject Matter Experts. How can you tell a compelling story without sounding fragmented? It's important that you write with a [single voice](#)—using the same tone and style of language, the same technical terms, and the same tenses. Avoid overusing jargon or abbreviations.

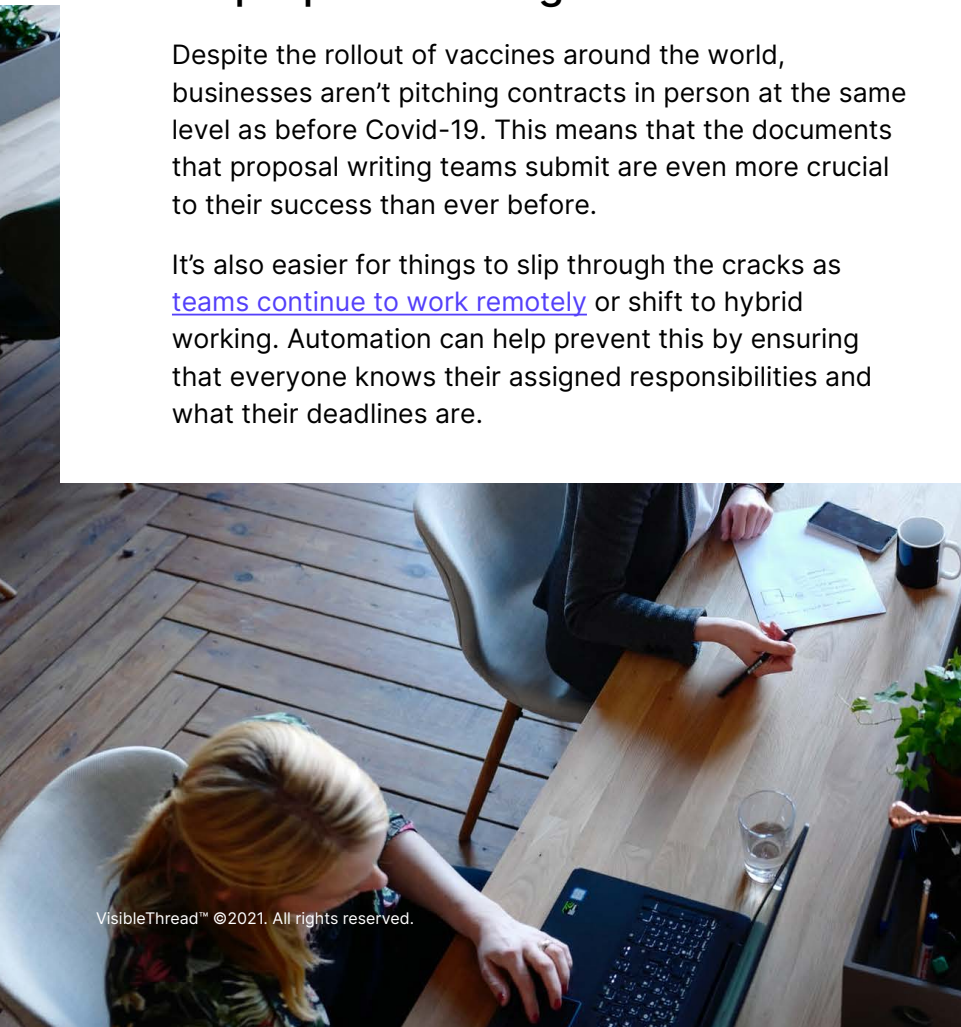
9. Use both human and robot proofreaders

When you're getting ready to submit your RFP response, you should use both automated and human proofreaders. [Software](#) can pick up problems like sentences that are too wordy, grammar mistakes, or overuse of passive voice. Colleagues from your proposal writing team can review the text for less tangible features like how the writing flows.

10. Understand the impact of Covid-19 on proposal writing

Despite the rollout of vaccines around the world, businesses aren't pitching contracts in person at the same level as before Covid-19. This means that the documents that proposal writing teams submit are even more crucial to their success than ever before.

It's also easier for things to slip through the cracks as [teams continue to work remotely](#) or shift to hybrid working. Automation can help prevent this by ensuring that everyone knows their assigned responsibilities and what their deadlines are.





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- Shred RFPs & create compliance matrices in minutes
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- Make faster bid / no-bid decisions
- Identify and shred critical FARs/DFARs and flow-down clauses
- Ensure alignment on Win Themes
- Remove ambiguity & confusion
- Ensure compliance by spotting gaps & risks
- Reduce 'scope creep' in RFP/bid responses

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STATS AT A GLANCE

1.1m

Dollars saved per year in
single division

71h

Time saved per proposal
on average

\$1m

Dollars saved per year
For 20 users

85%

Time saved per proposal
on average

