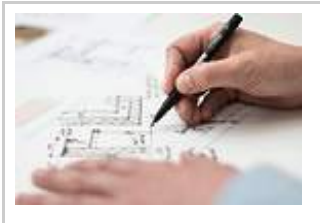


What You Are Required to Know About the RFP Process

Charlie Brown September 28, 2018



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([Newswire.net](https://www.newswire.net) -- September 28, 2018) -- A request for proposal (RFP) is a document that is prepared by someone who has a project and requires assistance with the project in terms of solutions from qualified vendors. Many organizations and enterprises prefer to

conduct business this way.

The RFP process is a structured one that is designed to make the playing field equal for businesses that are looking for a chance to work with a government organization. To even get close to being in the list of top contenders, your RFP has to be flawless. You, therefore, need to learn everything you can about writing a good one.

Here's a quick glance at the RFP process and what it involves.

Request for Information (RFI)

In order to understand a process, we must start from the roots. What is an RFI? Simply put, it is a Request for Information. Company A may request for information from companies B, C, and D if they need the services that the companies offer. Company A will, therefore, RFI these companies to give some information about the services that they offer.

The RFI consists of a series of questions that seek to find out information such as:

- .. The company's history.
- .. What services the company is able to provide.
- .. What it hopes to achieve in the future.
- .. Who owns the company?

These and other details are important for the company that wishes to contract the other for services.

Next Step, the RFP

Once the choice of eligible companies is made, an RFP is issued. The RFP gives details on the company or site that is hiring and its operations. It will also provide clear and well-articulated information on the services they need as well as a budget and a timeline.

There will also be a list of questions that will be directed at the service provider that declares an interest in providing the needed service. These questions include:

- .. Previous experience
- .. Sample timelines
- .. Team members
- .. Company processes

The most important detail in the RFP is the proposal itself. This is what the service provider is mostly interested in as they are required to provide a solution for the hiring company. They also have to outline how they plan to implement that service.

Any other information that the hiring company feels is pertinent to the project is also included in the RFP. It should go to all the companies that were selected during the RFI phase. It is possible that other companies may declare their interest in the project, especially those that look out for [website RFP](#) in order to check whether they are eligible for the services being requested.

The questions in the RFP are very detailed and the interested parties are expected to provide detailed answers as well. The hiring company will then have a list of providers to look through, and they can pick the best.

The RFQ

This is a Request for Quotation and is issued after an RFP. It is also known as an invitation for bid (IFB). It is not very different from an RFP.

The RFQ details exactly what the client needs, and how it is expected to work and display. It will spell out details like the terms of payment and the length of the contract. This information is especially important if the client is a government agency as they would be working with a strict budgetary allocation. The service provider responds to the RFQ and the client gives guidelines on implementation of the service and the costs.

Another term you are likely to come across is the Request for Tender (RFT). Governments are especially fond of RFTs and they send these out when there is a need that is well defined. They are best for goods and services as well as work that has lower costs. For your company to qualify for an RFT, you have to subscribe to a tender clearinghouse. Formerly, the clearinghouse would be a physical location, but these days you simply log onto a website where the tenders are posted for those interested to peruse.

With the RFP, it Takes a Team

You do not want to work on an RFP solo. It may feel like you are stuck in a maze that you have little hope of getting out of. There are a myriad of steps and stages in an RFP and all of them require details. The best way to navigate a Request for Proposal is to have a team working with you. It also requires patience to successfully complete drawing up one. There are a lot of issues that someone working alone may overlook. It is therefore necessary to have a team where each member is able to contribute.

Why are RFPs needed in the first place? They are important because oftentimes the project has a number of complexities that need to be spelled out.

No one will have all of the answers, so you should create a team where each member is able to contribute. In addition, what one member misses out may be noticed by another. That way, all details of the RFP will be adequately covered. This not only saves you time, but also ensures that your response is consistent.

Allocate a department to each member of your team and ask them to gather specific details. Also, ensure that you meet regularly to touch base on the progress, and to be assured that everyone is on track. The team may also be good at detecting problems while there is plenty of time to rectify them.

Tip: You must remember to include a case study or two. Clients always want to know if your company has any experience, and this question can come up at any stage as you chip away at the RFP. Companies provide case studies to prove that they are experienced. Your case studies should be part of your proposal timeline and you can just direct your client to them. You do not want to have to halt your work to get to the case studies first.

The RFP process is crucial and needs to be handled with utmost professionalism. Your company will thus be required to be well-versed in the process so that the end product will be satisfactory not only to you, but also to your client.

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