



# Writing Proposals that Win

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# Compliance

If you want to give the customer a simple reason to reject you then ignore their submittal instructions and/or be significantly non-compliant with their requirements.

Compliance means strict adherence to the customer's request - both to the submittal instructions and to the customer's technical requirements.

Compliance with instructions means that you have followed the requested proposal format, page budget and answered all questions. Compliance with requirements means that you have agreed to meet all requirements as asked for in the request.

There are three key things that you can do to make your proposals better in this area.



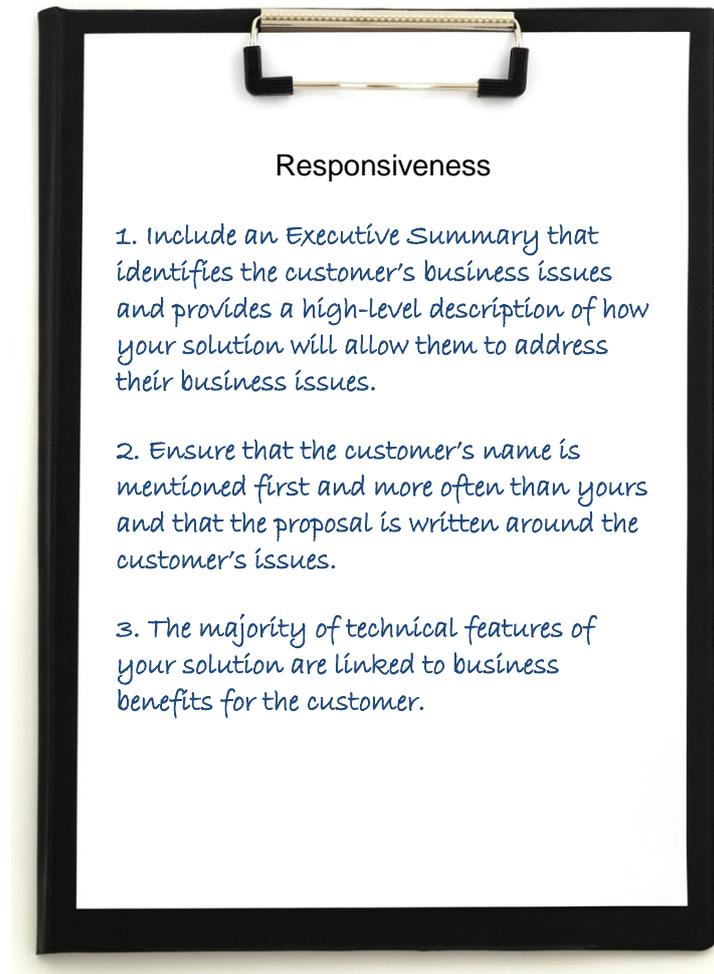
# Responsiveness

If you want to give the customer a simple reason to reject you then ignore the business issues behind their proposal request.

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 only be compliant to technical requirements.

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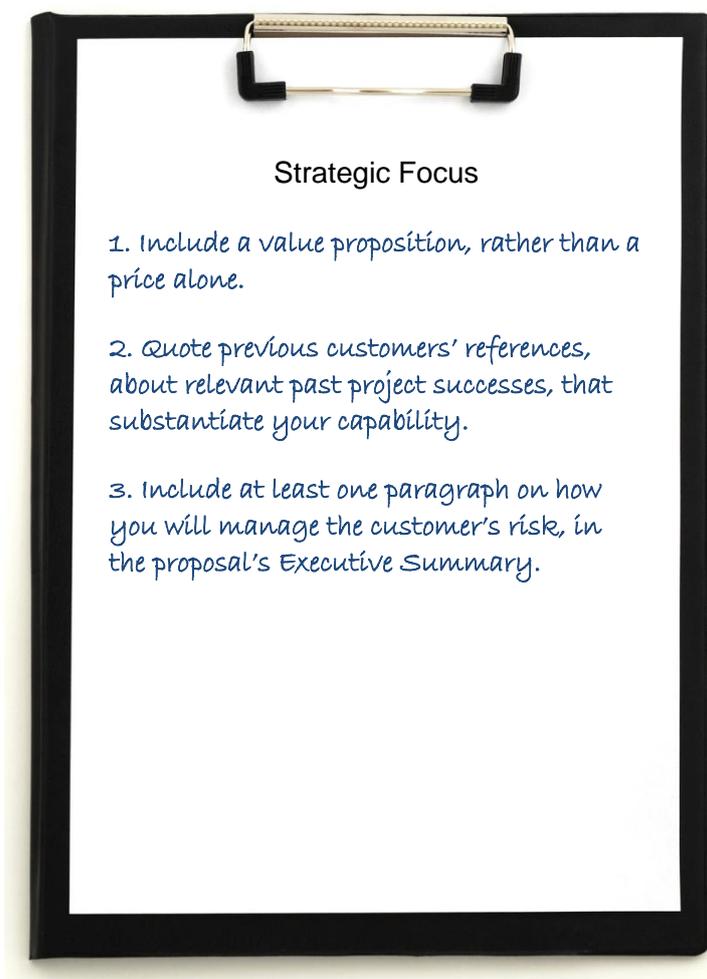
# Strategic Focus

If you want to give the customer a simple reason to reject you then ignore one or more of these factors.

Strategic Focus is about making it clear to the customer why you should be selected.

You achieve this primarily by emphasising specific strengths that relate directly to their request, demonstrating the benefits that your solution will bring to them and by discussing value, not price alone, particularly where you expect to be more expensive than a competitor.

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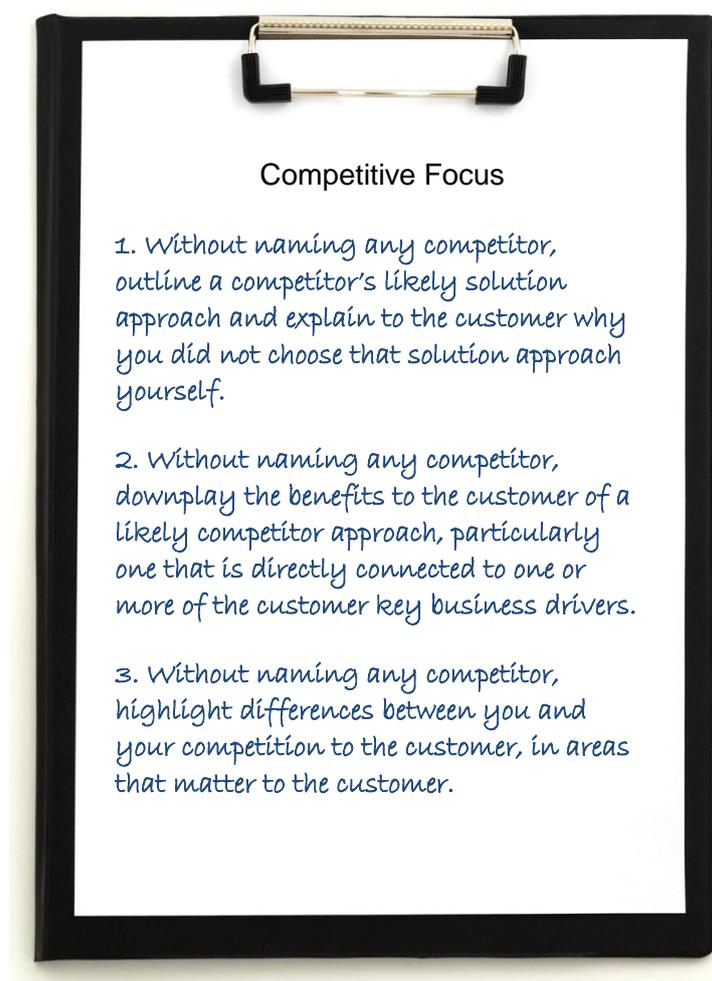
# Competitive Focus

If you want to give the customer a simple reason to reject you then ignore potentially strong competition and allow them to “ghost” you.

Competitive Focus is about raising concerns in the customer’s mind about the dangers of selecting one of your competitors.

You achieve this primarily by “ghosting” your competitors, making it clear to the customer where they should be looking to find the weaknesses in a competitor’s approach.

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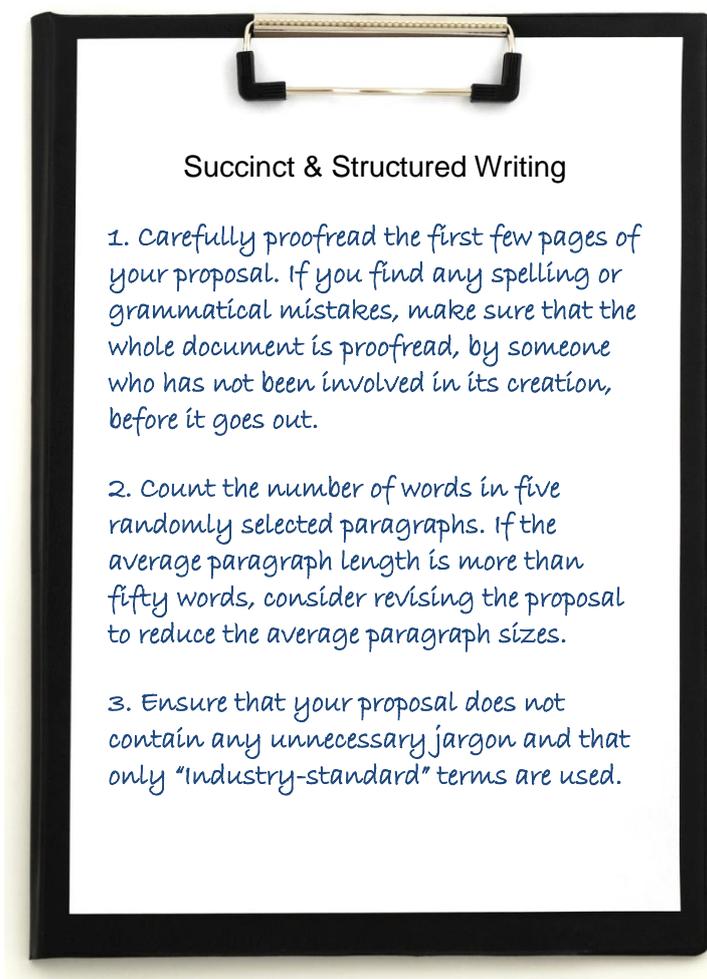
# Succinct & Structured Writing

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.

Succinct & Structured Writing is about having a sales message and stating it clearly in a grammatically correct way.

Don't let the customer be the first person to proofread your proposal. Poor standards of grammar and spelling will tell the customer something about your organisation's attention to detail.

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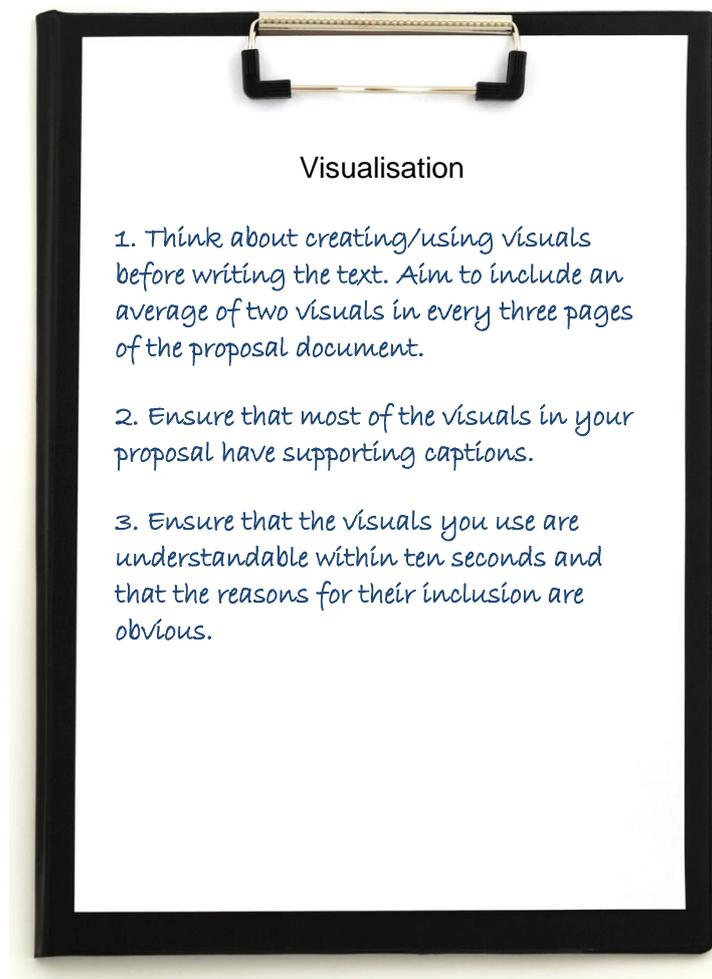
# Visualisation

If you want to give the customer a simple reason to get bored, when reading your proposal, don't include any visuals.

Visualisation is about using appropriate graphics, photographs, tables and diagrams, to add visual appeal to your proposal.

Visuals are also used to help you convey key messages.

There are three key things that you can do to make your proposals better in this area.



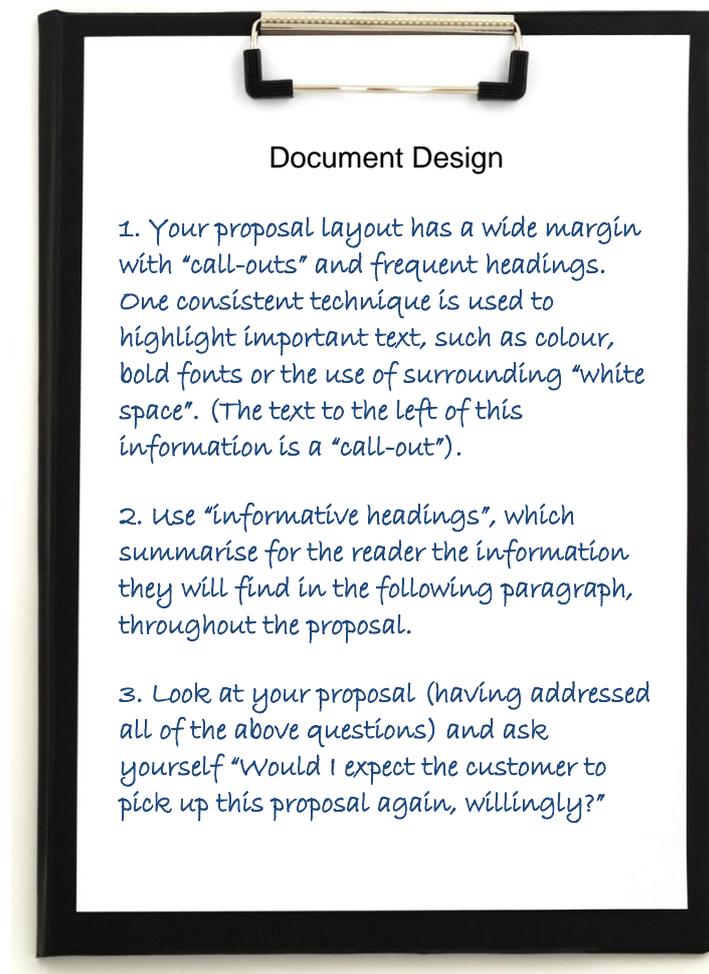
# Document Design

If you want to give the customer a simple reason to reject you, then make your proposal as difficult to navigate as possible and hide your key information inside long paragraphs.

Document Design is about organising the proposal such that key messages can be found easily and understood.

Most customers will not read a proposal cover to cover. Instead they will look for the answers to their questions and reference to their business issues.

There are three key things that you can do to make your proposals better in this area.



# Words of Caution

If you follow these suggestions, you will write more winning proposals.



*A high quality proposal will confirm your understanding of the customer's issues and present your matching solution in a professional manner*

