



A well-designed RFP will address your needs effectively. It should require that responding vendors propose concrete solutions and be accountable for those solutions.

Your RFP process should determine

- How willing is a vendor to accept contractual commitments?
- Does the vendor have the skills and experience to do the job right, on time and within budget?
- What responsibilities will the vendor have?
- What deliverables can you expect to see? When?
- What happens if the vendor does not deliver as expected?
- What is the best deal?

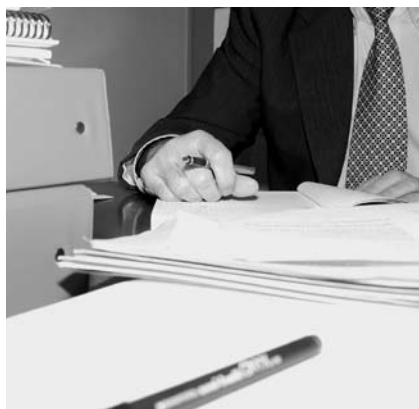
If the solutions to these issues are left ambiguous, the results are often disastrous. Project delays, cost overruns, wired deals and overall project failure are common outcomes from using an informal approach. Unfortunately, many projects fit into this undesirable category.

With the help of a well-crafted RFP, issues that are left for future negotiation with a vendor are minimal.

Benefits

- Establish vendor competition
- Convert vendor “sales talk” into enforceable contractual commitments
- Codify all requirements in a single document
- Align objectives and evaluation criteria
- Obtain multiple solutions to your “problem”
- Stop vendors from bypassing the procurement process
- Gain, improve and retain negotiating power
- Provide a disciplined, repeatable approach to the RFP process

Valuable Takeaways



You will receive **more than 20 tools and resources**, including

1. RFP Templates
2. Potential Vendor Evaluation Matrix
3. Potential Vendor Pricing Matrix
4. Bidders’ Conference Agenda
5. Position Paper
6. RFP Checklist
7. Request For Information (RFI) Template
8. Various Form Letters to Communicate Effectively with Potential Vendors
9. Sample Reference Check Questions

Workshop Outline

Workshop Length: 2 Days

The Power of the RFP— Leveraging Potential Vendors Early

1. Organize

- a. Form team(s)
 - Why?
 - Who?
 - How many teams?
- b. Research internal
 - The current situation
 - Begin defining the problem

- g. Conduct additional research on vendors
 - Types of vendors
 - Those who responded to the RFI
 - Those identified after or as a result of the RFI
 - Information to gather—**Five significant things to consider, including**
 - Vendors' financial viability
 - Vendors' business model

- Develop detailed criteria utilizing a matrix
- Includes all prioritized objectives
- Goes in the RFP in a generic form

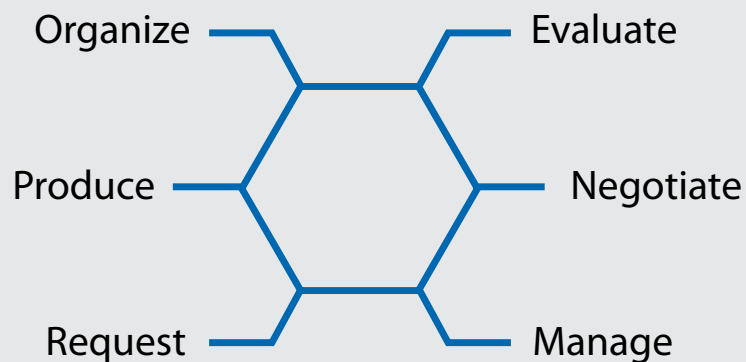
2. Produce

- a. Activate team
- b. Assign responsibilities
- c. Conduct RFP-based research—**Seven key sources including**
 - White papers
 - RFP Lab materials
- d. Develop RFP outline
- e. Incorporate prioritized objectives
- f. Draft RFP text
- g. Conduct peer review
- h. Compile initial draft
- i. Review by disinterested third party
- j. Revise as necessary
- k. Proofread
- l. Format
- m. Gain approval
- n. Publish

3. Request

- a. Issue RFP
 - Deliver RFP to vendors
 - Document receipt of Intent to Bid Letters
 - Document receipt of signed Confidentiality Agreements
 - Document receipt of Relationship Agreements
- b. Conduct bidders' conference
 - Procedures—**Ten things to consider, including**
 - Prepare agenda
 - Brief team members on roles and responsibilities
 - Develop seating chart
 - Benefits—**Five advantages to conducting a bidders' conference**
- c. Answer questions

Leveraging Potential Vendors



- c. Research external—**Eight sources, including**
 - User groups
 - Trade periodicals
- d. Decide results or resources
- e. Collect objectives
 - Types—**Ten different categories, including**
 - Technical
 - Infrastructure
 - Performance
 - Sources
- f. Prioritize objectives

- h. Develop Position Paper
 - Documents the essence of the deal—**Seven things we must document, including**
 - Prioritized objectives
 - Negotiating considerations
 - Signed by all team members and senior management
 - Updated throughout the acquisition process
- i. Determine evaluation criteria
 - Fact-based and objective rather than subjective
 - Provides for a consistent comparison of vendors

4. Evaluate

- a. Receive/review proposals for
 - Compliance
 - Completeness
- b. Separate financial/pricing info from other parts
- c. Issue deficiency notices, if necessary
- d. Evaluate responses from each vendor
 - Review evaluation procedures, scoring methods and evaluation tools
 - Break into subparts and give to appropriate team members
 - Apply evaluation criteria
- e. Issue requests for clarification or additional information
- f. Conduct reference checks
- g. Prepare for implementing the Zone of Consideration (ZOC)
 - Rank vendors
 - Invite “successful” vendors into ZOC
 - Notify “unsuccessful” vendors

- h. Finalize the negotiations strategy for each potential vendor
 - Update based on RFP proposals
 - Update based upon clarifications received
- i. Negotiate—**Twelve major principles, including**
 - Negotiation is a process, not an event
 - Negotiate with all potential vendors who can meet requirements
 - Select vendor(s) after negotiations are complete
- j. Execute agreement(s)
- k. Document the results
 - Update the Position Paper
 - Communicate with senior management

5. Manage

- a. Manage the project plan/transition plan
- b. Manage the contract
- c. Manage the relationship

Summary

Best practices—**Fourteen essential concepts, including**

1. Always include your form contract
2. There is no substitute for preparation
3. Do not accept unsolicited offers—tie all offers to your published RFP
4. Do not limit potential vendor creativity in proposing alternative solutions
5. Do not underestimate the amount of time required to prepare a complete response

RFP Lab™

Forms • Training • Templates

