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How to Write Proposals Faster

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1. Get Cross-trained in All Proposal Disciplines

- Proposal management
- Capture, especially win themes development and solution development
- Pricing
- Proposal writing
- Graphics
- Editing
- DTP





**Not to overwhelm yourself by
trying to do it all
(unless there is no one else)**

But to be able to
step in and fix it
faster in a crunch
time

Or when an expert
is unreachable...



2. Get Help of the Subject Matter Experts (SME)

- You shouldn't be the one coming up with solution and content, unless you are the SME yourself
- Although best proposal managers are SMEs at becoming SMEs, your job is to make content more compelling
- Don't let your leadership be cheap or weak by failing to make your project personnel available for proposal work

subject
matter
expert

3. Get Training in Speed Writing

- Most people write incorrectly
- It leads to long, painful writing: Write a sentence, edit, go back, research, come back, correct, rewrite, berate yourself, procrastinate...
- Download our procrastination flowchart to do it like a pro
- Bonus benefit – you will be able to train SMEs on how to write to save yourself time

4. Think Pre-built

1

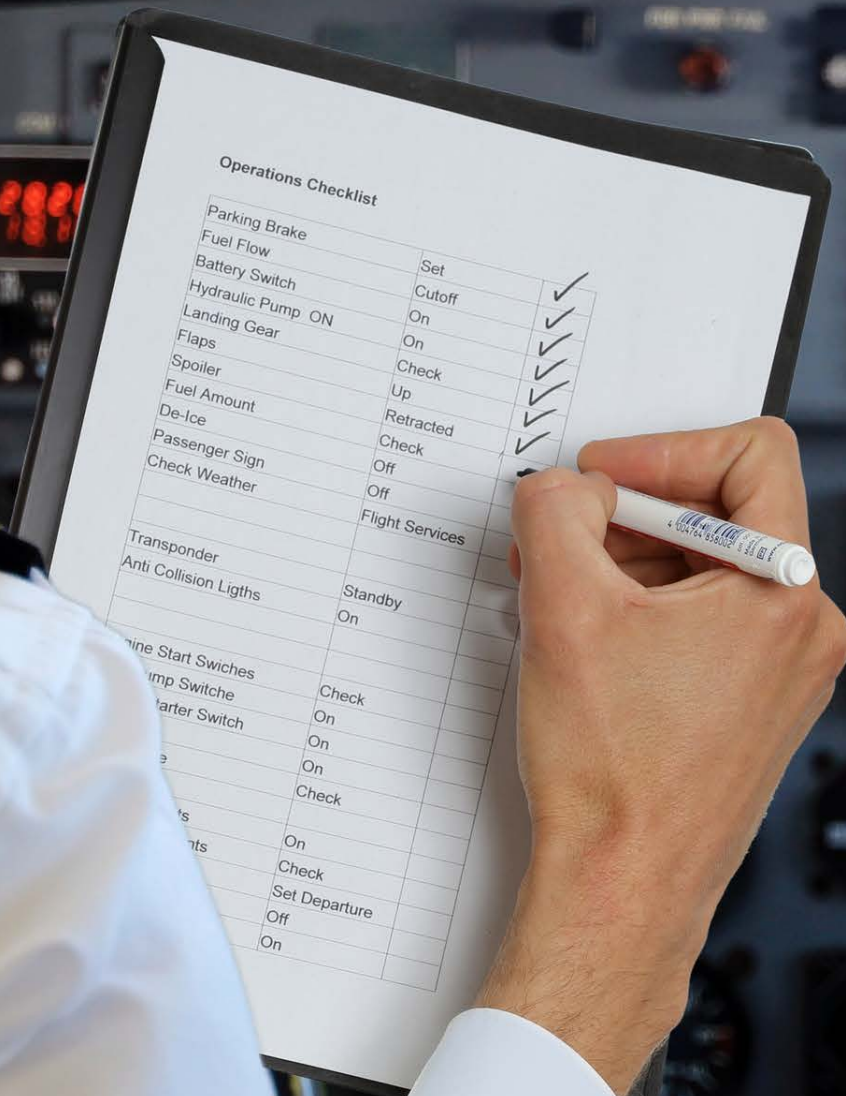
**Prebuilt process
tools and templates**

2

**Easily modifiable
graphics library**

3

**Prebuilt proposal
template with pre-
set styles**



Parking Brake		
Fuel Flow	Set	
Battery Switch	Cutoff	✓
Hydraulic Pump	ON	✓
Landing Gear	On	✓
Flaps	On	✓
Spoiler	Check	✓
Fuel Amount	Up	✓
De-Ice	Retracted	✓
Passenger Sign	Check	✓
Check Weather	Off	✓
	Flight Services	
Transponder		
Anti Collision Ligths	Standby	
	On	
Engine Start Switches		
Thrust Reverse Switch	Check	
Wing Anti-Ice Switch	On	
Wing Anti-Ice	On	
Wing Anti-Ice	On	
Wing Anti-Ice	Check	
Wing Anti-Ice	On	
Wing Anti-Ice	Check	
Wing Anti-Ice	Set Departure	
Wing Anti-Ice	Off	
Wing Anti-Ice	On	

5. Use Checklists for Everything

Even pilots with thousands of flight hours use checklists

Proposal Management Checklists

These Checklists Belong to:

A Proposal Manager's Essential Checklists



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Checklist 5: Advance Preparation for the Review

Review Title: _____

1. Reach Key Decisions

- Finalize the review dates:
 - Is the review date still the same given any changes that haven't gotten incorporated into your calendar?
 - Is your proposal ready for a meaningful review?
 - Are key reviewers available on this date?
- Decide what review format is most appropriate for this proposal:
 - Electronic with all reviewers in the same room, using electronic tools
 - Electronic with some or all reviewers attending remotely at the same time or at other times when they are available
 - Mixed: Hard copy review in person with some reviewers attending remotely
- Decide on the distribution approach for the proposal document:
 - Full hard or soft copy of the document issued to reviewers
 - Select sections issued to reviewers in accordance with their assignments
 - Single hard copy posted on the wall
 - Review tool(s) _____
- Determine when you will send/post/provide the materials for review (2 hours before the review, the night before, right before the review, etc.).
- Decide who will facilitate/lead the review: _____
- Decide on review security measures:
 - Which subcontractor(s) are safe to invite to the review, and which are not
 - What specific personnel are safe to invite from the subcontractor and who are not (that may be working on a competitor's proposal and are not firewalled properly)
 - Whether it is safe to issue the soft copy of the proposal to the subcontractors' reviewers
 - How you will control hard copies (numbering copies, logging, spelling out review rules)
 - Subcontractors' reviewers' access to the portal - what folders are they not allowed to see
- Decide on review duration: how many hours or days will it require? _____
- Decide on the review timing and sequencing (which are closely related to the review format, distribution, duration, and agenda):
 - Will the review be on the whole proposal or will be staggered as sections are done?
 - Will the review be conducted by the reviewers in the same condensed timeframe (synchronous review), or will the reviewers get more time and therefore decide when to review the proposal (asynchronous review)?
 - Will the reviewers be required to read the entire proposal, or will you assign sections to specific reviewers?

Content Development Checklists

- Management and technical approach development checklists
- Combine decision-making roadmap with proven solutions and reminders
- Need to be updated after every proposal
- Better than boilerplate



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11. Define a communications process

Develop a graphic and approach that shows the lines of communication and collaboration between:

- ▶ Your company; teammates, subcontractors and vendors; and the customer
- ▶ Project stakeholders
- ▶ Various project office locations
- ▶ Program management, task order management, and task order personnel
- ▶ Your company and end users (or your customer's customers)

Consider describing communication as part of a larger effort if this section is not mandated

Show how the customer will be involved in project management

Tout transparency and methods to provide it to the customer (dashboard portal with near-real-time or real-time performance data, reporting, metrics, and so on)

Claim commitment to partnership; describe what this means to the customer

Describe communication and collaboration tools

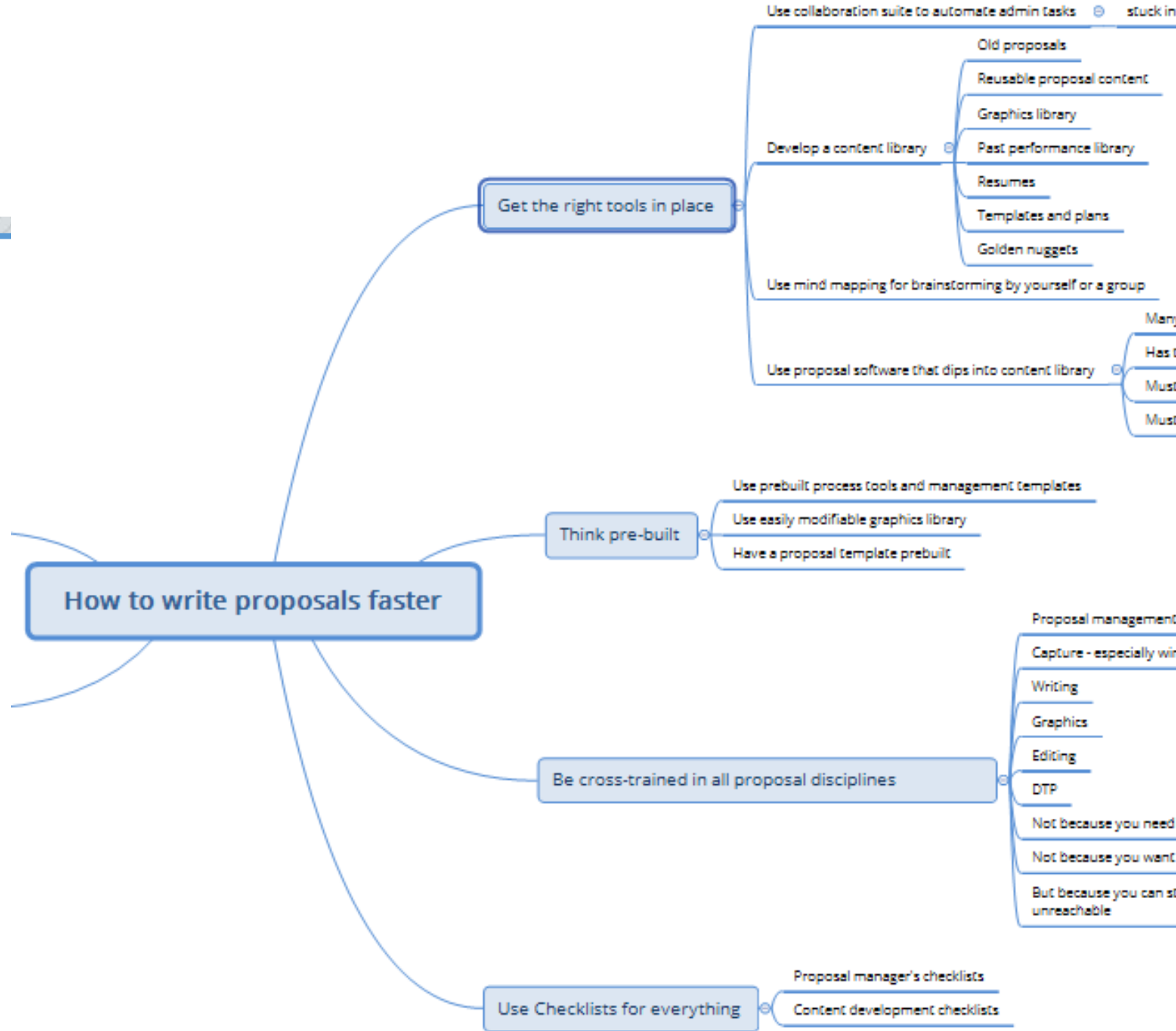
Decide whether you could assign customer liaison or advocate as a "value added" – someone either dedicated to the project or someone who is part of your corporate structure and is therefore at no additional cost to the project

12. Determine which Processes and Tools you will use as part of your approach for:

- ▶ Program management
- ▶ Planning and scheduling
- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Customer relationship management
- ▶ Risk management

6. Get the Right Tools in Place

- Mind mapping for brainstorming alone or in a group
- Collaboration suite to automate admin tasks
- Content library
 - Reusable proposal content
 - Graphics, past performance, resumes
 - Plans, golden nuggets
- Proposal development software
 - Must not distort formatting
 - Can fetch from content library
 - Must save you time instead of causing headaches



Resources to Speed Up Proposal Development

- Use our **Bid & Proposal Academy** course on **Writing Persuasive Federal Proposals** for faster and better writing techniques
- Take **Advanced Capture Management** course to get content development checklists
- Register for our **Win Themes Development Workshop** to learn how to develop persuasive win themes
- Get **A Proposal Manager's Essential Checklists** available as a stand-alone product



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