

6 EASY WAYS TO DESTROY YOUR PROPOSAL PROCESS

by David Whitemyer, AIA

Putting together proposals is always stressful. Sometimes RFPs are written poorly and the prospective client isn't responding to your questions. The response schedules are often unrealistic or too tight. You need to involve numerous people in your office; however, it seems like the proposal is everyone's last priority.

Here are 6 guaranteed ways to disrupt and destroy your proposal process.

1. Not developing and sharing a proposal schedule

If you've only got two weeks to put together a proposal, you should plan out each step down to the minute. Illustrate the linear path of your proposal process, determine who is doing what and when, and then make sure that everyone from whom you need input or materials has a copy of the schedule.

2. Not lining up your resources

If you're going to need input or materials from individuals in your firm—or from consultants—make sure they know about it well ahead of time. If you're going to need something by the end of the day Thursday, then tell them on Monday. Give them a heads up.

3. Not confirming the project schedule with everyone

Once you've created and shared your project schedule, make sure that everyone has bought into it. Don't just send out the schedule and expect everyone to meet it. They may have other meetings—or worse, travel!—that will conflict with your plans.

4. Not being clear about everyone's roles

One of my favorite axioms is, "When everyone is responsible, no one is." When going over your proposal schedule with everyone, stay away from the word "we," and instead use "you." Make sure each person knows specifically what he/she is responsible for, and exactly when it needs to be completed.

5. Not connecting with your consultants along the way

Don't assume that if you call your lighting consultant on Thursday morning that he'll be able to get you their fee breakdown by the end of the day. In addition to lining up your consultant resources early, check in with them along the way and let them know how the proposal is coming together.

6. Not involving your PMs and firm leaders

The leaders of your firm will have strong opinions about what should and shouldn't be included in the proposal, how it looks, and who your consultants are. Make sure they're involved in the process and can provide input along the way. Similarly, if your proposal includes project methodology or a project schedule, ask a project manager to develop this material for you. ●



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10 THINGS TO CONSIDER TO BUILD BACKLOG FAST

By Wally Hise

1. Expand the scope on current projects (focus on value added)

2. Set/revise client contact metrics (especially for senior professionals)

3. Host an open house for existing and prospective clients

4. Hold an internal brainstorming session (everybody bring an idea)

5. Form an alliance with a competitor/teaming partner

6. Sell training on high-end technical solutions/approaches

7. Aggressively pursue follow-on work from existing assignments

8. Develop a webinar series on new regulations

9. Launch a social media blitz

10. Chase small jobs (last resort, ouch!)



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