**Proposals 101**

As I was preparing a previous episode, it dawned on me that there might be some listeners who are relatively new to proposals or have tuned in to try to learn about them. To help fill in basic information and build a basis for learning, I’ll periodically present a Proposals 101 episode that will explore different facets of the proposal effort. This episode is just an overview of how to approach a response to a Government solicitation. It’s germane to all governmental levels and to commercial endeavors as well.SO let’s get right into the basic approach for all solicitations.

* First, read and understand the solicitation carefully. This is the most important step, as you will need to demonstrate that you have a clear understanding of the government's needs and requirements.
* Next, respond to all of the solicitation's requirements. This includes both the technical and the administrative requirements. If you do not respond to all of the requirements, your proposal may be disqualified.
* As you prepare your response, be clear and concise in your writing. The government evaluators will be reading a lot of proposals, so make sure yours is easy to understand and follow.
* Be sure to highlight your strengths. What makes your company or organization the best choice for this contract? Be sure to highlight your strengths in your proposal.
* As you finalize your response, proofread your proposal carefully. Typos and grammatical errors will make your proposal look unprofessional.
* Be sure to submit your proposal on time. The government will always have a strict deadline for submitting proposals, so be sure to submit yours on time.

Some additional tips that may help you write a successful proposal include:

* Use keywords throughout your proposal. This will help your proposal get noticed by the government evaluators.
* Use a professional format. Your proposal should be well-organized and easy to read. If the Government has provided instructions, be sure to follow them exactly.
* Use visuals to illustrate your points. This will help to make your proposal more engaging and persuasive. A response with an appropriate mix of plain text and graphics, tables and other non-text elements is easier to read and easier to score.
* Get feedback from others. Typically, there are multiple reviews each of which should involve someone that unfamiliar with the specific program but knowledgeable of any technical areas presented.

This is a quick overview of what you should expect when answering any Government solicitation. In later episode we’ll explore different aspects that make the proposal world a dynamic environment in which to work. Be on the look out for episodes containing Proposal 101 in the title.

That’s it for this episode. As always, you can provide any feedback or ask any questions through email to ken.blair@fedprops.com or by calling me at 301-859-0316.

Thanks for listening.