

Proposal Writing



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Module One: Getting Started

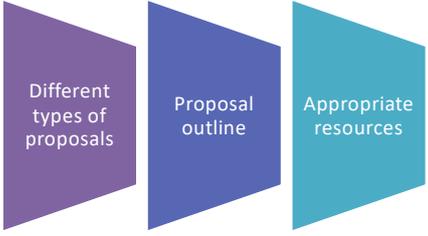
All the world is a laboratory to the inquiring mind.
Martin H. Fischer

This course will take participants through each step of the proposal writing process, from understanding why they are writing a proposal; to gathering information; to writing and proofreading; to creating the final, professional product.



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Course Objectives



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Module Two: Understanding Proposals

Proposals are a very unique type of business document. In this module, we will explore the proposal writing process, as well as the most common types of proposals. Note that we only provide an overview of the four major types; there are many variations on these types, as well as more specialized categories.

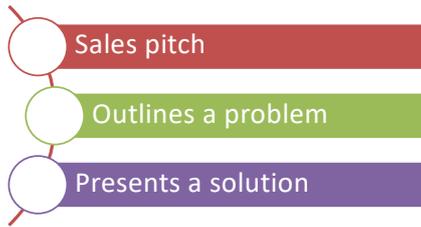
I don't pretend we have all the answers. But the questions are certainly worth thinking about.
Arthur C. Clarke



Good Session

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What is a Proposal?



Good Session

5



Good Session

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Types of Proposals

Technical Proposal	Sales Proposals
Cost Proposal	Professional Service

Good Session

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About Requests for Proposals

- Organizational background
- Requested product or service
- Solution details
- Timeline and budget

Good Session

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Module Three: Beginning the Proposal Writing Process

To write a convincing proposal, you must get started on the right foot. This module will look at how to determine the purpose of the proposal and gather background information.

A writer doesn't solve problems. He allows them to emerge.

Friedrich Dürrenmatt



Good Session

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Identifying Your Purpose and Your Audience

What exactly will the proposal do?

Identify who the audience will be

Good Session

10

Performing a Needs Analysis

Who are the customers of the proposal?

What do they want or need?

What do they currently have as a solution?

What can we offer?

Good Session

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Writing the Goal Statement

Identify the type of proposal

Add in the purpose of your proposal

Our <type of proposal> will convince the reader to <desired end result>.

Good Session

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**Module Four:
Preparing An Outline**

I try to leave out the parts that people skip.
Elmore Leonard

The preparation process that we outline in this module may seem detailed and comprehensive – and it is. *Why?* The more detailed and accurate your outline is, the more cohesive and persuasive your proposal will be.

ANALYSIS
SOLUTION
PRODUCTION
PROSPECTIVES
TEAMWORK
VISION
SALES

Good Session

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A General Format

Cover letter and title page

Table of contents Executive summary

Introduction Body Conclusions

Good Session

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Special Sections

Benefits summary

Marketing plan

Glossary of jargon

Good Session

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Creating a Framework

Build the
body

Outline
major points

Guideline

16

Getting Down to Details

Supporting points

Sub-categories

At least two sub-
points per heading

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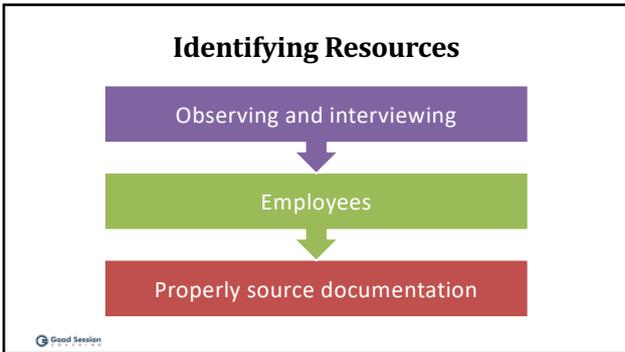
Module Five: Finding Facts

Research is to see what everybody else has seen, and to think what nobody else has thought.
Albert Szent-Gyorgyi

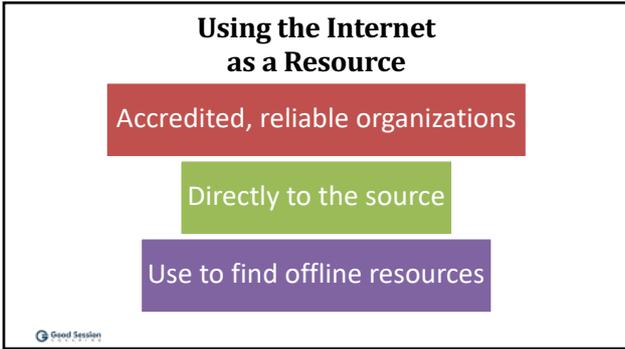
Now that we have an outline built, it's time to find facts to support our headings and sub-headings. In this module, we will look at what sources you can use and how to organize your information.

ANALYSIS
 SOLUTION
 PROCESS
 OBJECTIVES
 TEAMWORK
 VISION
 SALES

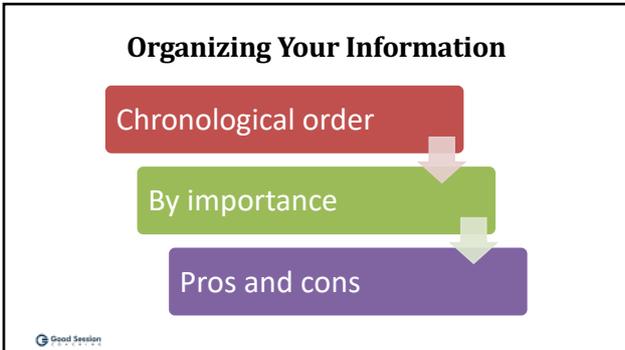
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Module Six: Writing Skills (I)

The research is done, the outline is complete, and you're ready to write, right? Hold on just a moment! Before you dive into your word processor, let's review some basic writing skills.

The role of a writer is not to say what we all can say, but what we are unable to say.
Anais Nin



Good Session

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Spelling and Grammar

- Basic rules
- Third person
- Read it out loud

Good Session

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Working with Words

- Proposals should be objective
- Appropriate level of detail
- Difference between comprehension and confusion

Good Session

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Constructing Sentences

Simple

Compound

Complex

Good Session

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Persuasive Writing

Consistency

Social Validation

Scarcity

Good Session

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Mastering Voice

Active voice,
where the writer is
doing something

Passive voice,
where something
is being done

Good Session

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Creating Paragraphs

- It has a beginning, middle, and an end
- It ties to the paragraphs before and after it
- It focuses on one theme

Good Session

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Creating Strong Transitions

- Transitional word or phrase
- However
- To illustrate

Good Session

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Building to Conclusions

- Mini-conclusion at the end of each paragraph
- At the end of each section
- Conclusion paragraph at the end of each major section

Good Session

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**Module Seven:
Value Proposition**

*Value proposition
then should be
expressed in terms of
them*

Jeffrey Gitomer

It's finally time for the real purpose of our journey: writing the actual proposal. This module will look at some tools to help you write your first draft.

ANALYSIS
SOLUTION
PROCESSES
OBJECTIVES
TEAMWORK
VISION





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**VALUE PROPOSITION
THE CUSTOMER PERCEPTION**

- Their perception is your reality. It is all that matters
- It is not about how YOU perceive your value... It is about how they perceive it!
- It is not who you are and what your benefits are...
- It's about how THEY will win
- Value proposition then should be expressed in terms of them



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WHAT'S YOUR VALUE



- What maybe valuable to you might not be valuable to your customer
- Take a moment and list the things your customer get as a result of doing business with you
- If you cannot come up with any then you are in trouble



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VALUE PROPOSITION IS NOT

WHO **YOU** ARE AND WHAT YOUR BENEFITS ARE...

Good Session

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VALUE PROPOSITION IS

HOW WOULD THE **CUSTOMER** WINS...

Value must be expressed in terms of **THEM**

Good Session

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WHY VALUE IS IMPORTANT?

1. It differentiate you from the competition
2. It gives the customer understandable reason to purchase
3. It gives the customer a peace of mind to move forward / lower the risk



Good Session

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**VALUE IS IMPORTANT
TO AN EXISTING CUSTOMER**

1. Builds REAL relationships
2. Makes reorder automatic
3. Eliminates competition and reduces churn



Good Session

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ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS OF SELLING

- Relationship is more powerful than price
- Relationship is more powerful than delivery
- Relationship is more powerful than quality
- Relationship is more powerful than service



Good Session

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RELATIONSHIPS...

...are hard to develop, take time to mature, and must be nurtured along the way.
BUT once achieved, are the most powerful force in the business world.

Good Session

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WHAT IS A VALUE PROPOSITION

Good Session

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PERCEIVED VALUE

Is your ability to convey your value to the prospect or customer

Good Session

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THE 5.5 STRATEGIC PARTS OF VALUE PROPOSITION

1. Value your company provides to others
2. Value your product or service provides
3. Value that the salesperson provides
4. Value in short-term incentive
5. Value that helps prospects profit / benefit
- 5.5 Value AFTER the sale

Good Session

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1. THE VALUE THAT YOUR COMPANY PROVIDES

- What your company stands for
- How they partner
- How they produce
- How they serve
- A chance to talk about capability and loyalty

Good Session

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2. THE VALUE THAT YOUR PRODUCT PROVIDES

- The technique of similar situation
- How your product performed successfully in other environments
- Not testimonials at this stage
- Tell stories of successful users

Good Session

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3. THE VALUE THAT YOU PROVIDE

- The first that is made is YOU
- If YOU bring no value to the table then your price will dominate the discussion and the outcome
- Your value as things like:
 - Industry knowledge
 - Product knowledge
 - Customer knowledge
 - Desire to serve
 - Timeliness
 - Overall understanding of how your customer can utilise your product to their benefit

Good Session

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3. THE VALUE THAT YOU PROVIDE

- You have to go beyond salesman to be their:
 - Consultant
 - Trusted advisor
 - Business friend
 - Resource
- By combining these elements you covered the most important business position possible

Good Session

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4. VALUE IN A SHORT TERM INCENTIVE

- Everyone wants to feel like they got a deal
- Examples: 6 months of free service, a kit of supplies, rebate, added piece of equipment at a reduced cost
- This creates a sense of buyer urgency
- Something that enhances your offer on a one-time-basis
- To get the customer to buy NOW...
- But there is a danger...
- The customer would want it again

Good Session

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5. VALUE THAT HELPS PROSPECTS PROFIT/BENEFIT

- The most important of all elements, and
- Almost never used by the salesperson
- In most cases, it is the only thing your customer is interested in, and
- What's in it for them
- In all cases, it is what will create the greatest engagement
- But you have to be able to verbalize it right

Good Session

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5.5. VALUE AFTER THE SALE

- What happens when your customer takes your product / service home?
- By continuing to provide value after the sales, you are letting your customer know that this is a RELATIONSHIP and not a transaction
- Continuous value = service + help + updates + availability



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TRUTH

THE MORE YOU START OUT WITH VALUE, THE EASIER IT IS TO WIN MORE SALES AT A HIGHER PRICE!



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ACTION STEP



- Take a moment and write down the ways that your customers produce benefits or profits from your product / service
- Make certain these value points are benefit points
- 10 bullet points will do
- Add it to your proposal or sales presentation
- State these values in terms of the customer... Not "we do this" but YOU, YOU, YOU



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**Module Eight:
Writing the Proposal**

How do I know what I think until I see what I say?
E. M. Forster

It's finally time for the real purpose of our journey: writing the actual proposal. This module will look at some tools to help you write your first draft.

ANALYSIS
SOLUTION
PROCESSES
ORGANIZATIONAL
TEAMWORK
VISION
SALVATION

Good Session

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Educating the Evaluator

- Statement of Understanding
- Benefits Analysis
- Organizational Impact Statement:

Good Session

53

Ghosting the Competition

- Include alternate solutions
- Show why they are not appropriate
- Your solution does not have those weaknesses

Good Session

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Using Illustrations

Good Session

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Module Nine: Checking for Readability

Never use a 50-cent word when a 10-cent word will do.
Anonymous

Once your proposal is written, it's time to check it for clarity and readability. This module will offer you some tools to do just that.

Good Session

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Checking for Clarity

Are my sentences clearly constructed?

↓

Have I primarily used the third person?

↓

Does each paragraph have a logical beginning, middle, and end?

Good Session

57

Reading for Your Audience

Jargon that needs to be explained?

Anticipate any questions

Highlight areas that need clarification



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Using the Readability Index

Should be written at a grade eight or nine level

Gunning Fog Index



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Module Ten: Proofreading and Editing

Even if someone else will be editing your work, you should always proofread and edit your writing before handing it off. This way, you can make sure that you said what you really meant to say.

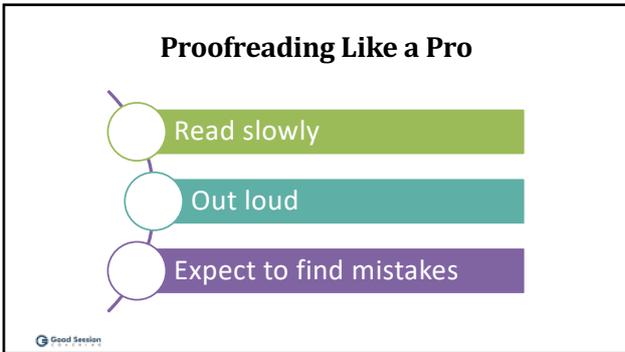
There is no great writing, only great rewriting.
Justice Brandeis



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Proofreading Like a Pro

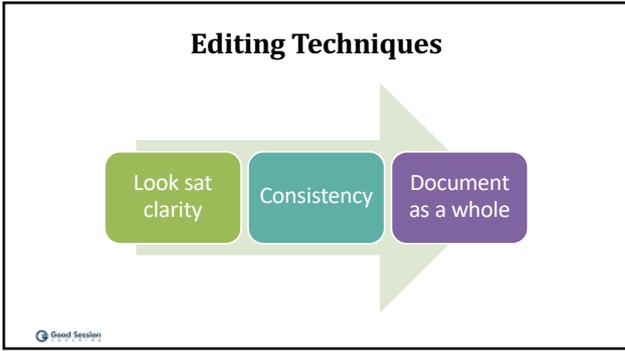
- Read slowly
- Out loud
- Expect to find mistakes



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Editing Techniques

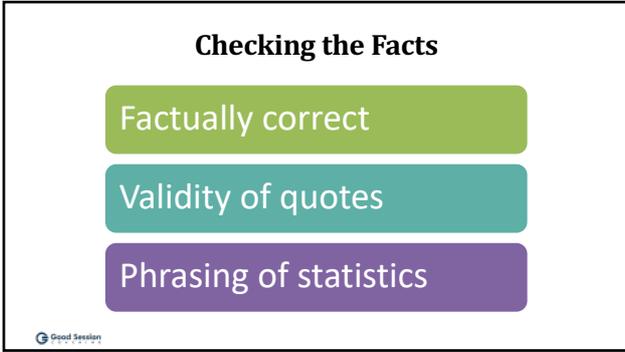
Look sat clarity → Consistency → Document as a whole



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Checking the Facts

- Factually correct
- Validity of quotes
- Phrasing of statistics



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The Power of Peer Review

Should be a mandatory component

↓

Hard to see your own errors

↓

Compensate for writing weakness

Good Session

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Module Eleven: Adding the Final Touches

Your proposal has been thoroughly researched, brilliantly written, and carefully edited. But if it's in an eight point font, all of your hard work will likely go unnoticed.

This module will show you how to present your proposal in a professional way.

For me, writing is hard work. I always look forward to drawing the pictures.
Marc Brown



Good Session

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Our Top Typesetting Tips

Respect company policies

↓

Establish a consistent formatting

↓

Use a maximum of two fonts

Good Session

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Achieving a Professional Look and Feel

Use plenty of white space	Sign in the same color ink
Consistent headers and footers	Less is more

Good Session

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Creating the Final Package

Quality paper
Simple, professional binding
Electronic copy

Good Session

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Wrapping Up

Although this workshop is coming to a close, we hope that your journey to improve your Proposal Writing skills is just beginning. Please take a moment to review and update your action plan. This will be a key tool to guide your progress in the days, weeks, months, and years to come. We wish you the best of luck on the rest of your travels!

Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.
Peter Drucker

ANALYSIS
SOLUTION
PROCESS
OBJECTIVES
TEAMWORK
VISION
SALES

Good Session

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Words from the Wise

Olin Miller	}	• Writing is the hardest way of earning a living, with the possible exception of wrestling alligators.
Stephen King	}	• I believe the road to hell is paved with adverbs.
Jules Renard	}	• Writing is the best way to talk without being interrupted.

© Good Session
