

Free Resource Guide Developed by The Pulse of GovCon

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# Personal and Corporate Growth: The Benefits of Cross-Training Your Business Development Team

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# Why is Today's Topic Important?

Historically Business Development, Capture and Proposal Management have been separate functions.

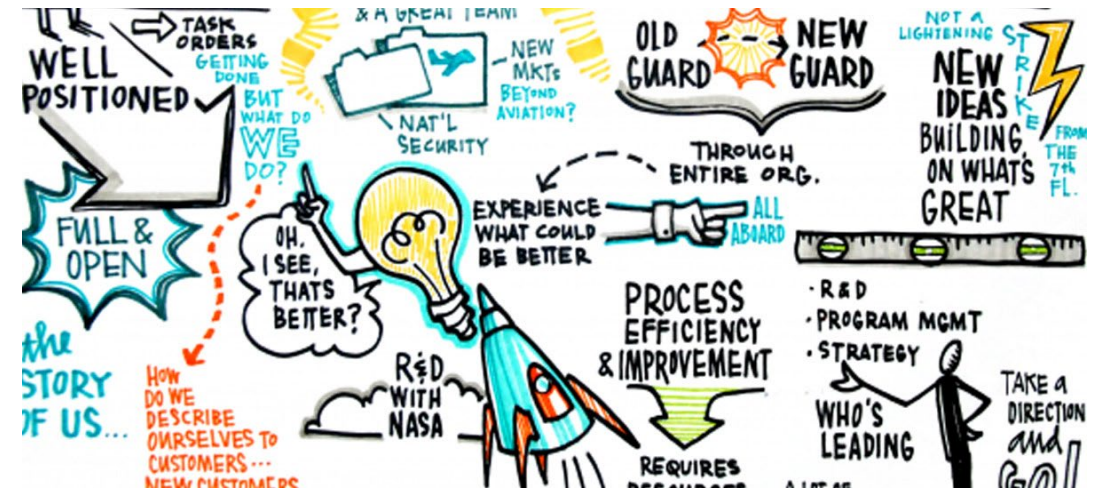
***But industry is changing.***

Coordination roles are falling by the wayside. Teams are more geographically dispersed. Personnel are being cross-trained at an increasing level.

**Organizations don't want people – they want dual-hatted, cross-functioning "unicorns"!**

# Bringing Us to Now!

Our fast-paced, collaborative world has required these roles to become extremely dependent on one another.



Federal Capture Managers are responsible for identifying and executing strategies to **capture** business opportunities while operating and managing limited B&P resources.

So how do you **increase efficiency**, **improve capacity** and **ensure flexibility** across your B&P team?

The answer is **cross-training.**

# So Who Are You Cross-Training?

It's time to recognize the value of your **Proposal Managers'** skills and give your company's Growth and Business Development arm a much-needed pulse...

***because***

they already possess skills to support ***Capture!***



# The Case for Cross-Training Your Proposal Managers

We compared notes on “*what makes a good **Capture Manager***” and identified 7 key universal traits and skills that are constantly touted by industry leaders.

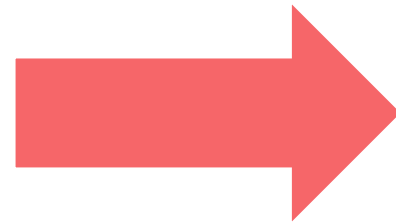
1. **Communication and Interpersonal**
2. **Collaboration**
3. **Negotiation and Persuasion**
4. **Project Management**
5. **Research and Strategy**
6. **Computer Skills**
7. **Business Intelligence**

# Ready to See How Your Proposal Manager's Skills Translate?

*This information was created by The Pulse of GovCon, LLC based on publicly available information.*

# 1. Communication & Interpersonal Skills

**A good Capture Manager must have strong communication skills.**



**These skills are required in order to communicate, present, assert and speak to all the different stakeholders involved.**

- Proposals ARE a vessel to communicate your benefits to required stakeholders.
- Proposal Managers are constantly communicating needs and managing relationships to various stakeholders.
- Proposal Managers are responsible for ensuring thematic messaging and clarity of the solution.
- Proposal Managers listen more than they speak to gather data points.



# Skills to Cross-Train

*From Proposals to Capture*

## Cold Calling

Encourage them to pick up the phone and reach out to potential federal buyers.

## Content Development

Encourage them to write relevant content where a customer can learn about your organization online.

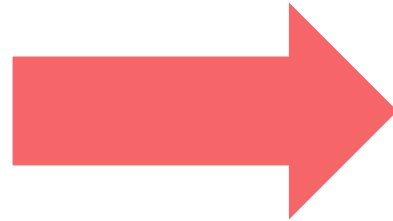
## Participate in Events

Need an extra set of hands? Need to be two places at once? Utilize the people on your team to attend events!

## 2. Collaboration Skills

**Capture Managers have to work in partnership with other Business Developers to identify and pursue the lead.**

**Any good Capture Manager should be able to build relationships, influence, manage conflicts and navigate through office politics in order to get things done.**



- Proposal development takes a village even when you have a management team of one.
- Proposal Managers are constantly managing vendor relationships
- Being a Proposal Manager requires superb facilitation skills (color team reviews, strategy/solution sessions).

# Skills to Cross-Train

*From Proposals to Capture*

## Growth Built on Persistence

Capture management requires being pleasantly persistent and always following-up. Encourage prop managers to establish and evolve relationships with Federal buyers.

## Host Events

Work with your colleagues to identify opportunities for you to host events between industry partners and other stakeholders to create and identify alignment.

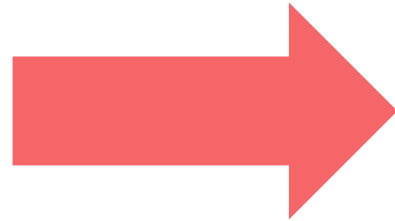
## Find New Teammates

Proposal Managers know the company, so they've noticed gap areas on bids. Need a facility clearance? Proactively create partnerships to open new doors!

# 3. Negotiation & Persuasion Skills

**A good Capture Manager must be tactful and diplomatic. Achieving your set goals require that you recognize when to compromise and when to take a stand.**

**In order to persuade your prospects to do what needs to be done, you will need to win their hearts, minds and trust.**



- Persuasion is the name of the proposal game.
- Proposal Managers must navigate conflicting people, outlines, and preferences constantly.
- Proposal Managers are skilled on allocating and pivoting resources on a dime while adapting to changing timelines in real time.
- In order to be successful, Proposal Managers must have the trust of their team from the start.

# Skills to Cross-Train

*From Proposals to Capture*

## Review CPARS, PPIRS and PPE

Help them help you by having them carefully scrutinize all performance evaluations that have negative impacts.

## Leverage Your Network

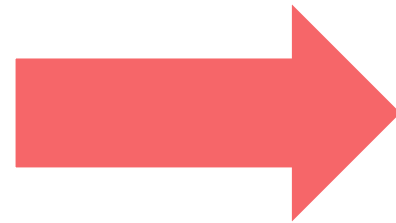
Encourage your colleagues to apply their ability to persuade your decision makers that an opportunity is worth the effort.

## Collaborate with SMEs

Have your colleagues work with your SMEs to identify your strategies. What about the approach? How about pricing?

# 4. Project Management Skills

**Good Capture Managers are in some way also Project Managers.**



Fact: Proposal Managers were the first ever Project Managers.

**They must be able to set goals, plan projects, manage the risks involved, calculate budgets, cost, time and personnel teams.**

- Planning/schedule management
- Cost control
- Risk management
- Contract management
- Time management

# Skills to Cross-Train

*From Proposals to Capture*

## Change Orders on Existing Projects

There are potential opportunities for new business on nearly every project. Use their skills to identify opportunities to expand the scope and propose new requirements.

## Watch That B&P

As a Proposal Manager, they were probably very close to whether the resource allocation was on-target and useful, or a waste of corporate \$.

## CRM Maintenance

Have them assist your organization on staying on top of your CRM tool. Ensure they are helping you stay on top of your outreach and follow-ups.

# 5. Research and Strategy

**A Capture Manager needs to have strong research and strategic analysis skills.**



**These are necessary in order to benchmark the competition and keep the company ahead of the opportunity.**

- Proposal Managers will never admit to this but *sometimes* they have to “google” your company’s solution *or* the Agency’s mission *or* the last winning price - need we say more?



# Skills to Cross-Train

*From Proposals to Capture*

## Staffing Support

Have them research contractor job portals for old (30+ days or more) job openings.

## Opportunity Identification

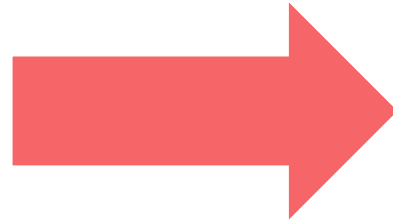
They can help you find opportunities! Hello - FBO, FPDS, Agency Forecast, etc.

## Who Won When You Lost?

If you were beat out on a proposal effort, find out who did win and why. Bring your Proposal Manager to the debrief.

# 6. Computer Skills

**This comes without thinking these days. Any decent employee needs to have at least basic computer skills.**



**Nevertheless a Capture Manager must have high competency working with Microsoft Office.**

- If you're not obsessively desktop publishing your proposal as you go, then are you really a modern-day Proposal Manager?
- Proposal Managers are constantly jailbreaking proposal excel sheets or templates so you can use them.

# Skills to Cross-Train

*From Proposals to Capture*

## Marketing Material

Have them assist in the redesign (or maybe even the initial development) of your marketing documents (i.e. one pager).

## Make Your Library Resources Pliable

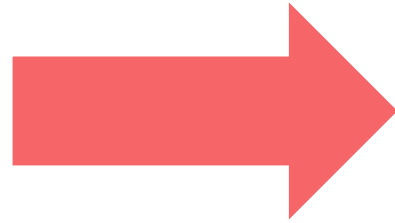
Do you have documents that aren't rich text? Or excel sheets that can't be filtered? Change that!

## Format your Capture Decks

Chances are good you have been more focused on content than format. Think about reorganizing the content.

# 7. Business Intelligence

**Knowing all about how your services or product offerings translate to an opportunity is essential for any Capture Manager.**



**Capture Managers must be able to collect the data they need in order to prepare an accurate analysis.**

- A good Proposal Manager probably has memorized their organization's Value Proposition.
- A good Proposal Manager knows where the gold and skeletons are buried regarding past performance, CPARS, etc.

# Skills to Cross-Train

*From Proposals to Capture*

## Develop a Strategic Plan

Ask your Proposal Manager: what does our organization do well? What are our strongest past performance references?

## Understand HOW you can HELP

Get a helping hand on understanding an Agency's critical tasks, socio-economic goals, or emerging needs.

## Look Into Your Crystal Ball

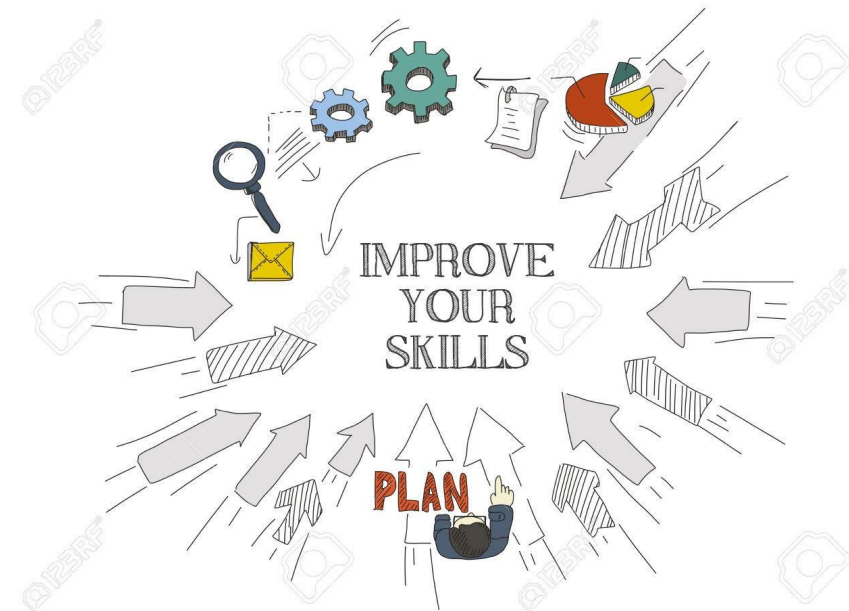
Have them help you map out when current contracts used for past performance are ending and try to anticipate the future of the work.

# Takeaways + Lessons Learned

Don't put your Proposal People in a box – swimlanes are a thing of the past.

Cross-training your Proposal personnel gives your organization:

- ✓ Durability
- ✓ Agility
- ✓ Flexibility
- ✓ Efficiency
- ✓ Teamwork





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