



Executive Summary

A Publication of the Association of Proposal Management Professionals (APMP) National Capital Area (NCA) Chapter

Special Election Edition February 2007

Volume XIII, Issue I

Special points of interest:

- As an NCA member you have more opportunities for networking and education than anywhere else in the country!
- Access presentations from previous APMP-NCA Roundtables at www.apmp-nca.org/apmplibrary.html
- Self-update your e-mail address directly on the NCA [Member and Colleague Database](#) page on NCA's Web site

In this issue:

Evaluators ♥ Graphics	5
NCA Presentation at APMP International Conference	6
Leadership Steps for Company Growth	7
50 Reasons Why Your Red Team Is Broken	9
NCA Chapter Job Board	10
APMP-NCA Info	11

President's Corner New Year—New Ideas



With such strong leadership and infrastructure in place, our Chapter is ready to build on our past accomplishments in this new year.

Michael Scruggs, APM.APMP

The National Capital Area (NCA) Chapter has never been stronger or more energized. Before looking forward, let's look at some of the successes of 2006:

- Our *Executive Summary* newsletter was totally reinvented by Board Director Beth Wingate, from a lone issue for all of 2005 to five issues in 2006. Beth developed a publishing schedule, identified knowledgeable authors and source materials, and completely redesigned the newsletter. One influential national company thought so highly of the revamped *Executive Summary*, they offered to sponsor the entire newsletter.
- With almost 300 attendees, our October 25 Professional Day event was the proverbial ball smacked out of the ballpark. Board Director

(Continued on page 4)

January 2007 Web Election Produces Experienced Diverse NCA Board of Directors

Beth Wingate

The National Capital Area Chapter held its Internet-based election for officers for the January 17, 2007 through January 16, 2008 term. Chapter membership voted to elect the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and nine At-Large Board Members.

The 2007 election produced a board of experienced professional volunteers. This year's board is big enough to help balance the struggles between administering a large association as volunteers and the often demanding and

unpredictable proposal and business development efforts we support and manage.

NCA President Michael Scruggs announced the 2007 election results on January 17 during the NCA Roundtable meeting at the Fairview Park Marriott.

Here are the results of the 2007 APMP NCA election for Officers and Directors at Large (DALs). We encourage all NCA members to participate actively in our Chapter activities. Check our Web site for volunteer opportunities such as writing

(Continued on page 2)



NCA's Directors At-Large voluntarily provide the special features and events for which our Chapter is known!



Get Them While They're Hot!!!

Special edition APMP NCA golf-style shirts (light blue, short sleeves) are available for only \$5 each for a limited time.

Show your NCA spirit and contact Lou Robinson at lou@apmpnca.org to purchase yours today!

(2007 APMP-NCA Board Elections...Continued from page 1)

articles for this newsletter, providing assistance at and suggesting topics and speakers for our bi-monthly Roundtables, and coordinating another successful Professional Day in October.

Officers and Directors at Large

Officers fulfill the specific responsibilities defined in the charter of our organization and are nominated and elected each year. DALs belong to the Board of Directors and provide support and assistance to the organization through volunteer activities.

Officers

Michael A. Scruggs, APM.APMP, leads the NCA Chapter as its **President**. He possesses almost 20 years' of capture and proposal management experience. As President, Michael convenes and chairs Board meetings, develops meeting agendas, and appoints committee chairs. He previously led the Chapter's Corporate Partners Program. Michael is a Senior Proposal Manager at P3 Solutions, an IT and consulting firm based in Vienna, Virginia. He completed his Masters and Bachelors degrees from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond and is an APMP Accredited Proposal Manager. Contact Michael at (703) 677-6060 or michael@apmpnca.org.

Dennis A. Doubroff serves as the Chapter's **Vice President**. He has more than 30 years' proposal development experience and has served on the Board for the past six years. Dennis designs and leads event logistics for the Chapter's Roundtable meetings. He owns and operates Rockville, Maryland-based PBD, Inc., a proposal and business development firm. Dennis earned his Bachelors degree from the University of Maryland. Contact Dennis at dennis@apmpnca.org.

Lou Robinson serves as the Chapter's **Treasurer**. He possesses more than 30 years' proposal experience and has served the Chapter in various positions for the past eight years. As Treasurer, Lou keeps strict and accurate accounts of all money received by and disbursed for and on behalf of the Chapter. He is Chief Operating Officer of Winning Proposal, Inc., a proposal development and production company

in Falls Church, Virginia. He previously worked for Lektron, Inc. Lou earned a BSEE from Virginia Tech. Contact Lou at lou@apmpnca.org.

Jan Cook Butorac serves as the Chapter's **Secretary**. She has more than 25 years' experience in the proposal field. This is Jan's fourth year serving on the Board, and as Secretary she keeps the minutes of Board meetings. Jan is an independent proposal consultant working with Proposal Management, LLC where she provides proposal writing and management and Federal IT consulting from her Haymarket, Virginia office. She previously worked for Northrop Grumman IT. Jan received her Masters degree from The Johns Hopkins University and a Bachelor degree from the University of Maryland. Contact Jan at jan@apmpnca.org.

Directors At-Large

2007 DALs share functional responsibilities with the formal NCA Chapter officers and are equally responsible for representing APMP to our Chapter membership. DALs are those essential members who voluntarily provide the special features and events for which our Chapter is known!

John Bender is **Networking Committee Chair**. He has 15 years' proposal development experience and has served on the Board for the past seven years. He currently leads the networking activities at all Chapter functions. He is Vice President of Advantage Consulting, a business development and management consulting firm in Annandale, Virginia where he provides proposal training and business consulting. John was formerly with Life Cycle Technology. He completed his Masters degree from the University of Southern California and his Bachelors degree from the U.S. Naval Academy. Contact John at john@apmpnca.org.

Bob Lohfeld is **Chair of the Chapter's Professional Day Committee**. He has more than 30 years' in the proposal field. This is Bob's second year on the Board where his responsibility is developing and coordinating the Chapter's 2007 Professional Day. Bob manages Lohfeld Consulting Group, a proposal management and development firm based in Edgewater, Maryland. He formerly served as President of Lockheed Martin's Enterprise

(Continued on page 3)



NCA members share a common interest in learning the best approaches to winning Government and commercial business.



Contact any NCA board members for any reason—especially if you are interested in participating in APMP-NCA Chapter events.

Solutions Division. He earned his Masters degree from the University of Maryland and his Bachelors degree from Catholic University. He completed Ph.D. coursework from George Washington University. Contact Bob at robert@apmpnca.org.

Rick Patterson is the **Chapter's Ombudsman**. He has 18 years' experience in the proposal field. This is Rick's third year on the Board, and he also oversees the activity of the Chapter's Job Board Web page. Rick owns and operates RJP Consultants, Ltd., a proposal management and IT management firm in Fairfax, Virginia. He previously served in the U.S. Air Force as a pilot and engineer. He received his Masters and Bachelors degrees from the U.S. Air Force Academy and the University of New Mexico. Contact Rick at richard@apmpnca.org.

Jay Schiavo, CAE, is **Chair of the Chapter's Marketing and Web Site Committee**. He has served on the Board for the past two years supporting the Programs Committee. Jay owns his own firm, All Media Creative Integrated Marketing Communications in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware and consults with Falls Church, Virginia-based 24 Hour Company, a firm specializing in proposal graphics. He completed his Bachelors degree from Marietta College. Contact Jay at jay@apmpnca.org.

Chris Stahl is **Programs Chair**. He has more than 20 years' in the capture and proposal field. In his first year on the Board, he significantly increased the number of corporate partners. Chris is President of G4i Consulting, a Sterling, Virginia-based firm specializing in capture and proposal management activities in the Federal marketplace. He previously led Synchris, Inc. Chris earned his Bachelors degree from San Jose State University. Contact Chris at christopher@apmpnca.org.

Patricia Westlein is **Membership Committee Chair**. She has more than 19 years' experience in the proposal field. Her work on the Board for the past two years includes leading the planning and development efforts for the Chapter's 2004 and 2005 Professional Day events. Patricia is Director of

Proposal Services at Advanced Management Technology, Inc., an Arlington, Virginia-based IT firm. She formerly served as Director of Proposal Development at TATC, a management consulting firm. Patricia earned her MBA and Bachelors degrees from George Washington University. Contact Patricia at patricia@apmpnca.org.

Beth Wingate, AM.APMP, is **Chair of the Chapter's Newsletter**. She has 19 years' proposal development experience. This is her second year on the Board, and she develops and produces the Chapter's newsletter, the *Executive Summary*. Beth is Proposal Center Director for MSD, Inc., a Fairfax-based IT, business management, and scientific solutions firm. She formerly served as Marketing Services Manager for Learning Tree International USA, Inc. Beth earned her Bachelors degree from the College of William and Mary in Virginia. Contact Beth at beth@apmpnca.org.

Jim Ross, Jr. is **Chair of the Chapter's Corporate Partnership Program**. He serves as Director of Channel Sales for G4i, where he brings extensive experience and understanding of Government contract consulting and software tools necessary for succeeding in the Federal business marketplace. Ross has an extensive background with enterprise software applications, applications management tools and services, network security tools and solutions, and financial management services. Prior to joining G4i, Ross served as National Accounts Manager for Synchris, Inc.

Alex Brown is **Events Logistics Chair**. He is currently a Relationship Manager with The BOSS Group, specializing in helping Federal contractors source and staff contract and full-time proposal talent. Alex has extensive staffing experience in both Federal contracting and private sector arenas. Prior to joining The BOSS Group, Alex spent five years in sales and recruiting for Vedior North America, servicing Fortune 500 clients in the metro Boston area. His experience also includes business analysis with the financial division of a healthcare consortium servicing the Federal Government and sales and recruiting with a Web services company and a national professional search firm.



We are expanding NCA's outreach to APMP members in the mid-Atlantic region.



Earned Value Management Systems, Effective Capture Management, and Q&A on Performance-Based Contracting were among 2006 NCA Roundtable presentations that broke all attendance records.

(2007 APMP-NCA Board Elections...Continued from page 3)

About the Election

The slate of Directors was elected electronically. Registered NCA Chapter members were advised of voting procedures via e-mail and registered their votes at the NCA Web site. Chapter members could recast their votes if they changed their minds before the deadline.

The names of our 2007 Board, their positions, and contact information are listed on the last page of the *Executive Summary* and at our NCA

Web site. Please contact any of these board members for any reason—especially if you are interested in participating in NCA Chapter events.

If you did not receive notice of the elections, your NCA contact information may be stale or missing. Please send an e-mail to inform us or self-update your e-mail address directly on the NCA Chapter Web site at www.apmp-nca.org/redesign/members/login.cfm. ♦

(President's Corner...Continued from page 1)

Bob Lohfeld enlisted members early in 2006 to identify topics and presenters, develop a presentation schedule, and coordinate video presentations, food service, and facility management. This event was the first with a full-fledged "Play Book" that guided each participant and activity.

- Earned Value Management Systems, Effective Capture Management, Q&A on Performance-Based Contracting—these were among 2006 Roundtable presentations that broke all attendance records. A huge tip of the hat to outgoing Board Director Malcolm Higgins who, with the assistance of Russell Smith and Chris Stahl, made this all happen.
- Speaking of Board Director Chris Stahl, his leadership of the Chapter's Corporate Partners Program in 2006 grew to include four new partners: Design to Delivery, XR Solutions, Octant Software, and MSD, Inc. He also initiated videotaping of Roundtable presentations and their streaming on the Chapter's Web site, www.apmp-nca.org.
- Board Director Jay Schiavo took on the complicated task of updating the Chapter's dated Web site. What started as a technical refresh resulted in a total rebuild. The site now features on-site registration and a Body of Knowledge. He also created an administrative approach for better scheduling and content management.

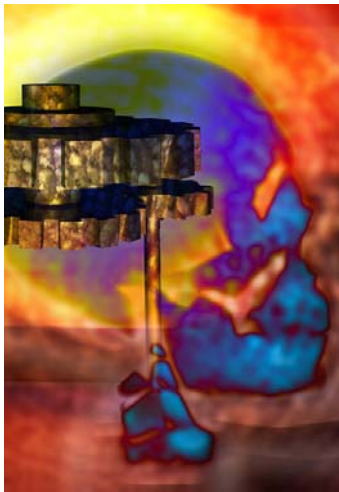
Other Board members worked equally hard. Vice President Dennis Doubroff provided strong leadership in all facets of event registration. Treasurer Lou Robinson kept our financial matters current and accurate. Secretary Jan Butorac kept all Chapter correspondence and minutes current. Board Directors Patricia Westlin (membership), John Bender (networking), and Rick Patterson (Ombudsman) also contributed to our overall success in 2006.

With such strong leadership and infrastructure already in place, our Chapter is ready to build on our past accomplishments in this new year. We plan to continue six Roundtables, the Professional Day event, expansion of our Web site, and our newsletter schedule.

Joining the Board this year are Jim Ross and Alex Brown. Jim takes over the Corporate Partners program, and we already have Voices for Success and P3 Solutions ready to become corporate partners. For the past year, Alex has worked with Dennis Doubroff on front-desk registrations, and he now joins the Board to assume command of this critical function.

While it is still early to define all new initiatives, the Board is exploring ways to add to the value of NCA Chapter affiliation. Meanwhile, we are expanding outreach to APMP members in the mid-Atlantic region.

Happy New Year to all, and a round of applause to everyone who helped place our Chapter into the enviable position we now enjoy. ♦



Well-thought-out content coupled with quality graphics result in a clear, communicative, compelling proposal—a winning proposal.



It will not matter how amazing your proposed solution is if your audience fails to comprehend or retain the information. Your competition knows this, and they definitely ♥ graphics.

Evaluators ♥ Graphics

Michael T. Parkinson

You are fractured. Your attention span is finite. Your time is limited, so you are forced to pick and choose what you focus on. You are pulled in several directions at once. You switch focus from home to work to kids to friends to acquaintances. One second you are concentrating on driving, the next you are looking for your ringing cell phone, and a minute later you are listening attentively to the breaking news on your radio. At work you are typing a report, then answering the phone, surfing the Internet, solving another problem, looking for your pen, chatting with a coworker, attending meetings, and thinking about how tired you are. Everywhere you go, you are presented with an increasing amount of stimuli—friends, family, coworkers, sales people, telemarketers, television advertisements and shows, news, movies, magazines, billboards, radio spots, and Web sites all competing to get your attention. It is amazing that we accomplish anything at all!

Evaluators and your audience are no different. Just like you, they make quick decisions based upon what they see. Studies show that we often ignore formal decision-making models because of time constraints, incomplete information, inability to calculate consequences, and other variables. Intuitive judgment is the process for most decisions. For this reason, evaluators, your audience, and you should ♥ graphics.

Using visuals in your proposals:

- Improves learning 200%—University of Wisconsin.
- Takes 40% less time to explain complex ideas—University of Pennsylvania.
- Improves retention 38%—Harvard University.

Graphics make it *much* easier for your audience to understand and remember your solution.

Professional, visually appealing graphics increase your likelihood of success by

43% (3M-sponsored study at the University of Minnesota School of Management).

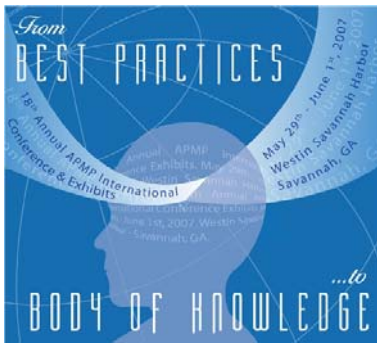
Joan Miller (name changed), a proposal manager, taught a proposal writing course for over 10 years. The class began with students forming source selection teams to evaluate two proposals and choose a winner based on the established evaluation criteria. *Proposal A* was attractive, well written, and contained a large number of professionally rendered, visually appealing graphics, but the proposal was not compliant with the evaluation criteria. *Proposal B* was not well written and used a smaller number of dense, difficult-to-read graphics, but it was compliant.

If the source selection teams had taken the extra time needed to understand *Proposal B*'s graphics, they would have realized that the graphics suitably showed the system to be built. Not surprisingly, Miller often found that *Proposal A* (the easy-to-read, graphically appealing proposal) received the highest grades. When asked, the students said that they had been so caught up in the presentation that they had failed to realize the proposal was not compliant.

I am not advocating the use of quality visuals over content, but rather the power of persuasion when both work synergistically to better explain your message. Well-thought-out content coupled with quality graphics result in a clear, communicative, compelling proposal—a winning proposal.

Greg Giddons, Executive Director of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Secure Border Initiative (SBI)net) Program Management Office (and part of the SBI)net decision-making team) said that visuals help tell the presenter's story. In addition, he said that graphics give evaluators a break because after reading several proposals "200 pages of text begin to look like ants." In fact, Greg saves his favorite graphics and keeps them with him for reference—a testament to the fact that evaluators ♥ graphics.

Michael T. Parkinson of 24 Hour Company (www.24hrco.com) has two new books available at BillionDollarGraphics.com that teach you how to turn your ideas into persuasive visuals. ♦



APMP's two and a half-day international conference will increase awareness and understanding of the methodologies, processes, standards, and interactive discussions that go into developing a Body of Knowledge.



Joining the NCA Chapter allows you to learn about our latest networking and presentation events.

Sharing a Chapter's Secrets: Inside the NCA

Beth Wingate

Do you want to know the secrets—the real insider secrets—for developing and running a successful APMP Chapter?

Join NCA Newsletter Chair Beth Wingate, AM.APMP and NCA President Michael Scruggs, APM.APMP as we present *Sharing a Chapter's Secrets: Inside the NCA* at the 18th Annual APMP International conference May 29–June 1, 2007 in Savannah, Georgia.

Our presentation ties in with this year's conference theme *From Best Practices to Body of Knowledge*. We'll share our insiders' tips for:

- Operating the chapter (Board of Directors size and scope, elections, format and content of monthly meetings, and bookkeeping).

- Communicating with chapter members (newsletter development, electronic communications, web site development and content, body of knowledge, advertising, and mailing list development).
- Holding standing-room-only roundtable events (planning, identifying topics and speakers, promoting the event, registering attendees, videotaping, and planning meals)
- Holding annual Professional Day events (planning, budgeting, selecting the site, selecting topics and speakers, promoting the event and speakers, and running the event).

We look forward to sharing our insider tips with you this spring. See you in Savannah, ya'll! ♦



How Do I Become An NCA Member?

It's easy to join the APMP National Capital Area Chapter, and it's free. If you are just joining APMP (https://www.apmp.org/siteSpecific/customer/register_accountData.aspx), simply note on the APMP application that you wish to affiliate with the NCA Chapter. That's all you need to do—APMP will provide your information to NCA, and we will include you in our mailings.

If you are currently an APMP member and want to join the NCA Chapter, simply go to www.apmpnca.org/affiliate.html and complete the online form.

With almost 600 members, the NCA Chapter is APMP's largest chapter. Joining the NCA Chapter allows you to learn about our latest networking and presentation events. Best of all, it's free.



Who Can Benefit From APMP?

- **Senior management executives** who are leading proposal quality initiatives in their organization
- **Proposal managers** looking for the latest tools, tips, techniques, and other career enhancements
- **BD/capture managers** who prepare to win new contracts
- **Corporations and Agencies** responsible for proposal development, production, and evaluation
- **Anyone who wants access to the best** state-of-the-art proposal knowledge available in the world and to meet the individuals who are developing it



When you pursue an opportunity, the sole purpose should be to win.

The Leadership Steps for Company Growth

Doug Allston

More on Strategic Commitment

Previously, I wrote about making a strategic commitment to a select group of Government organizations you selected based on your staff's access to the Government employees in those organizations. Before I leave this topic, we need to examine some of the aspects of this commitment that contractors often overlook.

When a firm changes from a "drive-by" bidder mode and becomes a committed contractor, it significantly improves its probability of winning. In fact, even if you lose, the work done to prepare for the bid actually helps with the next opportunity. I have attended Source Selection Authority (SSA) meetings where it was recognized that a procurement wasn't right for a specific contractor; but the firm so impressed the SSA that he directed his contracting officer to find work for them. He wanted them on his team!

Your employees are more likely to help identify new Government opportunities when they know people who work at the Agency. The attitudes of Government employees are also more positive toward a company when they know people there as well. Clearly, a firm that simply shows up and writes a proposal, then disappears if it loses, can't compete with a firm that cares enough about a current or potential customer to learn about its problems and challenges.

The "embarrassment" factor is another aspect of drive-by bidding that is not sufficiently appreciated. I've been a Government source selection evaluator, program manager (PM), and contracting officer's technical representative (COTR) and remember sitting around laughing about companies who never should have submitted a bid. What those companies

(Continued on page 8)

sharpen your winning edge

With the Bids and Proposal Professionals Certification Program from the APMP®



:: WHO :: BID PROFESSIONALS

:: AIM :: DEMONSTRATE AND HAVE RECOGNIZED YOUR SKILLS IN PROPOSAL-RELATED DISCIPLINES.

:: BENEFITS :: BY SPONSORING YOU TO ACHIEVE ACCREDITATION, YOUR COMPANY WILL BE INVOLVED IN PROMOTING THE PROFESSIONALISM OF THOSE INVOLVED IN WINNING BUSINESS WITH PROPOSALS AND ENDORSING THE USE OF BEST PRACTICE.

Who are the APMP®?

The APMP® is an internationally recognized association, with membership and corporate sponsors from a diverse range of disciplines and industries, which is committed to the pursuit of proposal excellence.

Its mission is to advance the arts, sciences, and technology of new business acquisition and to promote the professionalism of those engaged in those pursuits.

For further information contact:

The Accreditation Program Director for the U.S., by calling toll-free 1-888-448-APMP (2767), or by email to accreditationUS@apmp.org.

For further information about the APMP® and for details on how to become a member please visit the website at www.apmp.org.

Benefits of membership include: Conferences aimed at updating skills, exchanging best practices, networking and learning about the latest tools being used in industry. Regular local meetings, with industry-leading guest speakers and opportunities to meet other proposal management professionals.

LEVELS OF ACCREDITATION

FOUNDATION LEVEL

At the Foundation Level the candidate has:
 • demonstrated an understanding of his/her experience and/or learning in a proposals environment.

PRACTITIONER LEVEL

At the Practitioner Level the candidate has:
 • demonstrated a commitment to the profession.
 • an understanding of how to win business with proposals.
 • a willingness to seek and be involved in Continuing Professional Development.

PROFESSIONAL LEVEL

At the Professional Level the candidate has:
 • made a contribution towards furthering the profession.
 • helped develop others within the profession.
 • a track record of personal Continuing Professional Development.



The APMP® has two major publications; the APMP® Professional Journal and the APMP® online newsletter, The Perspective.

The Professional Journal is a collection of both researched articles and industry insights into the field of proposal management. The Journal is published twice a year and mailed to APMP® members. Past issues of the APMP® Journal can be found on the APMP® website.

The Perspective is published four times a year on the APMP® website. The Perspective contains shorter articles of interest on proposal operations, APMP® special interest groups and APMP® sponsored events.

The Accreditation Program was developed for the APMP® by Business2Business International Limited in conjunction with:





Leaders need to be accountable.



It is vital to ensure that every employee knows you expect them to play an active role in growing the company and that you are willing to support them in that endeavor.

(Leadership Steps...Continued from page 7)

forget is that you can write a perfectly good proposal that is so lacking in an understanding of the Agency's real needs and requirements that it is silly or laughable under the scrutiny of the Source Selection Board. A proposal based solely or almost completely on the information found in an RFP is most likely "dead on arrival." In the same vein, it may also be a loser because another business unit from the same company bid some time in the past and submitted a weak or equally humorous proposal. Government employees do talk with one another, and the reputations of potential vendors do "get around."

Strategic commitment to specific Government organizations is a key to long-term business success. Nothing good comes out of "drive-by bidding." You may occasionally get lucky, but the odds are against you for long-term success.

BD Review Meetings

Once a business target (task order or contract) is identified, a firm must make a resource commitment if it wishes to win the business. Without such a commitment, there's no point in a pursuit. When you pursue, the sole purpose should be to win, and during "capture" you must convince the Government that they want to work with your firm. The capture process helps develop insight into the Government's real requirements so you can focus on writing a proposal that is both competent and demonstrates your understanding of the customer's needs. Capture is also important because it may give you the opportunity to mold the procurement to best suit your capabilities.

A Capture Team should be organized to engage in several activities—analyzing requirements, developing a contact plan, planning the demonstration schedule, and so forth. Management must review the activities of the Capture Team to ensure company resources are spent wisely or where they might be spent more productively. Review meetings should be held at business unit level for opportunities that are the responsibility of the unit, and at corporate level for selected high priority or corporate-wide targets. Meetings at corporate level should be held at least monthly. Both the VP responsible for the capture effort and the Capture Team leader should present their updated business case for each target. This update should include the latest information gleaned from the Government as well as the status of the Team's activities to win the business.

All of this is routine management activity but can easily be overlooked. To do it right takes leadership, which includes protecting your people's time. No matter how much money a firm may have to spend, management must hold people accountable to make sure the capture activities are being accomplished. If indicators suggest there's no reasonable chance of winning, management should stop the effort before it becomes a waste of time or an embarrassment through submission of a flawed bid.

Leaders need to be accountable. Actions that lead to finding and winning opportunities cannot be delegated to your Business Development team. Rather, they must remain with operational managers who are held responsible for both finding those "winnable" opportunities and for the performance of their Capture Teams. Ultimate success is always dependent upon what operational managers do.

Finally, while interaction with the leadership team is very important, it is equally vital to ensure that every employee knows you expect them to play an active role in growing the company and that you are willing to support them in that endeavor. Growth is always a "team sport." The bigger the team, the more likely you will be successful.

Doug Allston is President of Advantage Consulting, Inc. You can reach him with your questions and comments at dallston@acibiz.com or 703.642.5153. ♦



What Keeps You Awake at Night?

If you have recommendations on subjects for upcoming

Roundtables that

would be helpful to you or your team—or better yet—if you also know of a potential guest speaker, please contact the APMP NCA Board of Directors at www.apmp-nca.org/aboutapmp-nca.html or send your ideas to info@apmp-nca.org.



Most Red Team reviews are flawed to the point of being nearly worthless. Yours probably is too.



Problem—All of the technical expertise available is on the proposal team, leaving none for an independent assessment.

50 Reasons Why Your Red Team Is Broken

It was a tremendous step in the evolution of proposals when people began to recognize that every proposal should have a formal review by people other than those who wrote it. This review is almost universally called a “Red Team” review. The only problem is that I can’t think of a single instance in several hundred proposals where a Red Team review has made a difference whether a proposal won or lost. This is probably because most Red Team reviews are flawed to the point of being nearly worthless. Yours probably is too. Here are some signs that your Red Team is broken:

1. If you asked all of the participants to define a “Red Team,” you’d get a different answer from each.
2. The goals for the Red Team are not explicitly defined.
3. Participants are not given specific directions regarding what to look for.
4. The Red Team does not have any checklists or written guidance to remind them of what to look for.
5. The burden of managing Red Team administration and logistics is left to the proposal team instead of being taken off of their hands.
6. The Red Team is scheduled too early and the document is not ready.
7. The Red Team is scheduled too late and there is not enough time to act on any suggestions.
8. The Red Team gives you the guidance you should have had at the start.
9. It is not clear who is driving: the Red Team or the proposal team.
10. The Red Team shows up without having actually read the proposal, cover to cover.
11. The Red Team is allowed to do their reading at their desks.
12. The Red Team shows up without having read the RFP.
13. Red Team participants have no assignment other than to read the entire proposal, cover to cover.
14. The Red Team is the only form of review planned for the proposal.
15. You limit the number and types of reviews you do to the number of colors you can name (red team, pink team, green team, blue team, purple team, gold team).
16. You expect the Red Team to review compliance, accuracy, your approach, the persuasiveness of the writing, the completeness of the document, how you stack up against the evaluation criteria, implementation of win strategies, and incorporation of customer/solution/competitive awareness all at the same time.
17. The same people who wrote the proposal are on the Red Team.
18. The Red Team is scheduled for only a couple of hours.
19. Participants have to leave early because they have other commitments.
20. The Red Team doesn’t have an appointed leader, other than the proposal manager.
21. The Red Team identifies problems without offering solutions.
22. The Red Team does little more than what amounts to proof reading.
23. The Red Team wastes valuable time proof reading copy that is going to significantly change or tells you about formatting problems on a document that has yet to go through final production.
24. There is no guidance regarding how comments should be made.
25. The Red Team examines your strategies instead of the effectiveness of their implementation.
26. The Red Team wants to change the outline of the proposal.
27. The Red Team is effectively a review by the executive sponsor.
28. The Red Team looks at the proposal from their own perspective, instead of the customer’s perspective.

(Continued on page 10)



Problem—Some people are on the Red Team simply because they want to see the document—not because they have anything to contribute.

(Why Your Red Team Is Broken...Continued from page 9)

29. Red Team participants think they need to read every comment they've written on the document while everyone is at the table.
30. The Red Team does not consolidate its own comments, but leaves that burden to the proposal team.
31. There is no discussion regarding how the Red Team's comments relate to or will impact the evaluation criteria.
32. Red Team comments fail to consider the page limitation imposed by the RFP.
33. The Red Team expects to see the document again after the changes are made.
34. Red Team suggestions are expected to be taken as orders (the proposal team is not free to ignore a Red Team recommendation).
35. If there are holes, the Red Team doesn't recommend any resources capable of filling the holes.
36. The proposal is so broken at the time of the Red Team that the Red Team can't do anything to help.
37. Participants make comments that are not actionable (generalized statements that don't specify a correction or action to take).
38. The Red Team makes comments that contradict the RFP.
39. The Red Team does not result in a set of specific action items that can be worked through a process of elimination.
40. The Red Team doesn't take any time to meet as a group and discuss their findings before they debrief the proposal team.
41. Some people are on the Red Team simply because they want to see the document—not because they have anything to contribute.
42. The Red Team identifies all of the defects, resulting in a proposal that merely answers the mail because they didn't look at what it takes to win.
43. They aren't physically present.
44. You haven't validated enough because you tried to do too much in a single review.
45. All of the technical expertise available is on the proposal team, leaving none for an independent assessment.
46. The debrief consists only of the participants taking turns sharing their thoughts.
47. The Red Team doesn't score the proposal according to the evaluation criteria.
48. The Red Team doesn't do anything but score the proposal according to the evaluation criteria.
49. The Red Team doesn't offer any useful advice or help (as opposed to criticisms).
50. The Red Team doesn't do anything to help the proposal WIN!

Please visit captureplanning.com for more business and proposal development information. ♦

How Does the NCA Chapter's Job Board Work?

Rick Patterson, Chapter Ombudsman

Does your firm have a proposal or business development position to fill? Are you looking for a proposal or business development position? If so, the [NCA Chapter's Job Board](#) can be a dynamite resource.

The Chapter started the Job Board last year. All listed job postings must be in the business development career field and contain categories including business development, capture management, proposal management, technical writing, proposal operations, and graphic design.

Our Job Board reaches a target audience beyond NCA's 600 members. Employers post a job profile by:

- Accessing the NCA web site;
- Selecting "Add Job Posting"; and
- Completing the form.

After submission, the Chapter Ombudsman reviews and, as necessary, edits the job posting. The cost is \$45, payable via PayPal or check, and the posting is effective for 21 days.

Effective this year, Job Board postings are also published in the Chapter's quarterly newsletter, the [Executive Summary](#), further increasing exposure to this valuable professional audience. ♦



NCA's Job Board reaches a target audience well beyond NCA's 600 members.



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**APMP-NCA Board of
Directors Meetings
Open to Members**

The Board of Directors for APMP NCA meets the first Tuesday of every month. Every other meeting is a virtual meeting-telephone conference. These meetings are open, and APMP members may attend.

Anyone interested in the topic is invited to attend our meetings. You do not have to be an APMP member or even a proposal specialist to attend an NCA Roundtable. If you are interested in proposals, business development, and professional development, we'd like for you to join us!

Mark Your Calendar for 2007 APMP-NCA Events

March 21	Roundtable
May 16	Roundtable
May 29 – June 1	APMP National Conference—Savannah, Georgia
July 18	Roundtable
September 19	Roundtable
October 17	Professional Day (Projected date)
November 14	Roundtable

Access the Proposal Management Body of Knowledge

Published and Presented by APMP and the NCA Chapter

The Executive Summary—NCA's Bimonthly E-newsletter

(www.apmpnca.org/e-newsletter.html)

- Access most current and back issues
- Reach proposal professionals through ads in the *Executive Summary*
- Write an article for the *Executive Summary*

APMP-NCA Education Programs (www.apmpnca.org/presentations.html)

- Access chapter presentations
- Suggest presentation topics and/or speakers

Journal of the APMP—APMP's Biannual Journal (www.apmp.org/ca-26.aspx)

- Access most current and back issues

APMP Perspective—APMP's Quarterly Newsletter (www.apmp.org/ca-27.aspx)

- Access most current and back issues

APMP Acquisition and Proposal Management Business Research (www.apmp.org/ca-28.aspx)

- Access Surveys Library

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