Sales Machine

The Essential Sales Proposal Checklist

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<!--[if !supportEmptyParas]--> <!--[endif]-->

Working on a sales proposal? Here's a quick way to assess whether you've got a chance of actually winning the business, based upon a conversation I had a couple of years ago with sales proposal guru Tom Sant.

Examine the current draft of your sales proposal carefully. Then answer the following questions as honestly as you can:

- <!--[if !supportLists]-->Does the customer know who we are?
- Is the customer expecting us to bid on this?
- Does the executive summary address customer needs?
- Is the executive summary one page or less?
  <!--[if !supportLists]--><!--[endif]-->
- Have we replaced all the jargon that's meaningful only to us?
- Are we sure that another vendor doesn't have the inside track?
- Does the proposal follow the customer's specified format and outline?
- Have we removed all the meaningless marketing fluff (e.g. "state-of-the-art")?
  <!--[if !supportLists]--><!--[endif]-->
- Has someone edited out other customer names from boilerplate material?
  <!--[if !supportLists]--><!--[endif]-->
- Is the writing clear and forceful rather than flat and technical?
  <!--[if !supportLists]--><!--[endif]-->
- Has the proposal been edited so that it contains no glaring grammatical errors?
  <!--[if !supportLists]--><!--[endif]--><!--[if !supportLists]-->
- Can the proposal convince the customer that we can actually deliver?
- Does the proposal define how we'll measure customer satisfaction?
- Is the proposal being submitted on time and to the right people?

If the answer to ANY of these question is "NO" then you'll lose the sale. It's as simple as that.

Have I missed anything?