A look inside the Government's Contract Award Process

The Government Contract Award Process

- Tell ‘em what you’re gonna do
- Do what you said you’d do
- Eliminate unfair advantages
- Suit Government’s best interest
- Stay IAW FAR

(In accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation)

The FAR Guiding Principles

Satisfy Gov't need for cost, quality, and timeliness

Conduct business with Integrity, Fairness, and Openness

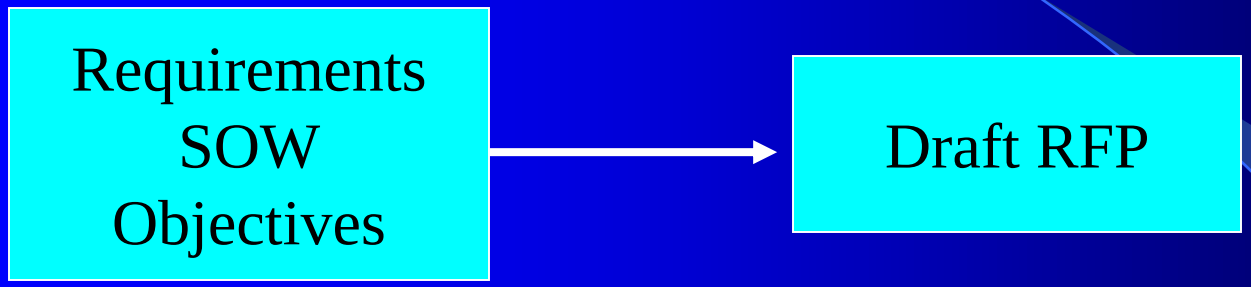
- Publicize procurements
- Require competition
- Protest procedures

Fulfill public policy objectives

- Small business
- Minority business
- Woman-owned business
- "Green" goals

SOURCE SELECTION PROCESS

(Example)



The Draft RFP

Question:

Why does the Government issue a draft RFP?

Solicit industry feedback

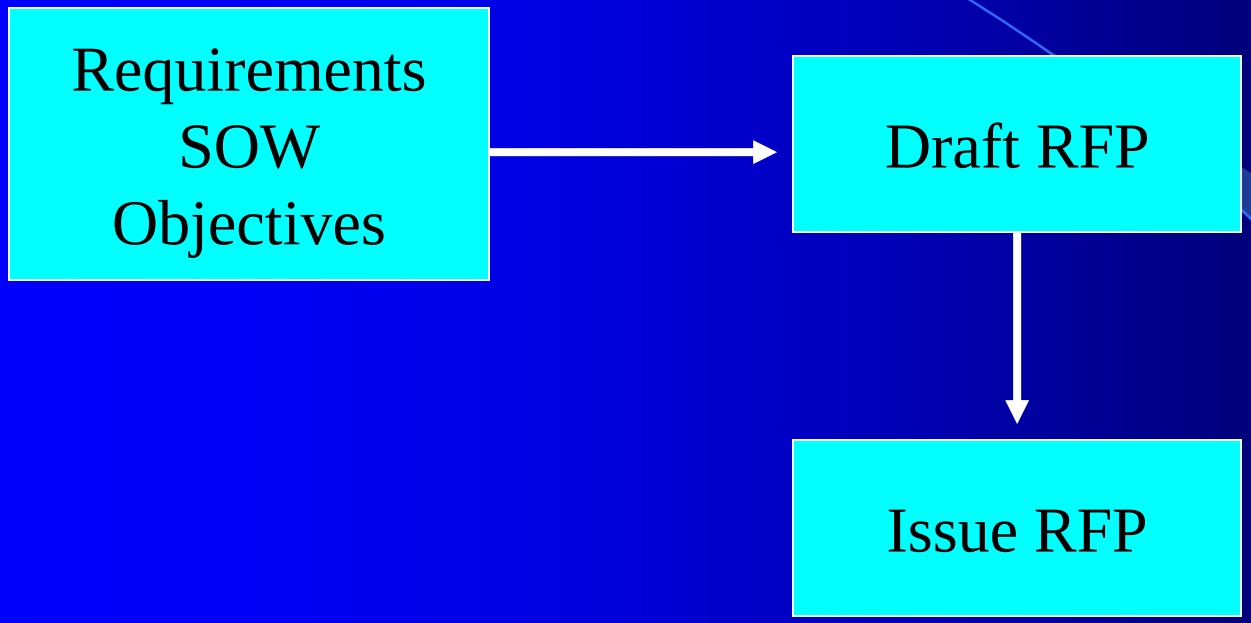
Increase industry awareness

Encourage questions, comments, suggestions

Better RFP yields better product !

SOURCE SELECTION PROCESS

(Example)



The Request for Proposals (RFP)

- Part I – The Schedule

  Section A – Solicitation /contract form

  Section B – Supplies or services; pricing

  Section C – Description / specifications

  Section D – Packaging and marking

  Section E – Inspection and acceptance

  Section F – Deliveries or performance

  Section G – Contract administration data

  Section H – Special contract requirements

The Request for Proposals (RFP)

- Part II – Contract Clauses

  Section I – Contract clauses

- Part III – Other Attachments

  Section J – List of documents, exhibits, and other attachments

The Request for Proposals (RFP)

- Part IV – Representations and Instructions

  Section K – Representations, certifications, and other statements of bidders

  Section L – Instructions, conditions, and notices to bidders

  Section M – Evaluation factors for award

The Request for Proposals (RFP)

- Section L : General Instructions for Offerors

Read !

Understand !

Comply !

-Section M : Evaluation Description

Basis for award: Best Value, Low Bid, etc

(*Tell 'em what you're gonna do*)

The Request for Proposals (RFP)

Documents the intended contract tasks (Performance Work Statement; Statement of Work; Statement of Objectives)

Documents all requirements of "responsive" bidders (Section L)

Documents how the award decision will be made (Section M)

The Request for Proposals (RFP)

Don’t assume….

- The Government Team knows what it’s asking for.

- The Government Team is knowledgeable about the required work

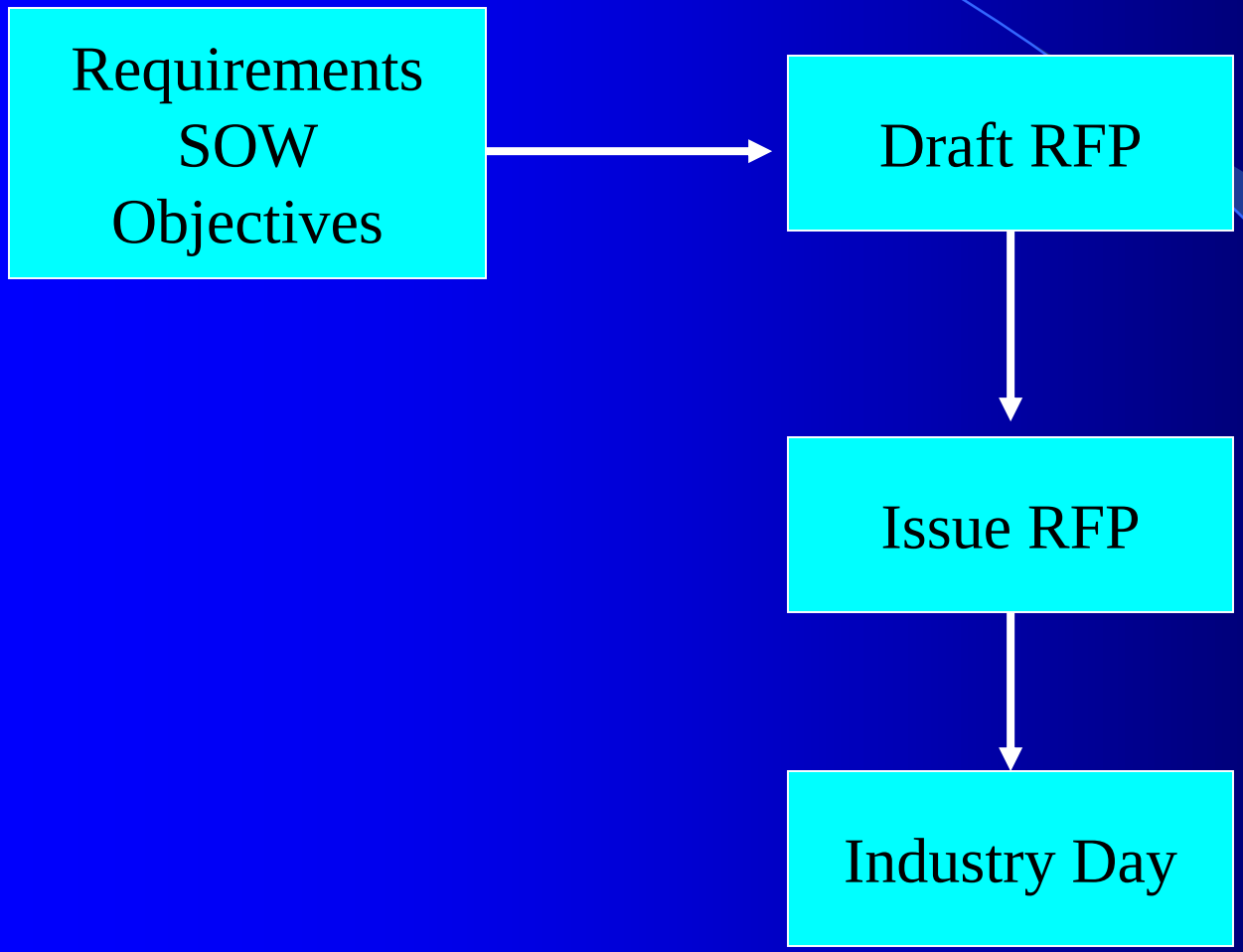
- The RFP is complete and error-free

Questions about the RFP

- If you don't understand it….
  …ASK! (in writing)
- Be sure your questions are succinct
- Word questions carefully
- Verbal information provided by Government is NOT BINDING! Ask the Issuing office to publish response with Q&A's to all recipients.

SOURCE SELECTION PROCESS

(Best Value Example)



Industry Day

Question:

Why does the Government conduct an Industry Day ?

Opportunity for Q & A

Provide offerors information not contained within the RFP that *may* be beneficial in preparing the proposal

Better proposal yields better product !

Industry Day Dilemma

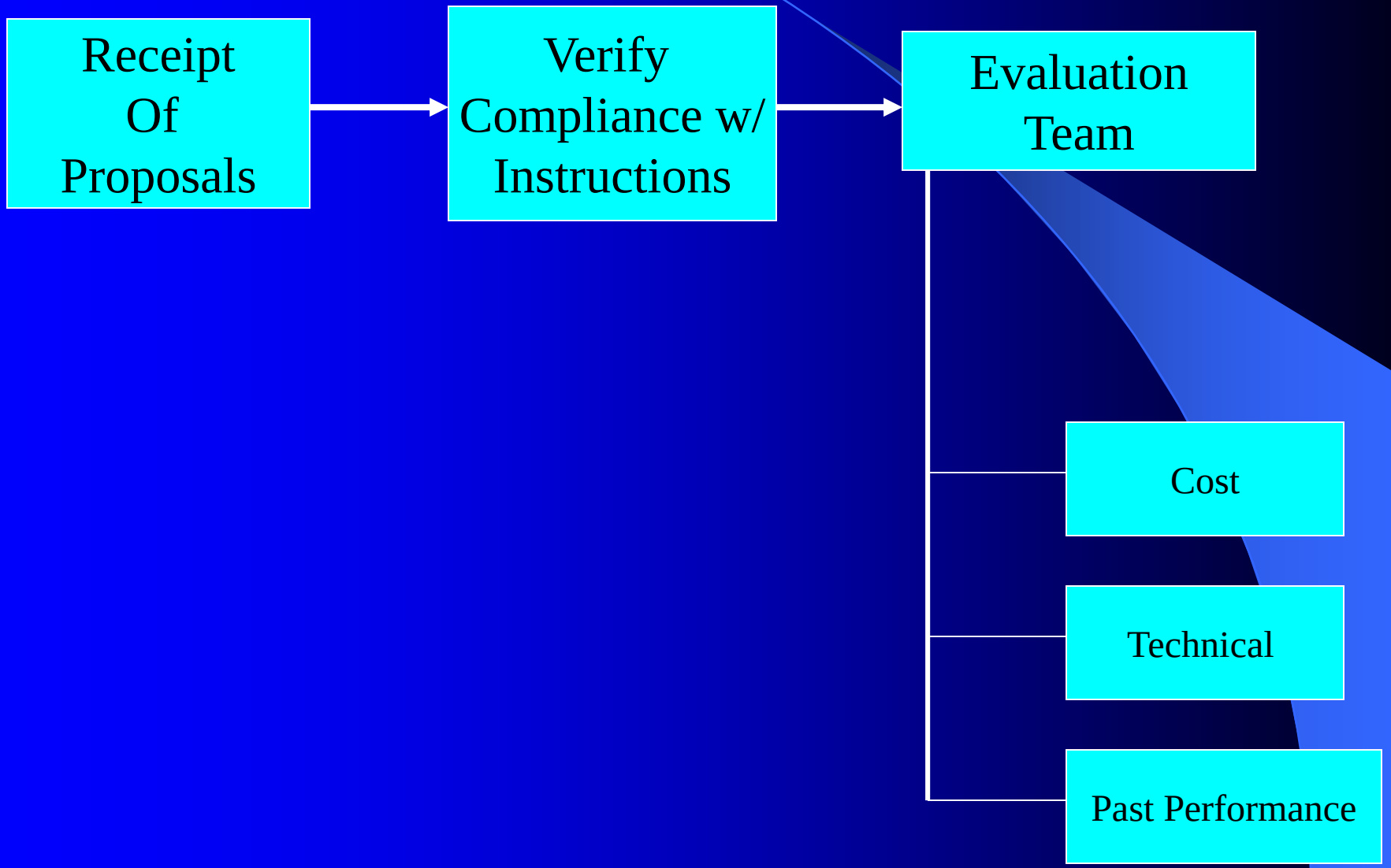
- Offerors get to size up the competition

- Offerors hesitant to ask questions (risk of "tipping their hand")

……Government receives no benefit

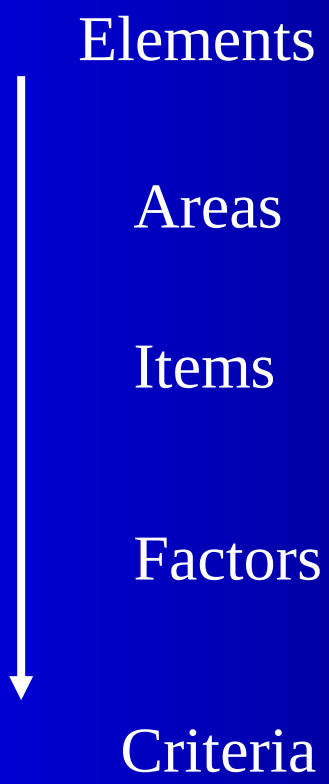
SOURCE SELECTION PROCESS

(Best Value Example)



EVALUATION HEIRARCHY

(Example)



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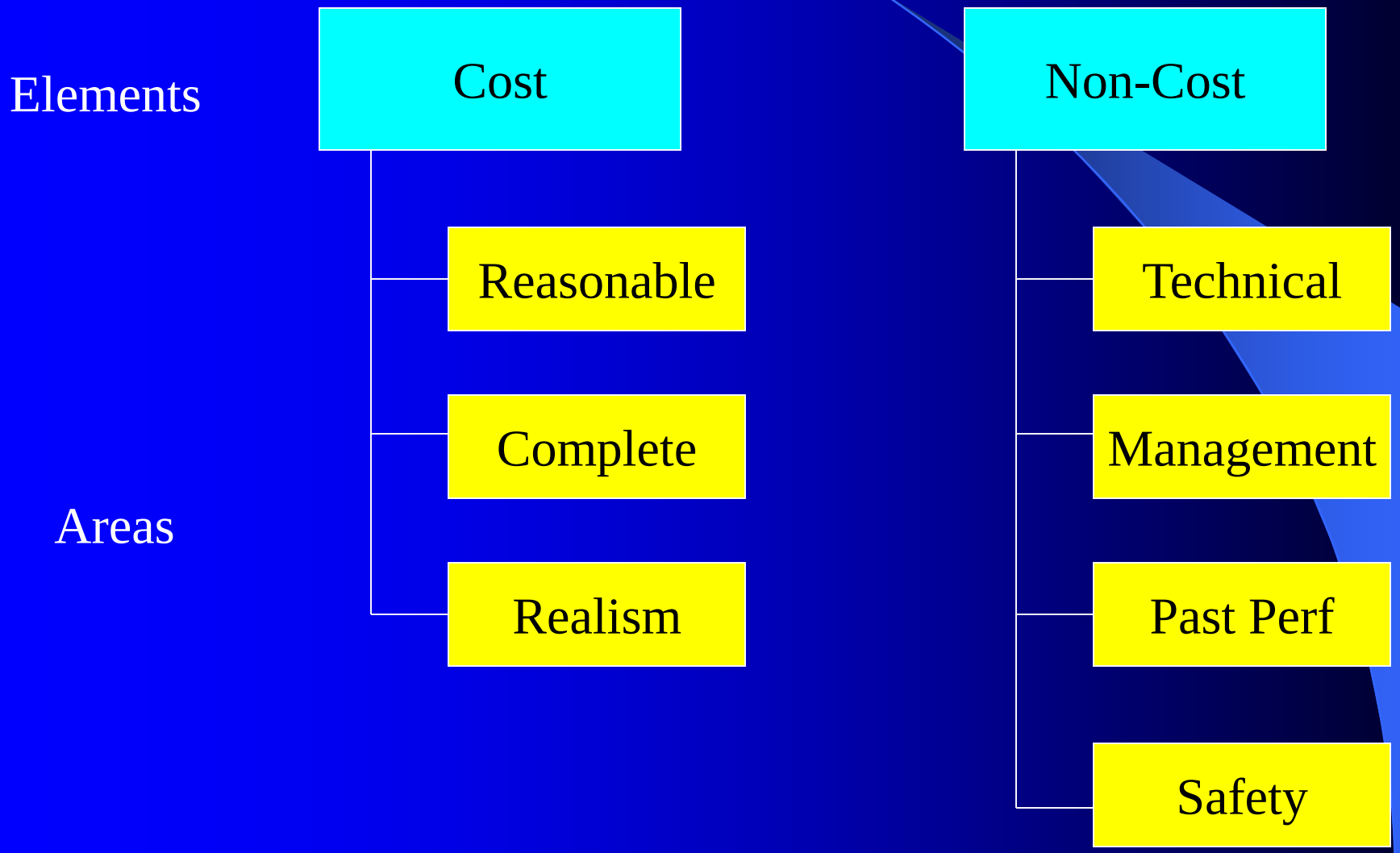

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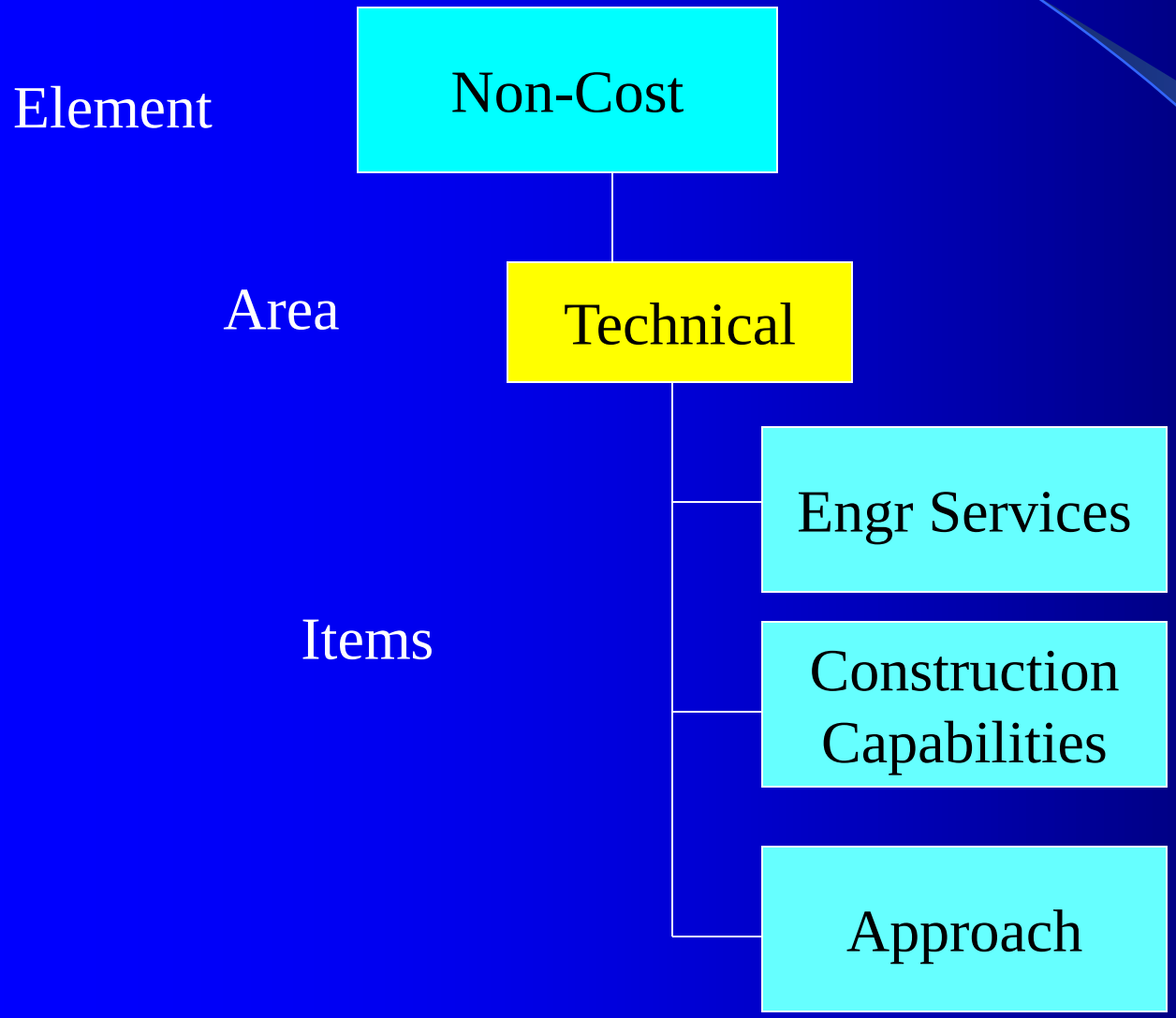

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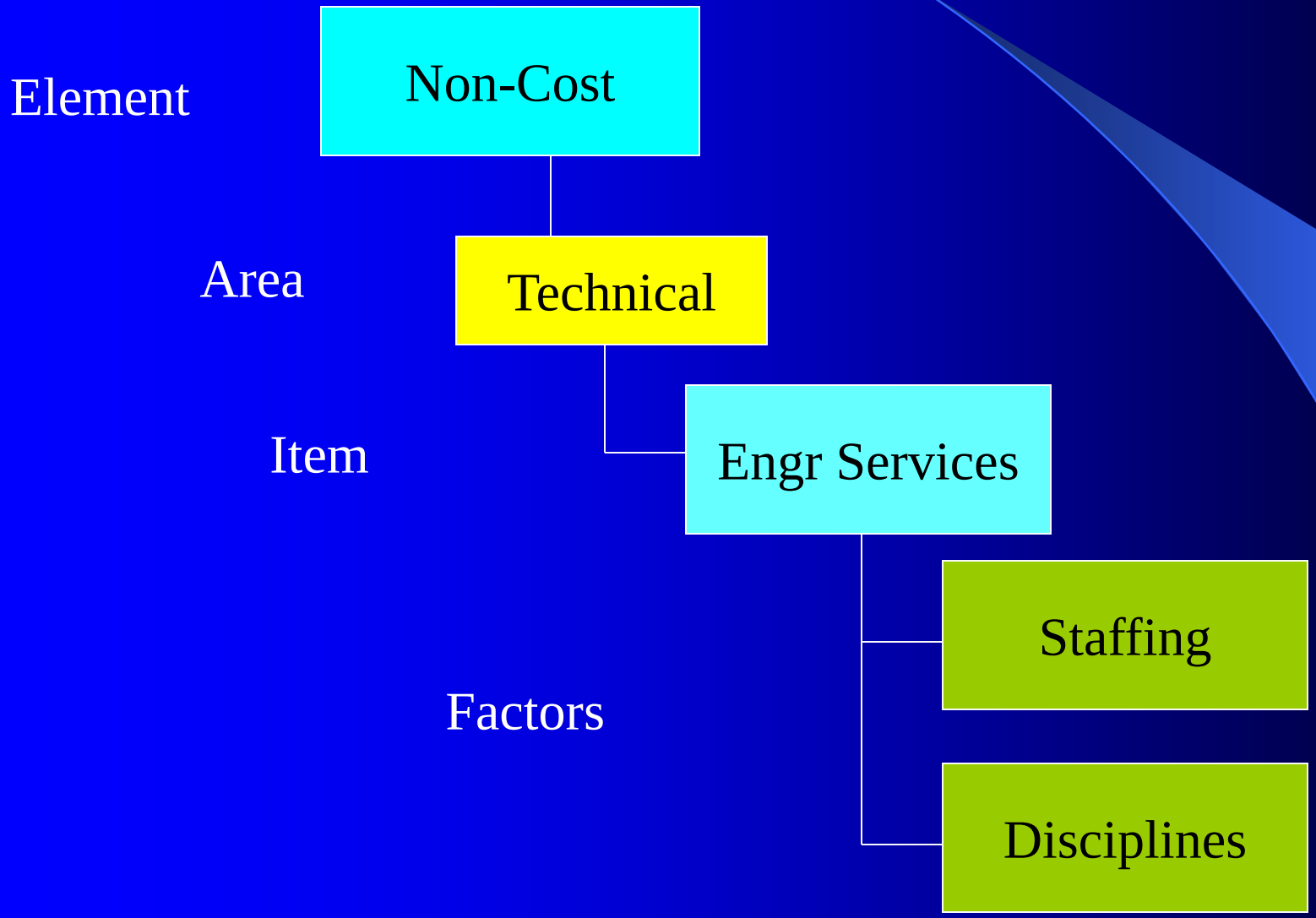


EVALUATION HEIRARCHY

(Example)

Evaluation Areas, Factors and Subfactors and their Relative Order of Importance

The evaluation will be made for the following Areas, Factors and Subfactors:

Technical Area (L.14.4.2)

Systems Engineering (Factor T-1): (WBS 4.1.8.2, SOW 2, L.14.4.2.1)

This includes the evaluation of technology maturity, simulation-based acquisition, integrated logistics, system requirements & integration, and risk mitigation.

Spacecraft (Factor T-2): (WBS 4.1.8.4, SOW 4, L.14.4.2.2)

Subfactor T-2-1: Spacecraft Design (WBS 4.1.8.4.2, SOW 4.2, L.14.4.2.2.1)
Subfactor T-2-2: Spacecraft Flight Test & Demonstration (WBS 4.1.8.4.4, SOW 4.4,
Subfactor T-2-3: Spacecraft Development, Integration and Production (WBS 4.1.8.4.3, 4.1.8.4.5, SOW 4.3, 4.5, L.14.4.2.2.3)

Safety and Mission Assurance (Factor T-3): (WBS 4.1.8.3, SOW 3, L.14.4.2.3)

This includes the evaluation of system safety, industrial, environmental and range safety, safety and health, reliability, maintainability, supportability, and hardware and software quality assurance.

Ground and Training Systems (Factor T-4): (WBS 4.1.8.6, SOW 6, L.14.4.2.4)

Management Area (L.14.4.3)

Program Management (Factor M-1): (WBS 4.1.8.1, SOW 1, L.14.4.3.1)

This includes the evaluation of organizational and management effectiveness, key personnel, management systems integration, metrics, staffing approach, business systems, the subcontracting plan and the extent of participation of Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB) concerns, in accordance with NFS 1815.304 (c)(4)(A), and contractor integration and risk management and the risk list.

Evaluation Criteria

Every factor has criteria for assessment

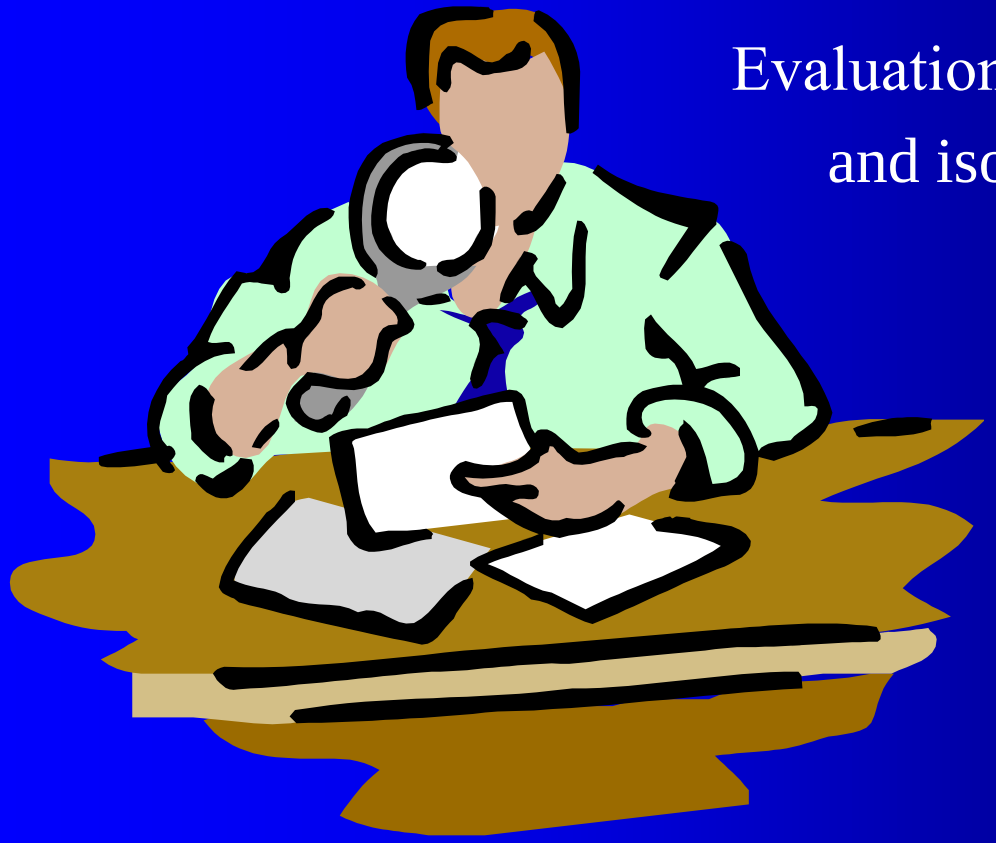
Underlying question: Does the offeror understand the requirements?

Offeror must convince the evaluator that the requirements are understood, and the approach is sound

- Substantiating every claim
- Providing background information
- Tie approach to requirements

The Evaluation

A whole lot of fun now!



Evaluation Team is “sequestered” and isolated

Team has access to advisors and Past Performance sources

The Evaluation

A whole lot of fun now!

Every proposal evaluated separately, w/o comparison

- Strengths, Weaknesses, Score, Risk
- Proposals are not scored relative to each other. No comparison between offerors is permitted

Every factor evaluated separately; Risk assessment may be included in evaluation

- Factors are evaluated and scored by individual team members

Evaluation Team convenes to discuss and reach consensus

- Resulting score is NOT just an average! Score is the result of discussion, argument, persuasion, and debate

Evaluation Consensus

After every proposal evaluated (strengths, weaknesses, score, risk) first "comparison" made between offerors

Comparison looks for consistency in evaluation scores

Evaluation Team reaches final consensus

-- although it may take some time !

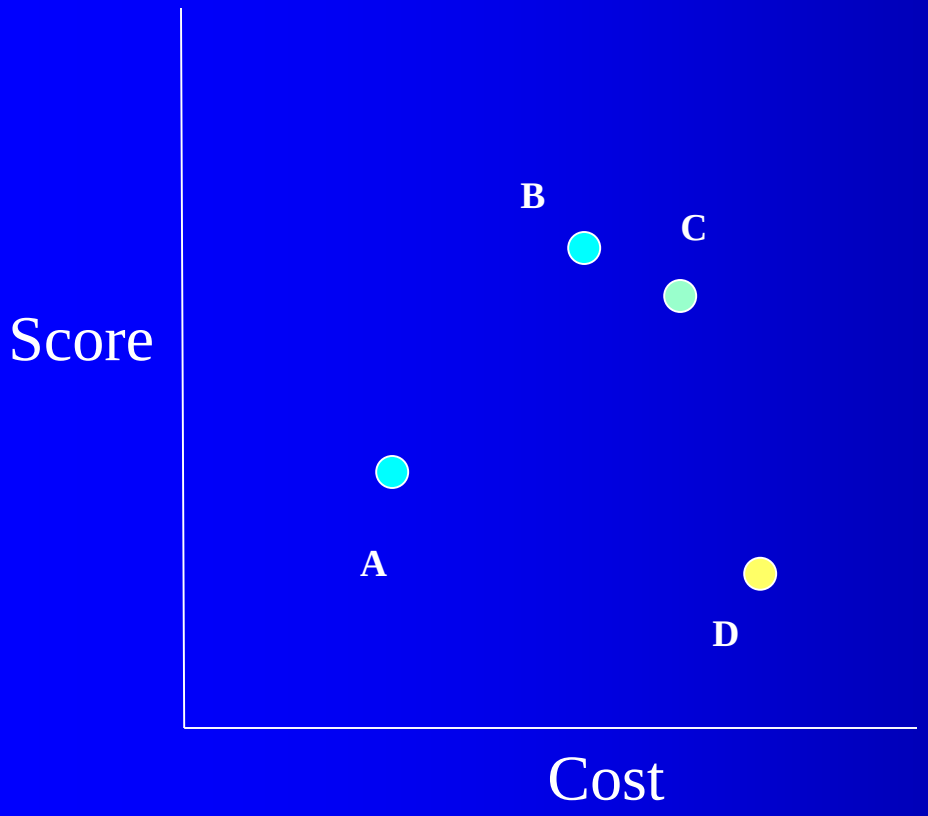
Evaluation Results

(Example)

		Offeror A		Offeror B		Offeror C		Offeror D	
	Weights	Score	Risk	Score	Risk	Score	Risk	Score	Risk
A. Technical									
A.1. Design	20%	6	Low-Med	8	Low-Med	7	Low-Med	3	Med-High
A.2. Deployment	12.5%	5	Low-Med	8	Low	9	Low	4	Med-High
A.3. Transition	7.5%	5	Low-Med	7	Low	6	Low-Med	3	Med-High
A.4. *Use of COTS*	5%	6	Low-Med	7	Low-Med	6	Low-Med	4	Low-Med
A.5 *Software Architecting*	5%	5	Low-Med	6	Low-Med	8	Low-Med	3	Med-High
B. Management									
B.1.Software Management	10.5%	6	Low-Med	7	Low	6	Med-High*	5	Low-Med
B.2. Key Personnel & Relevant Experience	10.5%	5	Med-High	8	Low	6	Low *	3	Med-High
B.3. Program Plan	7.5%	5	Low-Med	6	Low-Med	5	Low-Med	4	Med-High
B.4. Corporate Commitment	1.5%	6	Low	8	Low	8	Low	4	Low-Med
C. Past Performance									
C.1. Corporate Past Performance	7%	6	Low-Med	9	Low	9	Low	5	Low-Med
C.2. Software Management Past Performance	7%	5	Low-Med	6	Low-Med	7	Low	7	Low-Med
C.3. Info Warehouse Past Performance	5%	7	Low-Med	8	Low	8	Low	6	Low-Med
C.4. Cost Control Performance	1%	6	Low	6	Low	5	Low-Med	2	Low-Med
Σ=10 max	100%	5.55		7.43		7		4.035	

Evaluation Process

Cost evaluation combines with non-cost evaluation results for integrated comparison across offers



Results presented to the Source Selection Authority (SSA)

Final Award determined by SSA

Process Integrity

- Evaluation Team must reach consensus on all scores
- All results presented to SSA for decision
- Substantiating information also presented
- Results and basis of award rationale presented to offerors in formal de-briefings

Award Debriefings

- Describes Government's Source Selection Process
- Provides feedback on strengths and weaknesses
- Releases where offeror "finished" compared to awardee
- Provides useful information for future efforts

Remember....

Not an opportunity to challenge Govt's decision

No point by point comparisons

Reminders on Preparing a Successful Proposal

- Be Realistic, Factual, and Specific. Don't talk generalities or in emotional terms. Be able to substantiate all statements, or don't make them.
- Use Appropriate Language; Avoid abbreviations, initials, or jargon. Don't assume the reader will understand your acronyms or abbreviations-follow the rules of grammar.
- Use the right terminology

Reminders on Preparing a Successful Proposal

- Read the Guidelines carefully! Make your proposal fit the projected funding/other requirements.
- Go over the checklist (twice!) and make sure each item is addressed.
- Choose a format that's clear and easy to read. Readers are overloaded with proposals and appreciate legible, attractive proposals. Make sure tables are legible and easy to figure out.

Reminders on Preparing a Successful Proposal

- Stick to the specified number of pages. Extra pages or attachments may either be removed before the proposal is read, or may disqualify your entire proposal from the evaluation process.
- Make sure you include the requested number of copies and in the correct format when submitting your proposal.
- Make sure the cover page is complete, with all the information as requested.

Reminders on Preparing a Successful Proposal

- Do it yourself; teach your own staff about proposal writing. But if you hire a development person or consultant, stay on top of it; proposals exclusively written by development people usually don't make sense because that person isn't familiar with the project.
- Be realistic about the amount of time necessary assemble the proposal
- Plan ahead; allow plenty of time for those involved to meet, discuss, and review progress in the proposal writing process.

Essential Truths

A successful project begins before contract award !