



Improving Your Play Book – Lessons Learned from Proposal Benchmarking

**Presented by
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to
APMP SoCal Chapter Training Camp, 22 October 2010**

Agenda

❑ The Question of High Performance

- What constitutes “world-class performance” in proposal development?

❑ The Practices that Matter

- Are there specific, differentiating practices that lead to consistent, predictable proposal capability?

❑ The Path to Success

- How can companies grow their proposal capability to achieve and sustain benchmark-level results?

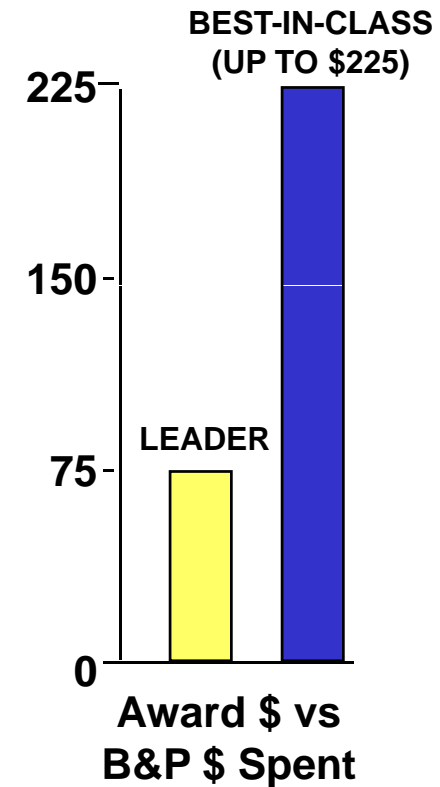
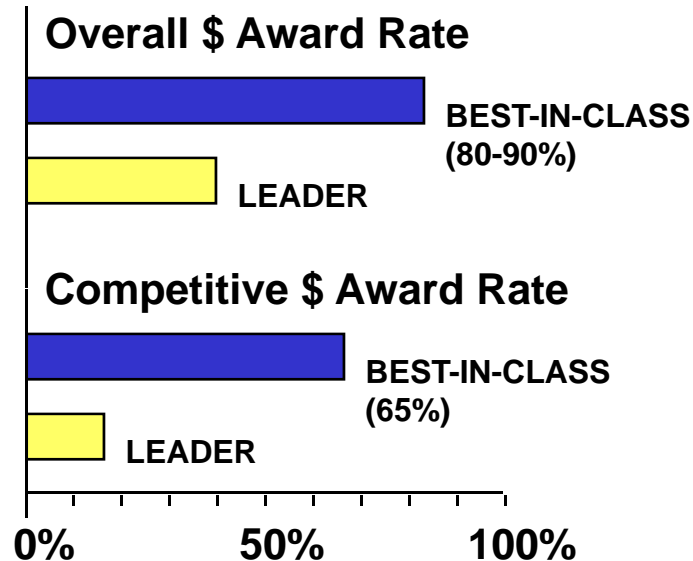
❑ Questions and Discussion

Typical "Best-in-Class" Definitions

- ❑ **Win rate (60-70%, minimum)**
- ❑ **Capture ratio**
 - Overall dollars available for award (80-90%)
 - Dollars available for award from competitive procurements (65%, minimum)
- ❑ **Return on investment**
 - Contract value versus investment (75:1, minimum) or other opportunity cost expended

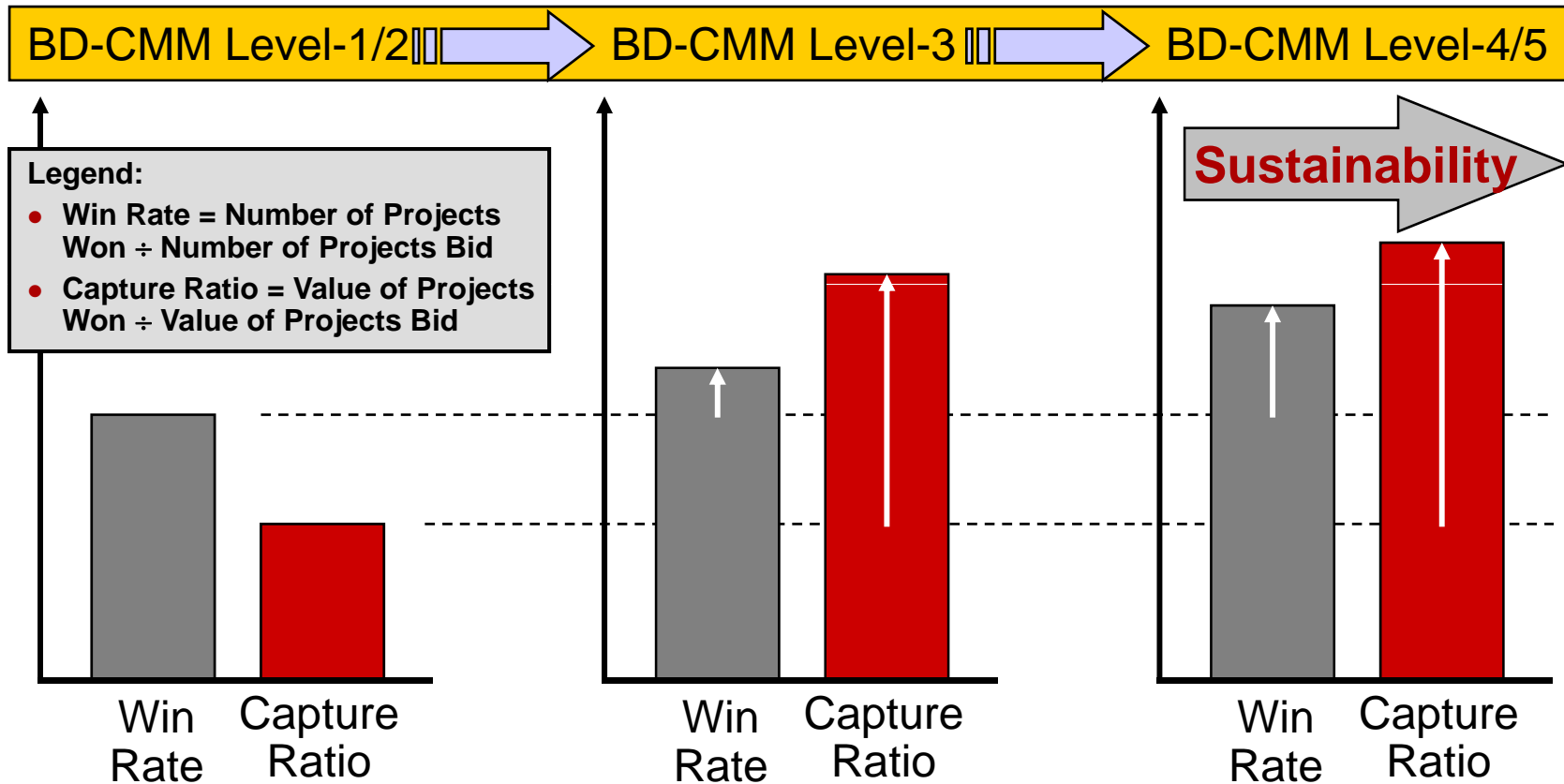
NOTE: All data sources are subject to varying disclosure statements and reporting assumptions

Price-Waterhouse Study



- Conducted during 1990-92
- Encompassed 24 major US corporations

Performance vs Capability Level



Note: Projections based on data collected during APMP Benchmark Study 2002, prior national benchmark studies, and Shipley process consulting experience

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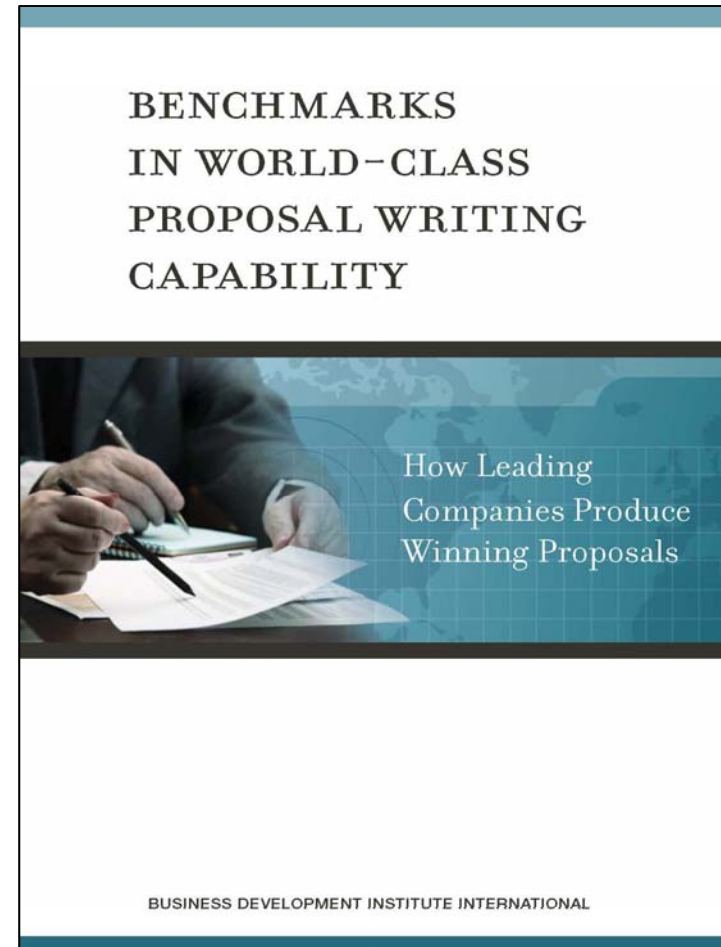
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Insights from Benchmark Study

- ❑ Focused on proposal capability
- ❑ Initial focus on Aerospace and Defense industries
- ❑ Expanded to include other companies serving Federal government
- ❑ Included practices from all industries

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Overview

- ❑ **Total of 180+ practices identified across five areas**
 - Proposal Development Steps
 - Use of Proposal Automation
 - Organizational Constructs
 - Training
 - Other Factors
- ❑ **Briefing 10 highlights today**
- ❑ **Study report can be ordered from BD-Institute website**

Practice #1: Process Guide

Use a Business Development Process Guide

- ❑ **Details the processes and policies associated with the organization's business development process**
- ❑ **Policy level document is key to establishing and maintaining consistency in the proposal process**
- ❑ **Process Guide is institutionalized by appropriate management commitment and active verification**

BD Process Guide is essential for predictable results

Practice #2: Proposal Plan

Use Proposal Plans

- ❑ For major efforts, a Proposal Plan (aka Proposal Management Plan) based on the Capture Plan is prepared and actively maintained for the life of the bid
- ❑ Web and on-line repositories enable distribution and real time updates of Proposal Plan information
- ❑ Sample Proposal Plan templates and web repositories ease the creation of proposal plans and encourage their use on more routine bids

Proposal plans optimize bid expenditures

Practice #3: Proposal Planning Tool

Use a “framework planning tool” in pre-proposal planning - Storyboards, Annotated Outlines or Proposal Maps

- ❑ **Effective organizations institutionalize their framework processes**
- ❑ **Storyboards predominate in collocated environments**
- ❑ **In virtual environments, online tools are used to provide framework capability**

Framework planning tools ensure strategies and themes are communicated clearly

Practice #4: Collaboration Tools

Use Collaborative Environments

- ❑ **Variety of major tools used for collaboration on bid responses**
- ❑ **Comprehensive feature sets**
- ❑ **Successful execution - highly dependent on institutionalization of tool**
- ❑ **Careful alignment of the automation tool and proposal process (mapped to Process Guide)**
- ❑ **Management commitment to universal usage**
- ❑ **Proper funding for training and support**
- ❑ **Integration of the tool in the day-to-day running of the project**
- ❑ **Visible leadership use of the tool**
- ❑ **Tools and templates aligned to institutionalize key practices**

Most tools have appropriate features – success is dependent on commitment to and management of tool

Practice #5: Knowledge Mgmt

Use active Knowledge Management strategies

- ❑ **Varies from repositories of past responses to managed reuse libraries**
- ❑ **Leaders use the concept of an “information item” - the lowest level of content that is likely to be reused**
 - For large-scale developmental bids - an entire section
 - For information that is repeatedly offered – separate structured information items
 - Past performance – highly structured repositories
- ❑ **Dedicated knowledge management staff**
 - Successful large organizations have a dedicated content management team that comprises 5% to 15% of the proposal staff
 - Smaller organizations identify and support role
- ❑ **For highly reusable and Q&A content, structured writing techniques are used to build clear concise content using established persuasive models**

Knowledge management maximizes return on intellectual properties and gives a head start

Practice #6: Professional Writers

Use Professional Writers

❑ Essential to creating compelling, well understood proposals

- Role is more than grammar and syntax
- Layering of complex information creates understanding for all levels of evaluators
- Use of structured information collection designed by professional writers aid the technical experts in providing in-depth information to create compelling content

❑ Enforce standards of persuasion in drafting and finalizing the response

Professional writers ensure that winning messages are effectively communicated

Practice #7: Branding

Use corporate branding standards to create and improve market perception of offering value

- ❑ **More than colors and logos - focus on customer relationships**
- ❑ **Integrated communications plans**
- ❑ **Elevator speech prepared and distributed to team after Gate 1**
- ❑ **External agency monitoring of the brand rating and perceptions within the designated market**

Consistent branding in external communications and proposals is essential

Practice #8: Staffing (1 of 2)

- ❑ Both proposal risk and program risk are high if prerequisites not met
- ❑ Capture plan provides first view of scope and timing of proposal team requirements
- ❑ Proposal Plan updates capture plan view to include tentative assignments, update sizing, identify required budget and schedule
- ❑ Proposal resources (as well as other BD resources) are systematically prioritized for proposals versus other tasks
- ❑ Core team is identified and staffed in pre-proposal phase (Capture, Proposal, Program managers)
- ❑ Core team prepares proposal framework for proposal team before full staffing

Practice #8: Staffing (2 of 2)

- ❑ Full staffing at Kick Off and grows slightly as any gaps are filled
- ❑ After Pink Team, proposal leadership prepares plan for post-Red Team staffing
- ❑ Post-red team staff is reduced

Providing the right staff at the right time is essential for efficiency and team success

Practice #9: Facilities

Use Facilities appropriate for process

❑ Virtual work or telecommuting

- Corporate acceptance and support for virtual work environments for other functions essential for BD virtual work to be successful

❑ Collocated proposal physical facilities create the necessary foundation

- Separate proposal work areas/war rooms

“Facilities” must match process and culture

Practice #10: Training

❑ Cohesive training strategy

- “Graduate” for leaders
- “Undergrad” for practitioners
- Selected courses for contributors
- Just-in-time, OJT, shadowing, mentoring

❑ Project or program managers trained in capture/proposal management



Training must be a multi-layered approach

Complete Results

- ❑ Book Order Information at www.bd-institute.org

"Benchmarks in World-Class Proposal Writing Capability" – Book Now Available!



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**Study addresses key areas
that define world-class capability – process,
automation, training, organizational constructs, and other factors**

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BD-CMM Version 1.0

Key Process Categories	Customer	Focus	People	Capabilities
Themes	Increasing Customer Value	Improving Performance and Synergy	Building Competencies and Teams	Enhancing Systems and Processes
Levels	Key Process Areas (KPAs)			
5 Optimizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Innovation and Transformation 			
4 Managed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Relationship Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enterprise Influence ■ Quantitative Process Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High-Performance Teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Business Development Systems Integration ■ Infrastructure Management
3 Defined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Solution Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organizational Tactics ■ Quality Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organizational Competencies Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Business Development Processes ■ Support Systems
2 Repeatable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Response Generation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Business Development Administration ■ Quality Control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Individual Skills Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sales/Capture Procedures ■ Work Environment
1 Initial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ad Hoc 			

BD-CMM Strategic Objectives



*Developed as a framework,
guide, and path for managing
and improving business
development processes*

- ❑ **Provide a Framework**
 - Description of key elements of business development
- ❑ **Describe a Path**
 - Evolutionary business development improvement path
- ❑ **Give support from a Guide**
 - Key practices for measuring and managing business development performance

BD-CMM Study Framework

Level	Characteristics
5 – Optimizing	Continuous business development process improvement is enabled by quantitative feedback from the process and from piloting innovative ideas and technology.
4 – Managed	Detailed measures of the business development process and results are collected. Both the process and products are quantitatively understood and controlled.
3 – Defined	Process for business development activities is documented, standardized, and integrated into the organization. All activities follow an approved, tailored version of the organization’s standard process.
2 - Repeatable	Basic business development management processes are established to track cost, schedule, and functionality. The necessary process discipline is in place to repeat earlier successes
1 - Initial	Process is characterized as ad hoc , and occasionally even chaotic. Few processes are defined, and success depends on individual effort and heroics.

Increasing Customer Value

BD-CMM Levels	KPC: Customer
	Theme: Increasing Customer Value
5. Optimizing	■ Innovation and Transformation
4. Managed	■ Relationship Management
3. Defined	■ Solution Development
2. Repeatable	■ Response Generation
1. Initial	■ Ad Hoc

- ❑ Increasing recognition of the customer as the basis for competitive discrimination
- ❑ Growing reliance on value propositions as the basis for customer interactions
- ❑ Decreasing reliance on proposals as focus for winning in favor of solutions and innovations as bases for increasing value

Improving Performance and Synergy

BD-CMM Levels	KPC: Focus
	Theme: Improving Performance and Synergy
5. Optimizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Innovation and Transformation
4. Managed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enterprise Influence ■ Quantitative Process Management
3. Defined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organizational Tactics ■ Quality Management
2. Repeatable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ BD Administration ■ Quality Control
1. Initial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ad Hoc

- ❑ Progression from reactive to proactive management involvement
- ❑ Increasing leadership role of the BD management team
- ❑ Growing influence of BD-related perspectives and needs on the process of running the business
- ❑ Increasing reliance on data and emerging needs as drivers in management decision-making

Building Competencies and Teams

BD-CMM Levels	KPC: People
	Theme: Building Competencies & Teams
5. Optimizing	■ Innovation and Transformation
4. Managed	■ High-Performance Teams
3. Defined	■ Organizational Competencies Development
2. Repeatable	■ Individual Skills Development
1. Initial	■ Ad Hoc

- ❑ Increasingly sophisticated interactions within teams to promote winning solutions and long-term value
- ❑ Decreasing reliance on “heroes” in favor of broader organizational competence
- ❑ Growing emphasis on learning organizations as competitive drivers

Enhancing Systems and Processes

BD-CMM Levels	KPC: Capabilities
	Theme: Enhancing Systems and Processes
5. Optimizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Innovation and Transformation
4. Managed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ BD System Integration ■ Infrastructure Mgmt
3. Defined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sales/Capture Processes ■ Support Systems
2. Repeatable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sales/Capture Procedures ■ Work Environment
1. Initial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ad Hoc

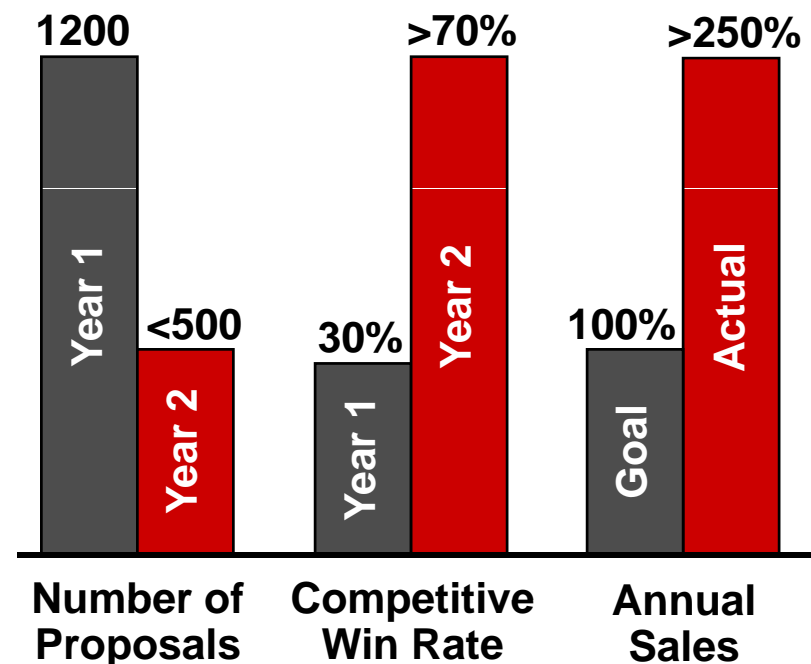
- ❑ Increasing use of resources and infrastructure to improve competitive performance
- ❑ Growing capabilities based on meaningful systems and processes that continuously evolve in response to competitive environments
- ❑ Increasingly sophisticated levels of integration of BD with enterprise systems

A Case Study in Transformation

Managed Implementation:

- ❑ **Mid-size company in the Washington DC area**
 - IT services industry
 - Federal, state, and local government markets
- ❑ **Aggressive growth targets**
- ❑ **Broad-based process development in partnership with Shipley**
- ❑ **Effort begun in January 2003**
- ❑ **Implemented BD-CMM**
 - Level 1 in January 2003
 - Level 3 by end of July 2003 (not certified)

Results:



For details, see presentation "Leading-Edge Results: Commitment to Capability Beyond Just Process" at www.bd-institute.org/conference/conference_event.html

Key Actions... Multiple Fronts

- ❑ Process
- ❑ Funding of capture/proposals
- ❑ People
- ❑ Technology Support
- ❑ Rewards

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For additional information:

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