



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Writing Persuasive Federal Proposals

Day 1
OST Bid & Proposal Academy
Course

www.ostglobalsolutions.com

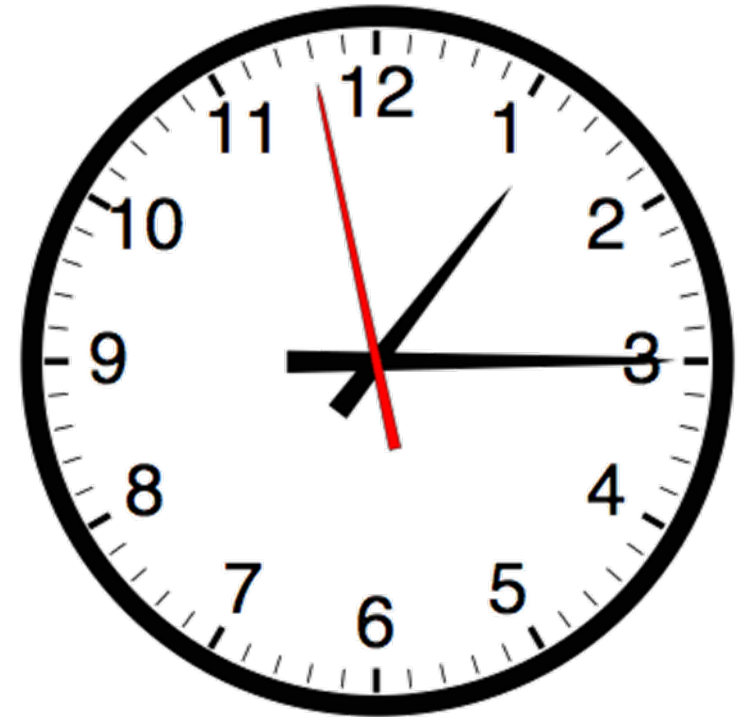
Agenda



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



- 09:00 – 10:30 AM Training
- 10:30 – 10:45 AM Break
- 10:45 AM – 12:00 PM Training
- 12:00 – 01:00 PM Lunch Break
- 01:00 PM – 02:45 PM Training
- 02:45 PM – 03:00 PM Break
- 03:00 PM – 04:00 PM Training
- 04:00 PM – 05:00 PM Flex



Please, give yourself the benefit of focus and limit email and use of cell phones to breaks

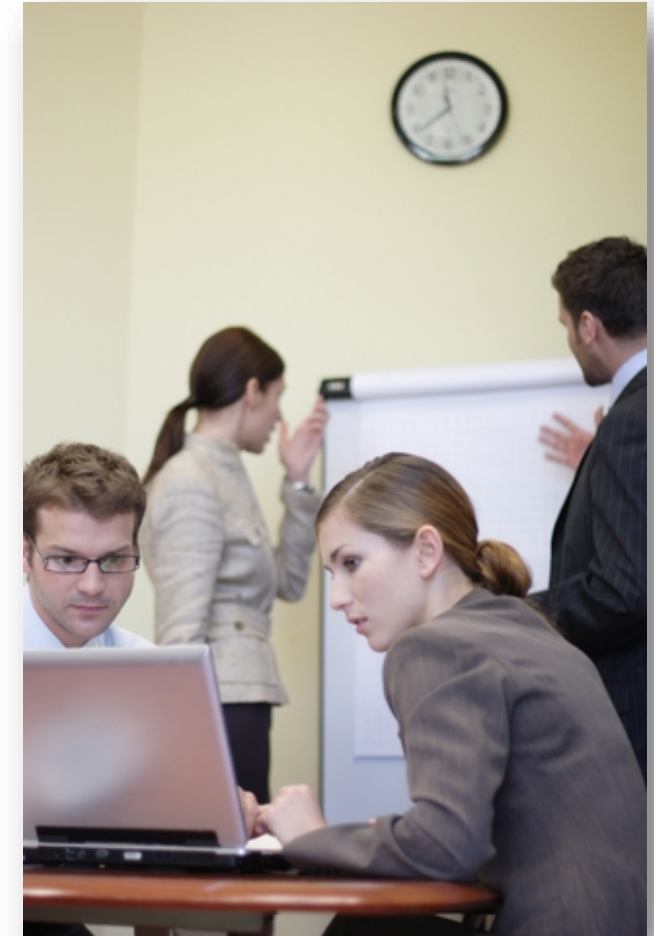
How to Maximize the Learning Process



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



- How adults learn:
 - Understand WHY things work a certain way
 - Participate in exercises
 - Ask questions
 - Relate the material to your own experience
 - Take notes
- Bring up topics of interest to your job
- Move around during exercises



Introductions – Who is Who



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



HELLO
my name is

Max

- Your Name, Position, Company
- An interesting fact about your life
- Your experience writing proposals
- What are you looking to get out of this training?



Module 1

Class Roadmap and Three Elements of the
Proposal Speed Writing System

Can You Relate to Any of These?



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



You have taken a step to gain advantage over majority of your competitors who are using outdated techniques and tools for writing

- Have you pulled one too many all-nighters rewriting otherwise atrocious proposal sections?
- Do you want to manage or write proposals more efficiently so that they don't occupy so much of your time?
- Do you struggle, or see others in your organization struggle, with writer's block where it comes to proposals?
- Do you dislike writing wholesale?
- Do you want to gain professional skills (or know how to teach others those skills) in ensuring your sections are both compliant and highly compelling so that your proposals win?



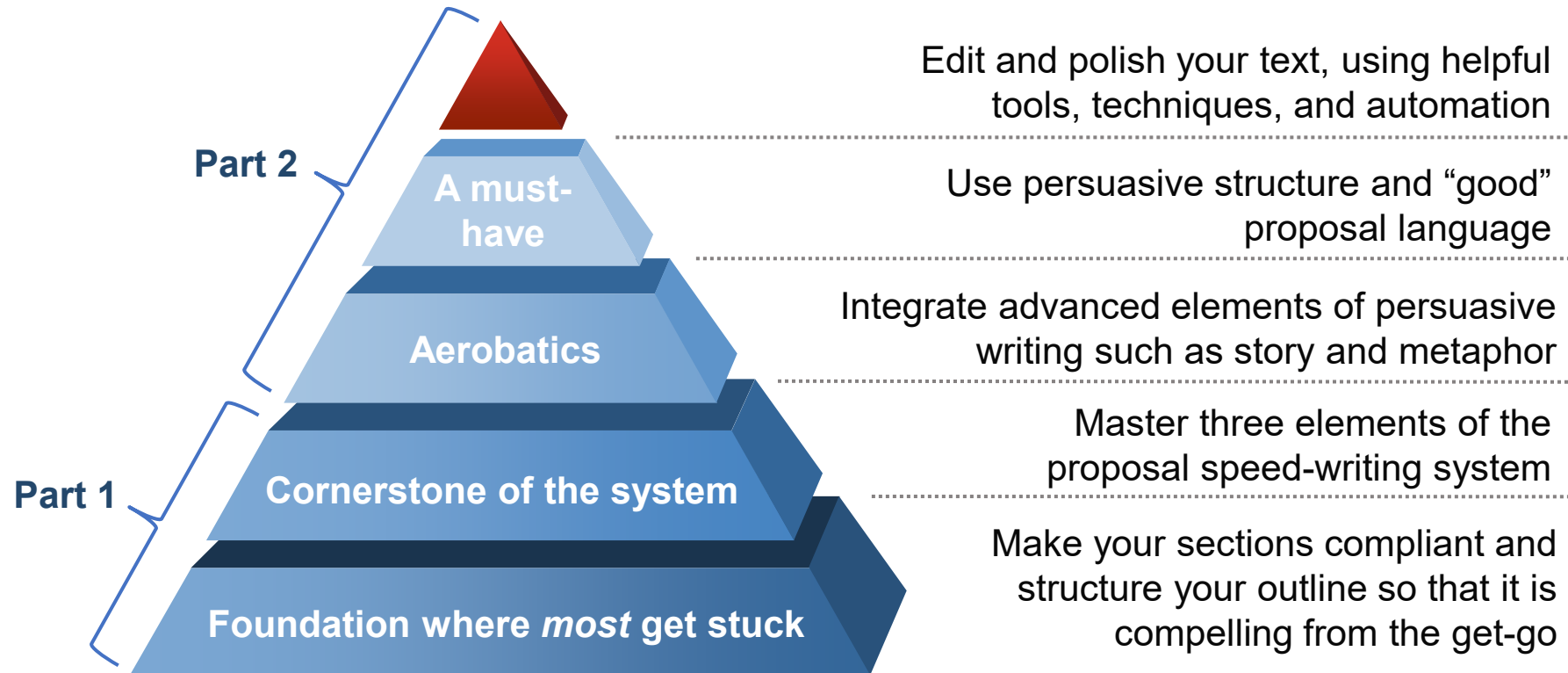
Class Roadmap



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



This class covers basic and advanced elements of proposal writing, and offers you hands-on workshop elements to practice them in real time



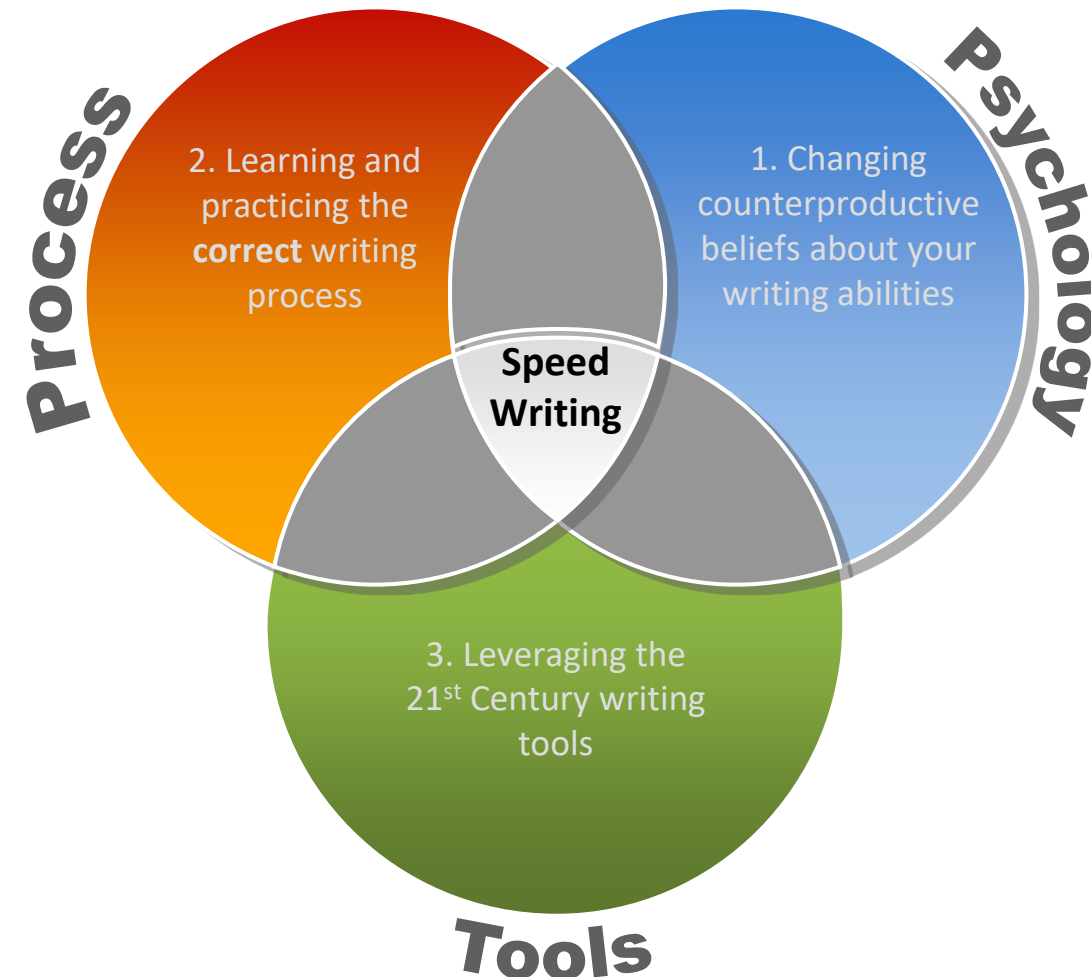
Three Elements of the Proposal Speed Writing System



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



All three must be present to ensure the most efficient and enjoyable proposal writing process





OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Please, Complete an Assignment
for **Module 1** Prior to Proceeding
to the Next Module

Module 3 Quiz: Speed Writing System



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



- Three elements of the proposal writing system are:
 - ☐ a. 1. Process, 2. People, 3. Psychology
 - ☐ b. 1. Process, 2. Psychology, 3. Tools
 - ☐ c. 1. Tools, 2. Process, 3. Counterproductive Beliefs
- What has the proposal writing process been like for you?





Module 2

A Close Look at Compliance

The Foundation for Proposal Sections: Compliant and Compelling



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Before we dive into the Three Elements, let's look at compliance closely

- Compliance gets you in the door
 - Non-compliant sections get your proposal in the trash can or simply lower your score
 - Compliant sections make your proposal barely passable
- Compliance will not win you a proposal
- Compelling is what counts AFTER you are compliant
- Being persuasive within the bounds of being compliant is the tough part in writing government proposals



A Frustrated Evaluator

Getting Your Section Compliant

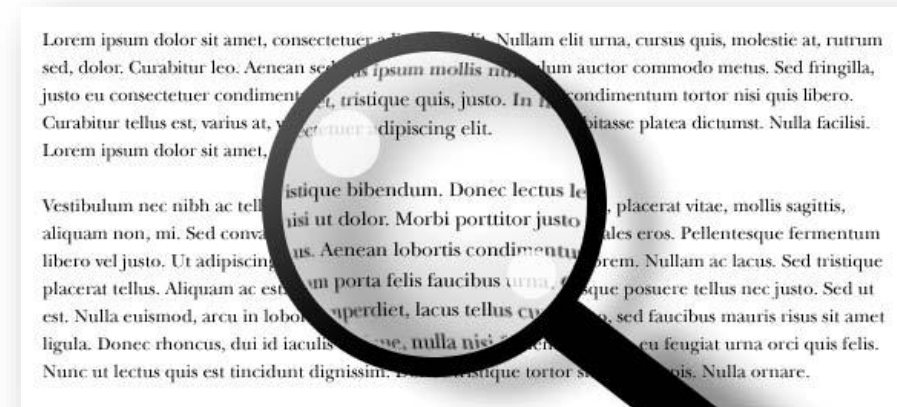


OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Note that this course is not about outlining the whole proposal, it is about outlining within sections – but it will make your outlines better for the entire proposal

- **Analyze the RFP requirements**
- **Remember that RFP doesn't have requirements in one neat package – they come from different places**
- **Determine which sections “intersect” where it comes to the requirements and double-check the proposal manager's decisions**
- **Don't get hung up on the Statement of Work section headings – they are often misleading – carefully read what's being requested**
- **Pull together the requirements in the section**
- **Determine the overall focus (top-down)**
- **Then look at the key words (bottom-up)**



Here is an Example of How to Find Key Words



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Note that there are several different possible keyword combinations and ways to outline the section

Section L: Describe a qualified on-site support team availability to support testing during regular operations and surges.

Summarize your approach for supporting all test needs using personnel, tools, and systems, as described in the SOO.

- **Go Slow**
- **Men at Work**
- **Go**
- **Slow Men at Work**



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Please, Complete an Assignment
for **Module 2** Prior to Proceeding
to the Next Module

Module 2 Exercise: Compliance Phrases



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



*See Word File: Writing Assignment for Exercises: Just Page 1 of the sheet, **not Page 2** – we will use it later in another exercise)*

- Analyze the RFP requirements from Sections L (proposal instructions), M (evaluation criteria), C (Statement of Objectives), and H (Special Contract Requirements)
- Determine the overall focus of the section (what it is about)
- Highlight the key words and pull them out as bullets in a section outline (your practice section is 2 pages total – don't need to number subsections)
- Notice different possible logical groupings of key words
- How did you decide to group your key phrases to tell the story and why?

OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS

CASE STUDY FOR EXERCISES
Bid & Proposal Academy's Writing Persuasive
Federal Proposals

Exercise Instructions: Analyze requirements, outline, and develop a section up to 2 pages in length. Font requirements: 12-point Times New Roman font, 10 Arial Narrow font for graphics, single-spaced, 1-inch margins.

RFP Requirements

Section L: Describe a qualified on-site support team availability to support testing during regular operations and surges. Summarize your approach to supporting all test needs using personnel, tools, and systems, as described in the SOO.

Section M: The degree to which qualified personnel is available at the minimum 95% of the required staffing level, to meet day-to-day operations and surge demands. Ability to run tests efficiently using the existing test bed facility.

SOO: 2.3.5 Task 5 – Qualified, On-Site Support Team

To support its network security software testing effort, FEMA requires the following:

- Sufficient number of highly skilled, experienced network engineers, system administrators, and domain administrators not only for routine operations, but to support surges in activity.
- Ability to respond promptly to all test needs throughout the test process.
- A trouble ticket system to track assistance requests.

Section H:

Network engineer: Oversees the installation, configuration, testing, and maintenance of networked information systems. Minimum 5 years of experience. Desired certifications: MCSE, CCNA, or CCNP. Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science, Information Technology or similar field.

System Administrator: Responsible for the design, installation, configuration, administration, tuning, and optimization servers, networks, and related software and components. Minimum 3 years of experience. Desired Certifications: MCSA. Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science, Information Technology or similar field.

Domain Administrator: Missing description.

1 | Page

Copyright 2009-2020 OST Global Solutions, Inc. – Because There is No Second Place in Proposals™ Tel: 301-384-3350 • Web: www.ostglobalsolutions.com



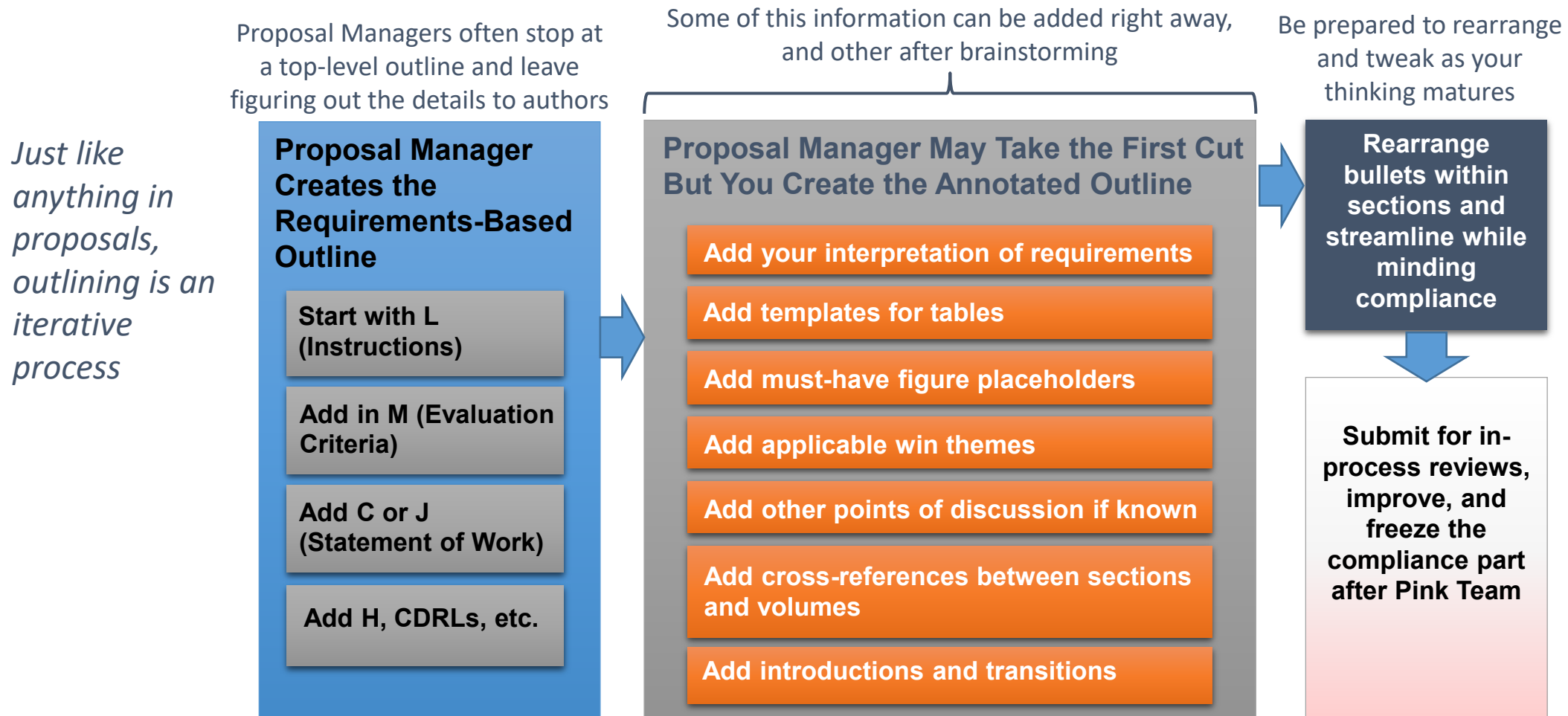
Module 3

Outlining a Compliant Proposal Section

Annotating Your Section



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Points to Keep in Mind



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Rules of outlining within the section are less strict than those for outlining between sections

- At the top level, try to present the major points in order as they appear in the requirements
- WITHIN the section, often you don't absolutely have to follow the order of the requirements
- You can tell a better story, even if it entails changing the order of the key words
- The most important thing is to ensure that nothing gets overlooked, and you don't end up with "orphan" requirements
- You may want to "bold" the key words for ease of navigation



Infuse the Section Flow



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



*Design the proper paragraph flow for greater persuasion – to make your sections **compelling** by design; use 8Ws to guide the paragraph flow*

Higher level summary sections - X or X.X outline levels

Why: Customer problem, challenge, or key risk factor behind the requirement

What: What do we propose to do in response to the requirement?

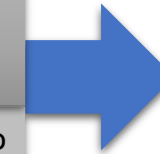
Who: Who exactly is going to do this part of work, by name and title?

How: Step-by-step approach with benefits to the customer and risk mitigation

When: In what sequence we are going to do it per schedule, or when have we done it before?

Where: Indicate the location or facility, or say where we have done it before successfully

Wow: Powerful section conclusion



Lower level sections for X.X.X levels and further down

Only if you have room:
Why

What, Who, and How

Only if you have room:
When, Where and Wow

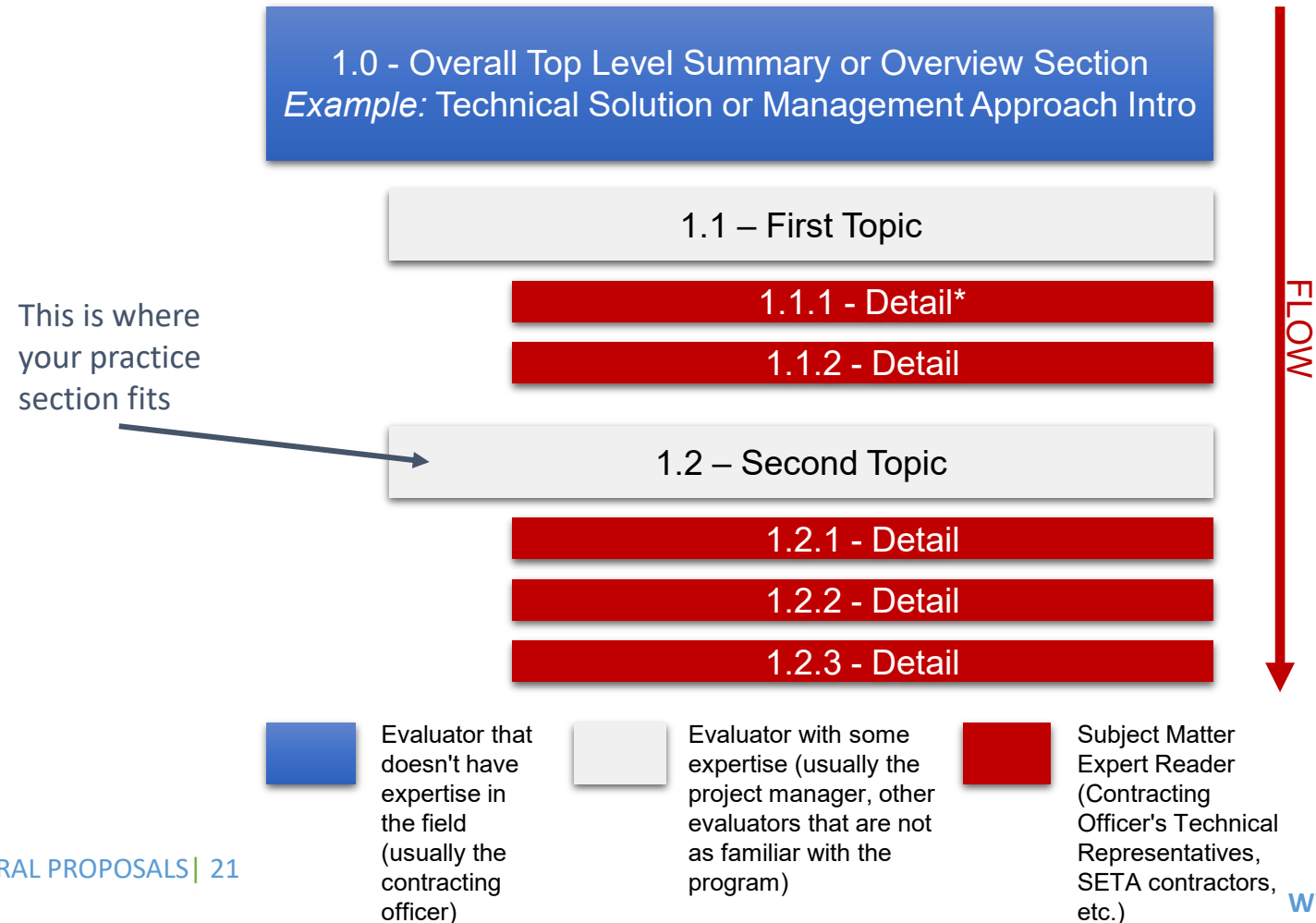
Proposal Level Section Flow



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



If the RFP permits, go from general to specific, and from an overview to greater detail



Determine Where Your Section Fits in the Overall Proposal Flow

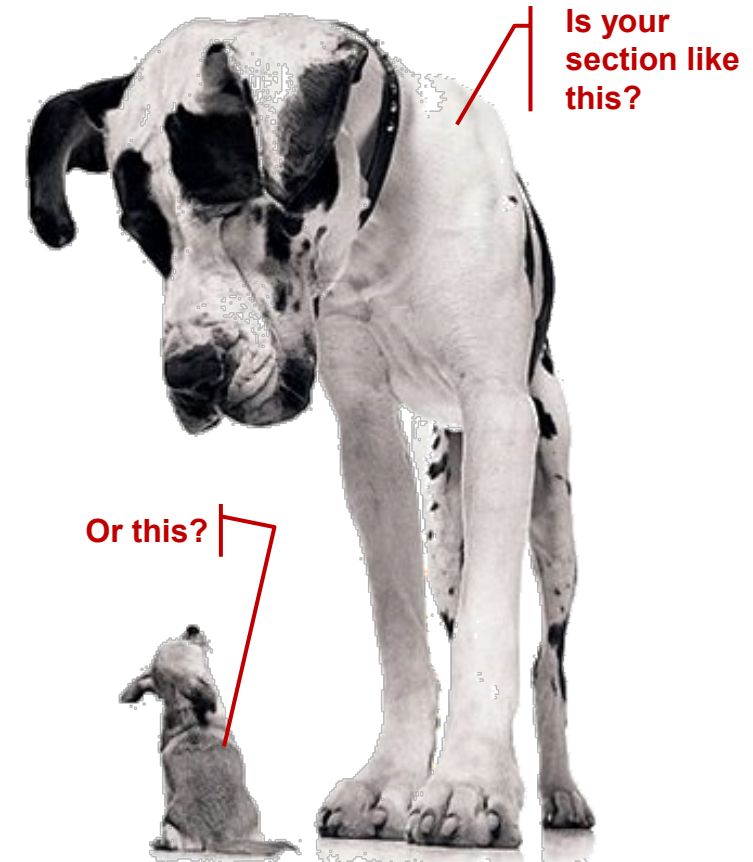


OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



This helps you determine the focus of your section, and the level of detail

- The level of detail depends on where your section is in the proposal outline
 - Examine the outline and determine your section's hierarchy
- Know your page count allocation
- Sometimes you cannot afford to address every single key word
- You need to figure out how to group the requirements in reasonable “chunks” that you can address together
- Determine what other sections (and authors) you have to coordinate with





OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Please, Complete an Assignment
for **Module 3** Prior to Proceeding
to the Next Module

Module 3 Exercise: Outlining and Annotating



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Laws of speed writing don't apply at the whole proposal level; they don't even apply at the annotated outline level; they become useful at the heart of each section

- Finish outlining your section
- Annotate your section
 - Add content notes
 - Add tables and raw graphic concepts
- Notice where you reach the limits of where you can take your section without further brainstorming and decisions
- After this step, once your outlining stops, the laws of speed-writing begin to apply





Module 4

Element 1: Psychology

Element 1 of the Proposal Speed Writing System



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



- Mental blocks lower our ability to do anything: if we believe we can't, we can't
- Psychology matters: most elite athletes, successful actors, or high-performing business executives have coaches that focus on psychology of performance
- Mental state is key to achieving the height of human abilities
- Changing the psychology and unhelpful beliefs about writing transforms you and your proposal team



Questions to Uncover Self-Limiting Beliefs About Writing

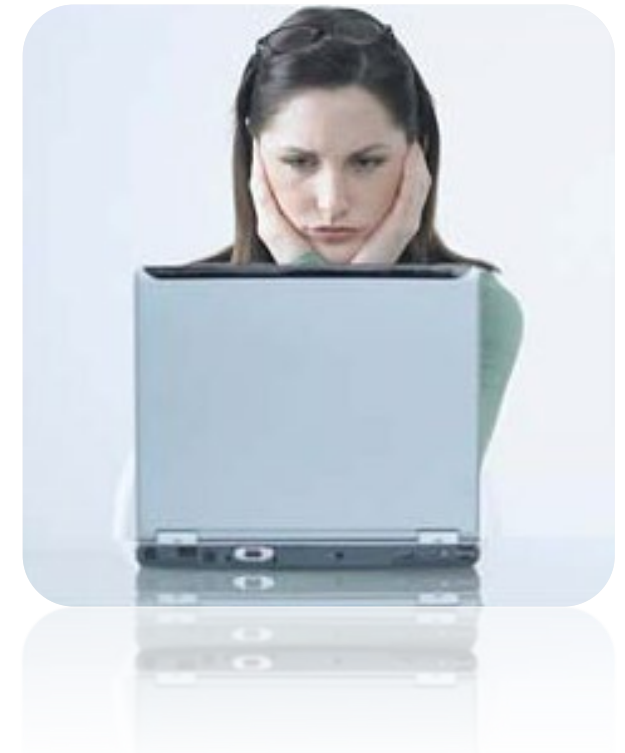


OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Even if you are a willing and able writer, knowing how to deal with people's self-limiting beliefs will transform the nature of your proposal work

- Do you believe you are not good at writing?
 - Has someone else told you this or is there a “voice” in your head judging you?
 - What specifically makes you feel that you are not good?
- Do you feel like a writing or even an intellectual fraud?
- Do you just simply dislike writing but will write well if needed?
- OR... Do you believe you are a good writer and can even enjoy it but inevitably procrastinate and dread writing anyway?



Overcoming the Initial Blocks



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



It is amazing how quickly we got stereotyped as kids and how we perpetuate these stereotypes years later

- Most myths about writing come from early education experiences
- Believe there are the anointed ones for whom writing is a birthright (unlike us):
 - “Special people” with the soul of a poet who are clever at their use of words (may wear a French beret hat)
 - Have large vocabularies with the right adjectives to define anything
 - Are “artistic” and “creative”
- Few were taught the correct process for transforming **thought** into **written word**
- Many were punished with a perpetual “C” in English
- Most adult writing classes are **about editing** and hence don’t work



“C”

Dispelling the Myths About Writing



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Remember: if you can think and talk, you can write (ability to talk is optional)

- Proposal writing **does not** require exceptional talent
- Passion is conveyed through:
 - Clear plans, customer knowledge, facts, and proof
 - ...Not the clever wording and large vocabularies
- Negative self-talk is more common than you would imagine
 - Most everyone with critical thinking abilities questions and criticizes themselves ... a lot
 - Don't need to get to the root of it: just recognize the voice and decide to silence it whenever it comes up
 - Temporary silencing is perfectly OK



Getting Down to Specifics is the Only Way to Help



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Let's explore: What do you and/or your writers SPECIFICALLY dislike about writing?

- ☐ The typing itself or the challenge of putting thoughts into words?
- ☐ The effort of organizing the ideas into a logical order?
- ☐ The writing not well-connected to what you are trying to say?
- ☐ Appearing to be "padding" to fill the pages after getting the basic idea across?
- ☐ Failing to find the right words?
- ☐ Seeing too many connections so it's hard to structure the thoughts or focus?
- ☐ Fear of seeming incompetent or not as smart when your section doesn't come out quite as intended?
- ☐ The dread of how long the writing takes, and how much time this proposal is going to steal out of your life?

Dealing with the Dislike of Typing or Translating Thoughts Into Words...

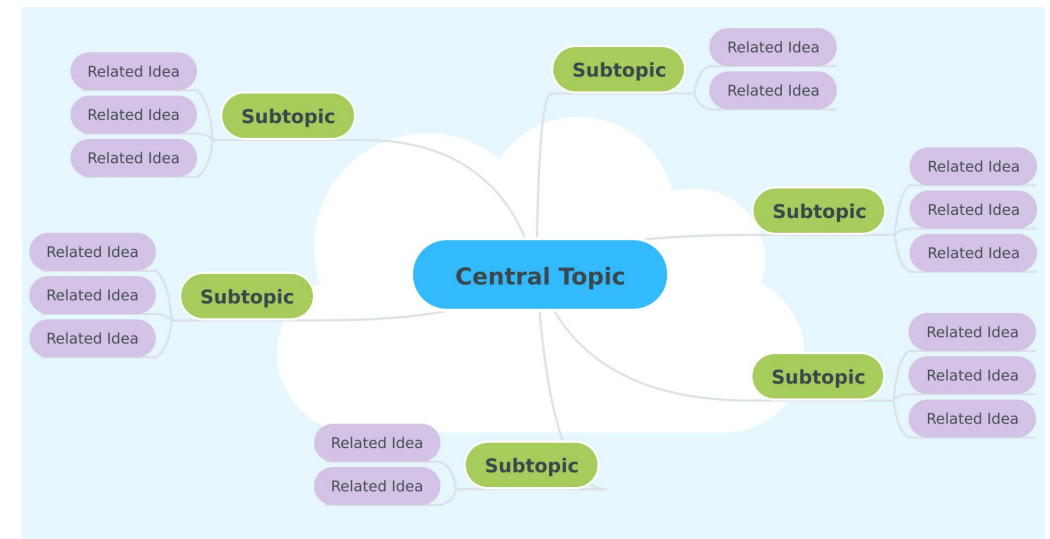


OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



There are tools to help you or your writers through both difficult blocks

- When it is a dislike of typing:
 - Assign another writer to interview
 - Use voice to text apps
- When it's a hard time translating thoughts into words:
 - Get away from outlining
 - Master mind mapping techniques
 - Work even with severe learning disabilities
 - Don't require precise "words" – concepts, associations, or pictures are OK as a first pass
 - Accept it may be a slightly longer process



When It is Hard to Organize the Ideas into a Logical Order

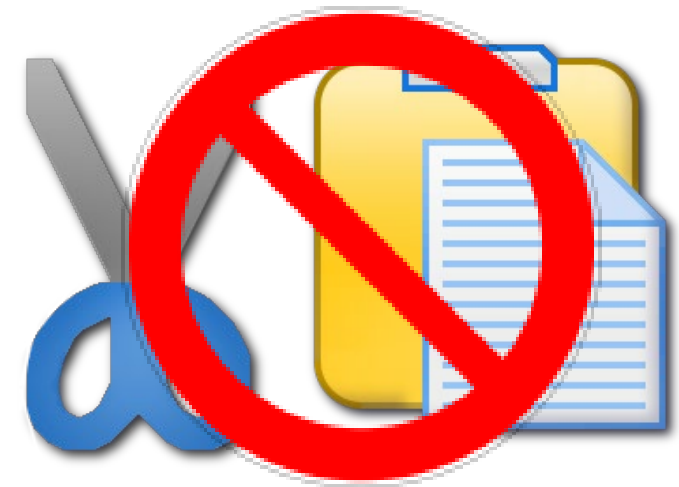


OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



*The biggest problem for people who have this issue is the temptation to cut and paste; they usually **drown** in a sea of text*

- Avoid cutting and pasting wholesale
 - Use a hard copy print out of boilerplate sections to stimulate ideas
 - The less text to wade through, the better
- Use the 8Ws sequence to:
 - Sort out who does what to whom and why
 - Answer questions about every aspect of the problem
 - Use pre-built section flow to develop your first draft
- Prioritize your mind maps or use UNO or Rico Clusters to figure out the hierarchy of ideas when brainstorming



If the Writing is Not Well-Connected to What You are Trying to Say

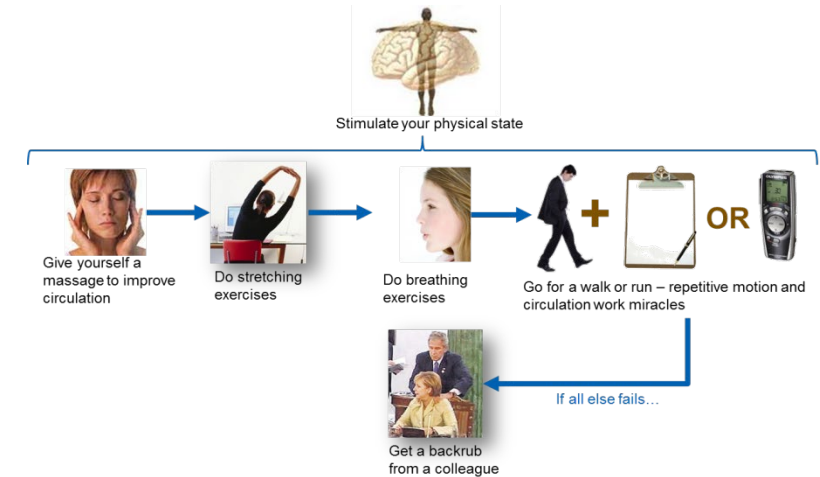


OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Some of the blocks are tough but it doesn't mean they don't have a solution

- Get your thoughts together first, **before** starting to write; don't skip the brainstorming
 - What is the approach?
 - What are you going to say?
- **Picture an evaluator** clearly in your head while writing – what are you trying to convey?
- Be ready to **edit radically** if you are verbose
- Experiment with **images and flowcharts**:
 - Write an entire thought or idea in pictures
 - Make the pictures as simple as possible
 - Draw the pictures almost as if you were writing a sentence
 - Run your pictorial by others and have them talk through it
 - Get rid of anything extra from the pictures that doesn't help



What if You Feel Like You are “Padding” to Fill the Pages After Getting the Basic Idea Across?



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Padding is good in contact sports but not so good in writing

- Put more emphasis on developing content and brainstorming: have more things to say rather than saying the same thing repeatedly
- Know that it is possible to tell a meaningful and elaborate story even about the simplest of things if you think through it well
 - Answer all the 8Ws
 - Explore the WHY and the HOW in detail
 - Tell anecdotes of past performance and customer “kudos”



Failing to Find the Right Words



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Remember – knowing what to say is half the battle – if you stick to nouns, verbs, and assorted facts, there will be no room to worry whether the words are “right”

- Remember – power writing is about nouns and verbs
- Adjectives and adverbs are there for specific descriptions
 - **Red** car vs. state-of-the-art car
- Issue a list of action verbs appropriate for proposals
- Use pictorials and flowcharts – start with section graphics first
- Don't focus on the craft of writing – just convey the content
- Finding the right words for proposals is overrated



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS

EIGHTY PROPOSAL POWER VERBS – HANDOUT

The usual proposal language, called “proposalese,” is weak and boring. See for yourself:

“Our outstanding team of engineers with reputation for world-class service can provide innovative and flexible solutions to ensure that the government receives unparalleled comprehensive maintenance support at all times and can utilize the facility on a 24x7 basis.”

We can point out multiple problems with this sentence, but we will pick the biggest offender of all—the excessive use of adjectives. For those of you who don't remember grammar well, adjectives are words that answer such questions as *What kind? How much? How many? Which one? and Whose?*

Adjective-holics believe that real writers have a special talent to draw on their rich vocabularies to pick the perfect words to describe something well. They tend to say, “I can't understand it, but it sounds so good!” So, they pack those adjectives into a proposal like sardines. In the sentence above, the writer managed to stuff more than a half-dozen adjectives! We are sure he or she believed it sounded good...

The truth is, certain superlatives that appear in many proposals and marketing materials, such as “world-class” or “outstanding”, instantly send a negative message to the evaluator. So do multiple adjectives in the same sentence or paragraph. The unintended message is something like “I revel in unsubstantiated puffery to impress you—I am full of hot air.”

Adjectives are useful only when the noun or verb alone cannot convey the specific meaning that the adjective adds. When you describe an “uninterrupted flow,” for example, the word “flow” alone is not enough to convey the meaning. Better yet, whenever you can, quantify your nouns rather than qualifying them—instead of describing *What kind?* and *Which?*, state *How much?* and *How many?* Otherwise, ruthlessly cut the adjectives and your proposals are sure to benefit.

The most powerful proposal text comes from sticking to nouns and verbs. Finding good nouns may be easier—you usually know what you deliver. It is the verbs where everyone struggles. We have seen proposals with only four verbs other than the various forms of the verb “to be”: **provide, ensure, utilize** (the word we despise), and **bring**.

1 | Page

Copyright 2009-2020 OST Global Solutions, Inc. – Because There is No Second Place in Proposals™ Tel: 301-384-3350 • Web: www.ostglobalsolutions.com

Fear of Seeming Incompetent When Your Section Doesn't Come Out Quite as Intended



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



This is a consequence of psychology impeding our ability to write

- A direct result of the “voices” and the impostor syndrome
- Rejoice in knowing that first drafts are almost NEVER perfect
- You only technically WRITE the first draft (the rest is editing)
- Talk out the section with someone BEFORE you begin to write, to gain confidence in what you have to say
- When in doubt, check if you answered all the “W” questions, and don’t focus on the act of writing



The Dread of How Much Time This Proposal is Going to Steal from Your Life



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Many people don't write well because they dislike the very idea of how long it takes; but the correct writing process and writing in short intervals work miracles

- Writing doesn't have to take hours; hence no need to procrastinate because of the state of overwhelm and dread
- Don't try to schedule "one solid day" or another large time slot for writing – it is hard to pull off and is unnecessary
- Schedule instead short periods of time throughout the day
 - Go for 15-20 minute intervals
 - If you feel like continuing after you got yourself started, do so
- Use your smart phone timer, and turn off the distractions such as email and phone



Where Dealing with Psychology Fits in the Proposal Process

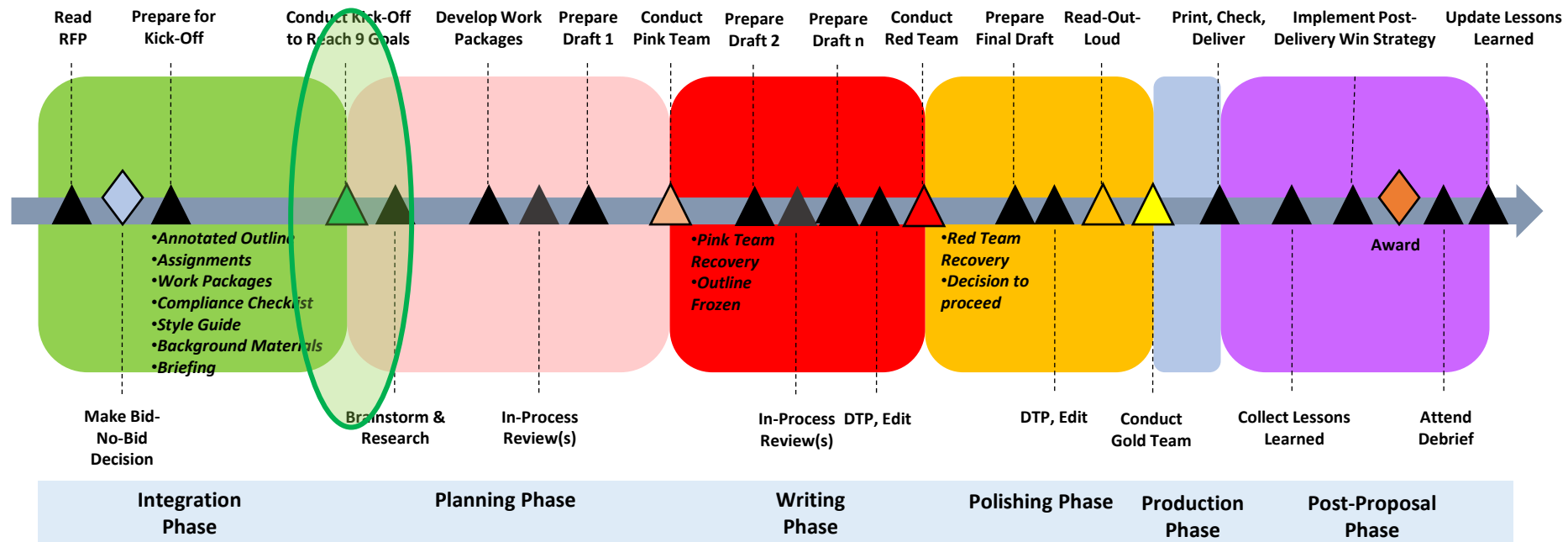


OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



You can dedicate a small part of your kickoff to dealing with psychology of writing

Predecessor: Capture Process



Successor: Project Delivery Process that Includes Capture of Additional Scope and Projects



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Please, Complete an Assignment
for **Module 4** Prior to Proceeding
to the Next Module

Module 4 Quiz



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



- Use of boilerplate helps especially when you have a hard time organizing ideas into logical order. It can speed up the process.
 - ☐ a. True
 - ☐ b. False

- When your brain is faster than your typing fingers, and it frustrates you, the best strategies include:
 - ☐ a. 1. Using someone else to interview you, 2. Using voice to text tools.
 - ☐ b. 1. Brainstorming more, 2. Answering the 8Ws.
 - ☐ c. All of the above.
 - ☐ d. None of the above.



Module 5

Element 2: The Correct Writing Process

Centers in Brain Hemispheres Are Responsible for Different Tasks



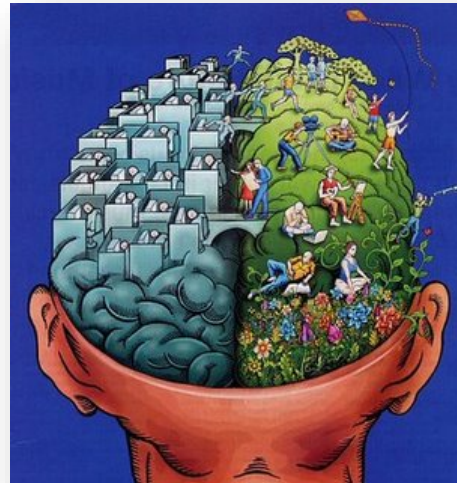
OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Processes details of visible objects

Plays a major role in grammar and decoding literal meaning

Logical, sequential, rational, analytical, objective, and focused on parts



Those stuck in the traffic jam in corpus callosum (connecting the hemispheres) will take longer to complete tasks

Processes overall shape of objects

Plays a role in understanding verbal metaphors and decoding indirect or implied meaning

Creative, random, intuitive, holistic, synthesizing, subjective, and focused on wholes

The Correct Writing Process



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS

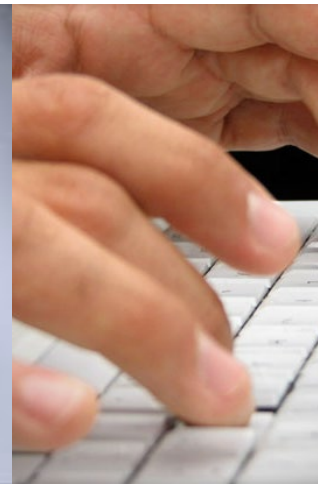


The act of writing requires the shortest period of time in the writing process



40%

**Research and
Brainstorming**



20%

Writing



40%

**Rewriting and
Editing**

- Three distinct stages: when skipped or tackled out of order, they make writing painful and time-consuming
- Mixing is the mother of all writer's block because of how narrow the bridges are between the hemispheres



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Please, Complete an Assignment
for **Module 5** Prior to Proceeding
to the Next Module

Module 5 Quiz



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



- Where are the centers you are primarily using when you are generating ideas during brainstorming?
 - ☐ a. Right hemisphere
 - ☐ b. Left hemisphere
- Where are the centers you are primarily using when you are editing?
 - ☐ a. Right hemisphere
 - ☐ b. Left hemisphere
- What happens when you mix the stages of writing?
 - ☐ a. You experience writer's block
 - ☐ b. You are stuck in the "traffic jam" in the corpus collosum
 - ☐ c. All of the above are correct



Module 6

Stage 1: Research, Brainstorming, Planning
Brainstorming in a Group

Stage 1: Research, Brainstorming, Planning



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Planning is the most important portion of writing – if it doesn't go well, the writing process will stall

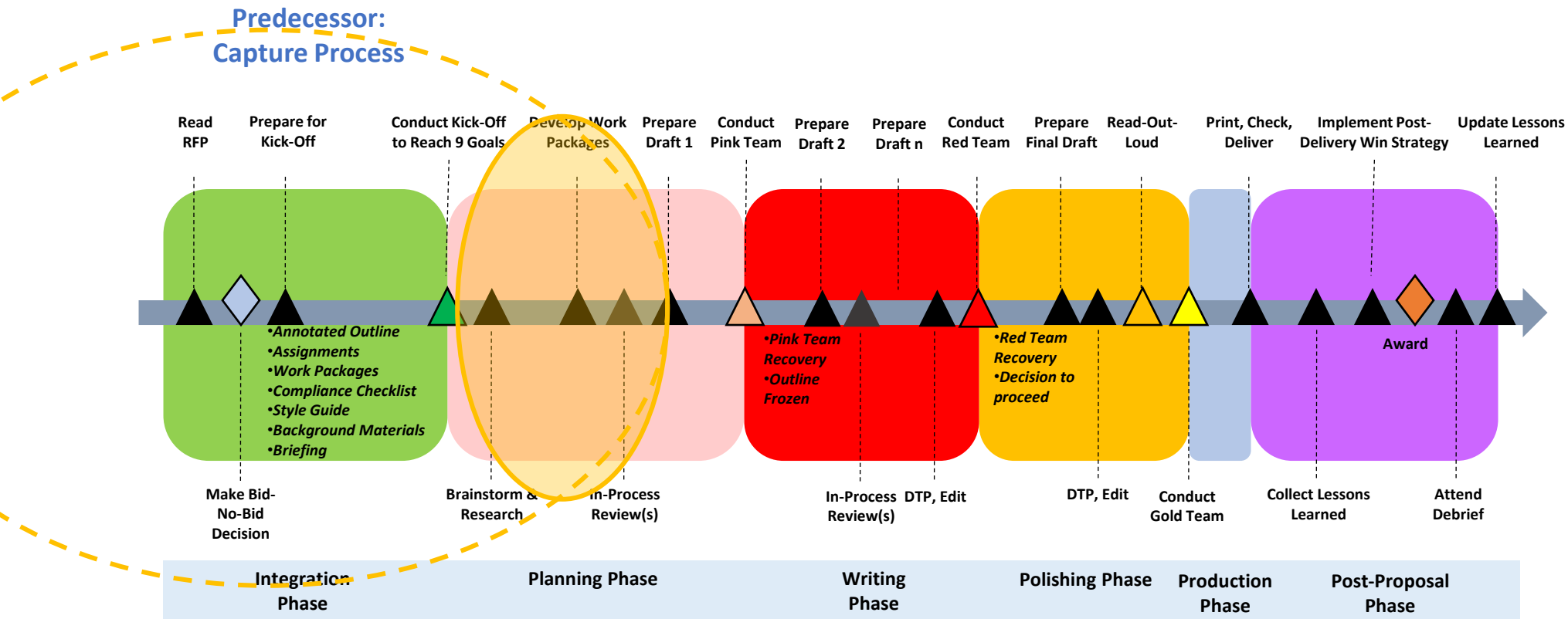
- **Takes at least 40% of the proposal duration**
- Includes:
 - Researching
 - Brainstorming as a group
 - Brainstorming by yourself
 - Section planning
 - Answering the “W” questions
 - Developing graphics
 - Talking through your section
 - Preparing storyboards or work packages



Where Stage 1 Fits in the Proposal Process



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Why Does it Take so Long to Prepare to Write?



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Thinking, planning, and research are important but can be onerous; use solution development checklists to speed up the preparation process

- Starting to write before preparation is done leads to **writer's block**
- People don't like to feel like fakes
- Hard to start if you can't understand:
 - What the customer is looking for
 - What is being proposed
 - Why the customer should pick your team



Brainstorming in a Group



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Brainstorming is often under-appreciated and runs ad-hoc; instead, it should be run as a carefully planned and orchestrated session

- The success is in skillful facilitation
- Assign a lead and a time-keeper
- Have a clear agenda and process
 1. Warm up (Getting your team in a creative mindset)
 2. Idea generation without judgment (chaotic)
 3. Organizing
 4. Streamlining and troubleshooting
- Keep reminding the team:
 - Where they are in the process
 - Where they have been
 - Where they are going



Steps 1 and 2 of Effective Brainstorming



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



You may find that many good thinkers stay within the confines of their current notions until you help them come up with new ideas to help beat your competition

- Step 1: Warm up and get *Creative*
 - Recall stories of brilliance and how it felt
 - How did you figure out something that wasn't clear before, came up with a clever idea, fixed something tricky, or otherwise felt smart?
- Step 2: Generate massive quantity of ideas
 - Go for quantity of the ideas without judging
 - Write your ideas on post its and put them up on the wall in loose order or without any order
 - Reframe tasks: What if it were an ideal world? What if we were solving another problem?
 - ID self-limiting assumptions and reframe: "How can we..."
 - Keep sense of humor
 - Move about, switch up leads, embrace chaos and outlandish ideas



Steps 3 & 4: Organize, Streamline and Troubleshoot



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



This part of the brainstorming session is easier than the first for most technical personnel as it is dominated by the left hemisphere of the brain

- Organize your post-its by major topics
- Remove duplicates and sort through ideas
- Refine and build on good ideas
- Fill in gaps (think 8Ws and un-addressed requirements) and make decisions
- Stop the session as soon as you are ready to write



Fill the Gaps Using the 8 Ws



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



*8Ws ensure comprehensive approach to covering all bases in brainstorming. In writing, the order of Ws matters for greater persuasion to make your sections **compelling** by design.*

Why: Customer problem, challenge, or key risk factor behind the requirement

What: What do we propose to do in response to the requirement?

Who: Who exactly is going to do this part of work, by name and title?

How: Step-by-step approach with benefits to the customer and risk mitigation

When: In what sequence we are going to do it per schedule, or when have we done it before?

Where: Indicate the location or facility, or say where we have done it before successfully

Wow: Powerful section conclusion



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Please, Complete an Assignment
for **Module 6** Prior to Proceeding
to the Next Module

Module 6 Exercise: Brainstorming



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



This is a type of session you can run both during capture and pre-pink team to get your proposal team to develop solutions



- Assign a facilitator
- Use the case study to brainstorm on the solution in a group; now you can read the Page 2 of the exercise handout to help you with the story
- Make assumptions where you are missing information
- Use your creativity, understanding that your brainstorming will help you write the section later
- If you don't know some facts, make documented assumptions or make up information – this is a game

Module 7

Stage 1: Research, Brainstorming, Planning
Brainstorming Individually

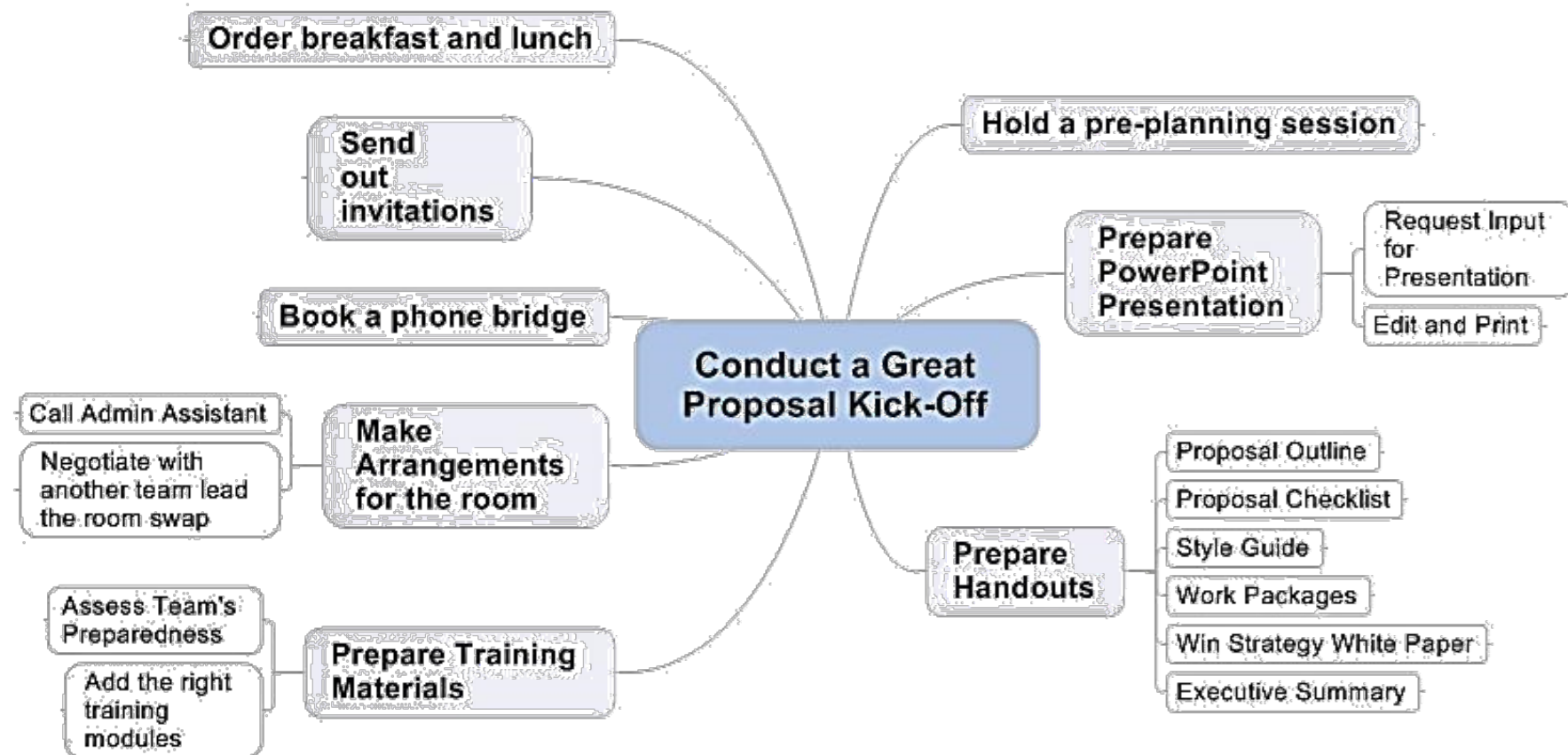
Mind Mapping



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Mind mapping can be fast by hand but you can use a variety of software packages and apps; Mindjet by Mind Manager is the best known and robust tool



Important Mind Mapping Considerations

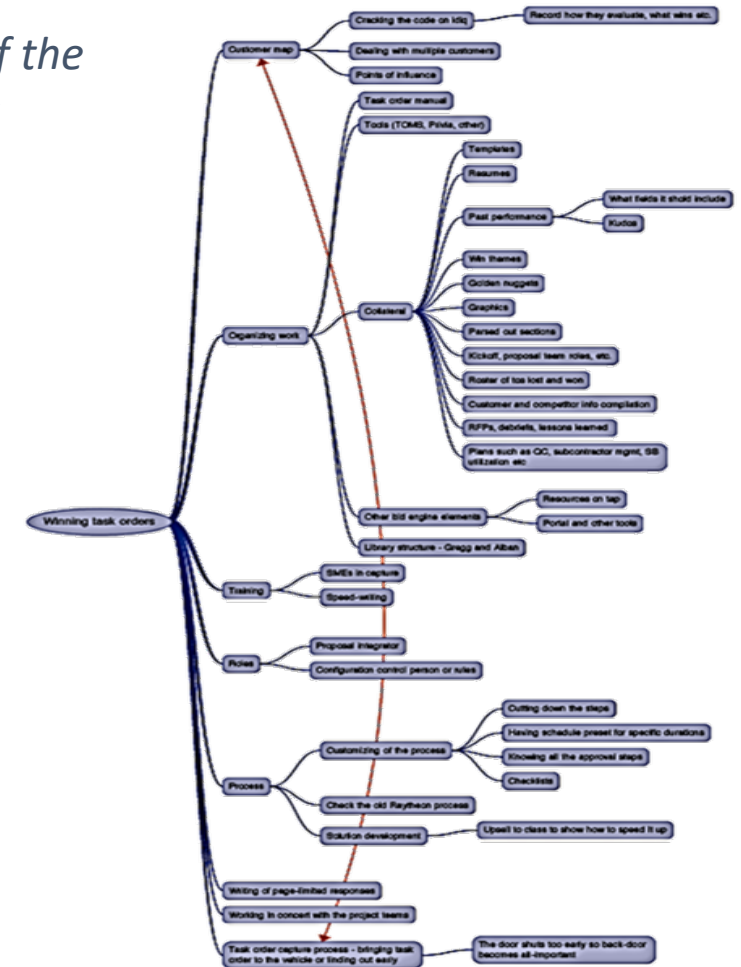


OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Mind mapping captures the shortest-term memory in the front lobe parts of the brain – this is where the creativity resides; it's like dreams you quickly forget

- Follow and capture thoughts as they emerge – don't outline
- Make random connections
- Relax
- Go quickly; you don't have to write everything out
- Follow your thoughts naturally
- Try different mind maps for same section – for example, the WHY and the HOW
- Try different settings and techniques
- When ideas stop, ask: “what else?” Some of the most important ideas may emerge after you may think you are done!
- Stop when ‘itching’ to write





OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Please, Complete **Exercise 1** for
Module 7 Prior to Proceeding to
the Next Module

Module 7 Exercise 1: Mind Map Rekindling a Well-Forgotten Hobby (or a Picking Up a New One)



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Try to have fun with this exercise even if it is hard to imagine that it could come true

- Imagine you all of a sudden got one day a week freed up with a condition to dedicate it to a hobby you are not currently into
- What hobby would you pick up?
- Mind map what you would have to do to excel in this hobby?
 - Would you have to research anything?
 - Would you have to purchase anything?
 - Would you invite anyone to part-take in it?
 - What changes would you make in your life to fully embrace your hobby?
 - What resources would you require to fund your hobby?
 - Let your mind explore...



UNiversal Organizer (UNO) – A Mind Mapping Alternative

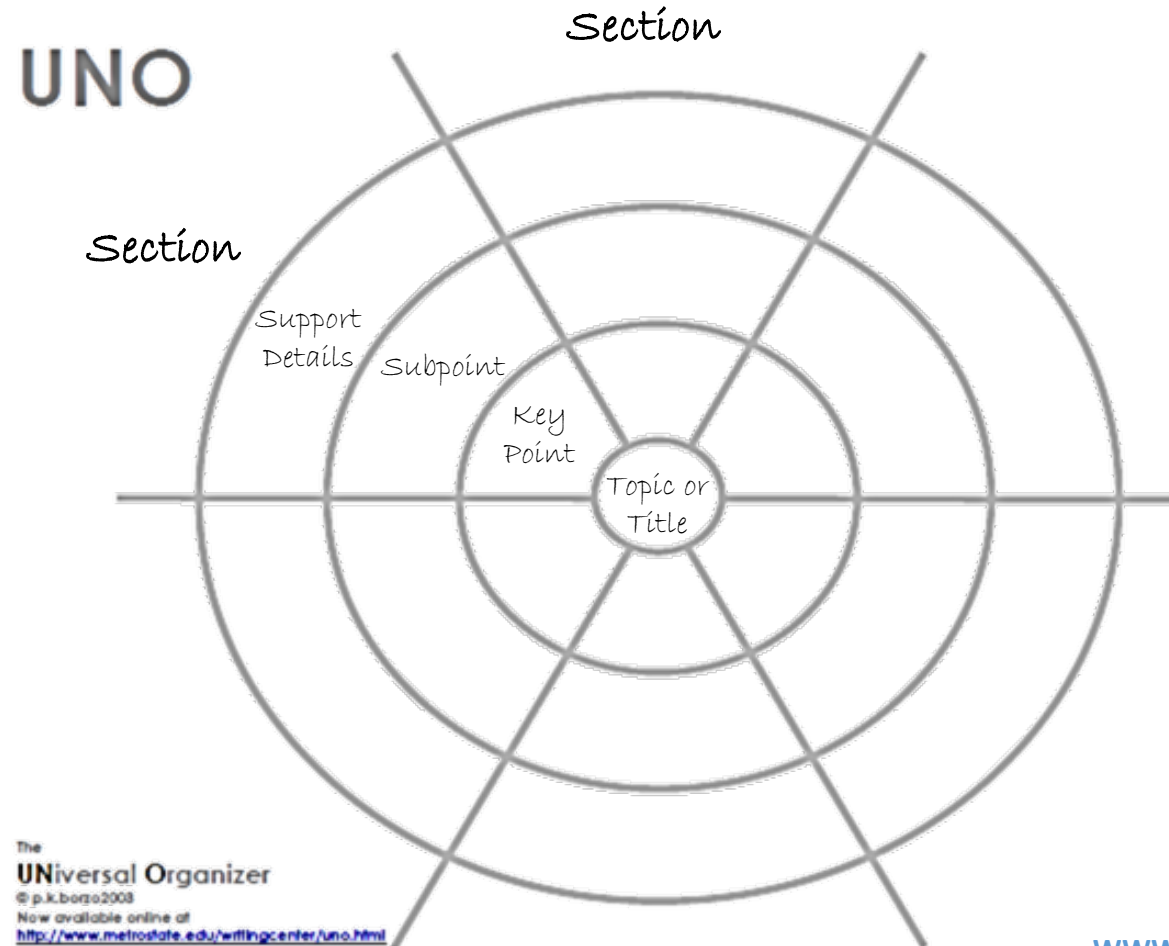


OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



http://www.metrostate.edu/msweb/resources/academic_ss/cae/writing_center/uno.html

For those who just can't get away from structuring – it's how your brain works



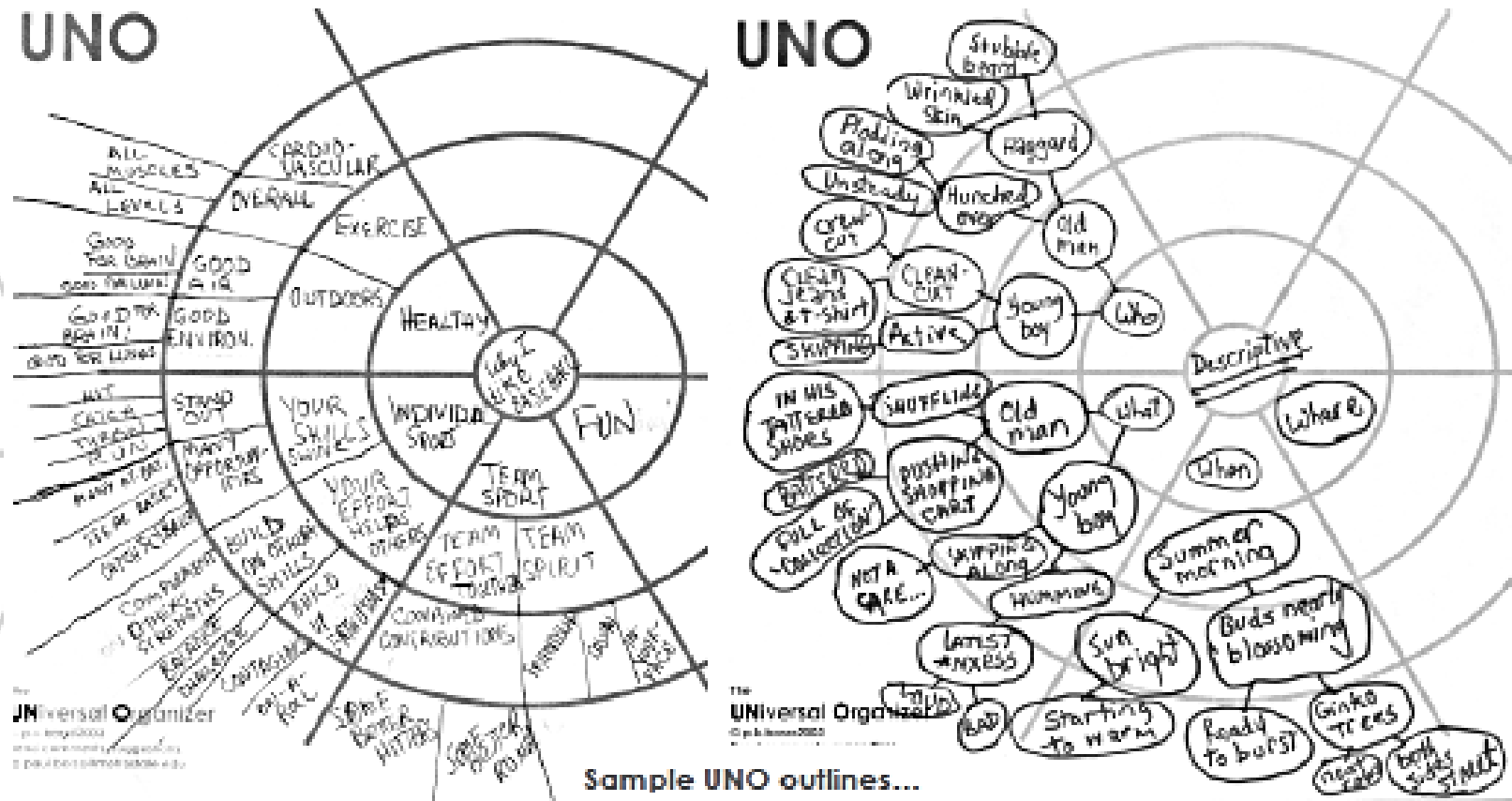
Examples of How UNO Can Be Used



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Like any tool, make this tool work for you; here are a couple of ideas...



Another Alternative: Rico Clusters



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



- Works when you don't know what question to ask, or what exactly to address in the section
- It is a web of related or interconnected ideas leading to one another, rather than ideas radiating out from a central concept that a mind map offers
- Is intended to leverage the brain's normal processes of communication between the right and left hemispheres
- The idea is to work towards a kind of "critical mass," where the language- and process-oriented left brain takes over from the visual- and pattern-oriented left
- Once you start seeing the pattern, you can arrive at the question to ask
- Think of the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy:
What is the answer to Life, Universe, and Everything?
"42"
But what is the question?





OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Please, Complete **Exercise 1** for
Module 7 Prior to Proceeding to
the Next Module

Module 7 Exercise 2: Mind Mapping a Proposal Section



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



This is an opportunity to try this approach on your brainstormed section – this is like brainstorming with yourself

- Using the brainstorming example from before, and leveraging your experience mind mapping your hobby and the discussion, create the proposal section mind map
- Alternatively, you can use UNO or Rico Clusters
- AVOID looking at mind mapping as another way of outlining – let your thoughts fire at random and document
- This mind map is to gather your thoughts in preparation for writing





Module 8

Stage 2: Speed Writing

Stage 2: Writing



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



This is a “fast and furious” stage that should not take long; in fact, 20% of the time is overly generous and applies to really long pieces

- If you are not ready to write, go back to research
- Write as you would say it, say it out loud, say it simply
- **Do not write and edit**
 - You cannot go back and correct until you finish the ENTIRE section
 - Type with your eyes closed or laptop screen bent back if tempted – just check periodically on your finger positioning because you could type a page of gibberish
- It is important that you get raw ideas down on paper as fast as possible, without looking back



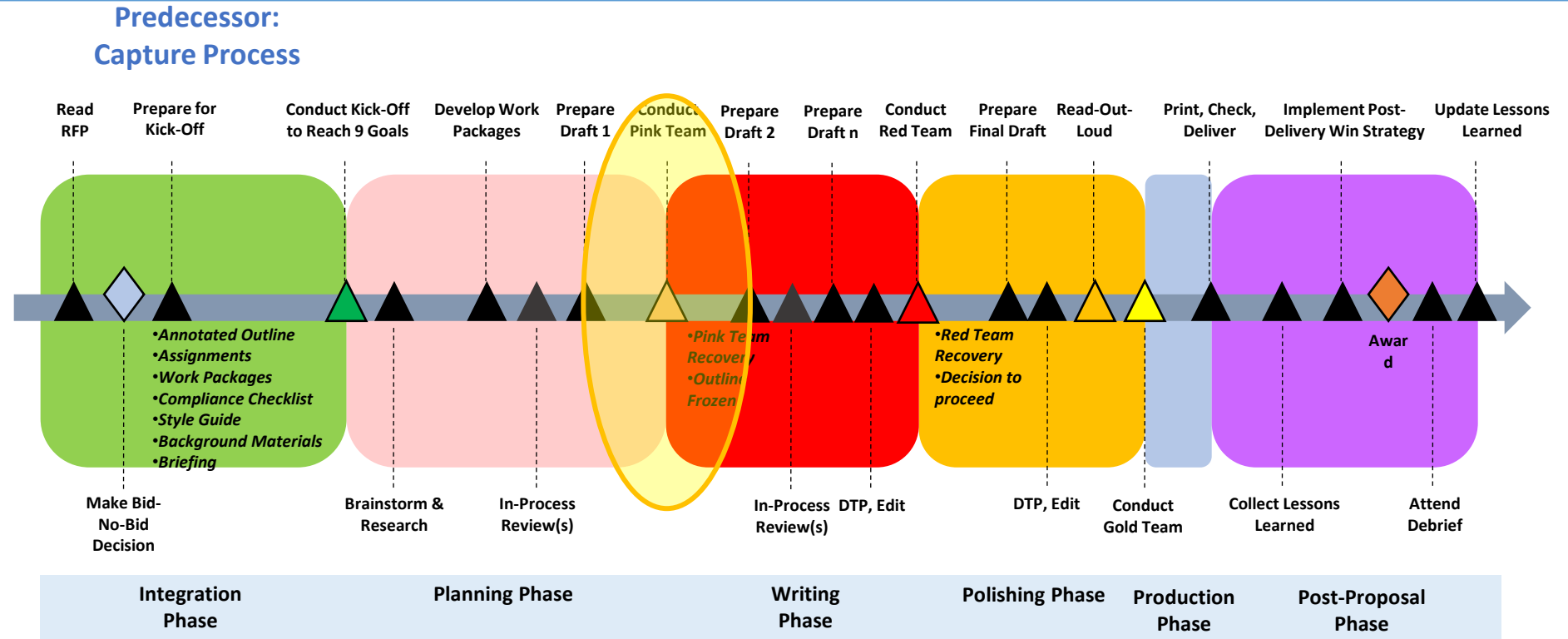
Where Stage 2 Fits in the Proposal Process



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



As you may notice, writing itself in the proposal lifecycle is limited to developing a complete first draft, that you can then rewrite, polish, edit, and perfect in other ways



Successor:
Project Delivery Process that
Includes Capture of Additional
Scope and Projects

MAIN SECRET: Allow Yourself to Be Imperfect



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



*Don't worry about the way your ugly cake of a section looks – you will have an opportunity to fix it later. The most important goal is to **complete** your section.*

Allow yourself to enjoy the process of generating ugly writing like a toddler relishes getting wet and dirty in a muddy puddle



**Bake the cake all the way to the end.
The uglier the cake, the better!**

Remember the Simple Writing Rules



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Most of these rules differ from what you may have learned at school; English language is alive and keeps changing

- Write as you speak
- **Write in NOUNS and VERBS**
- **Picture your evaluators reading**
- Use personal pronouns and short words
- Contractions (don't, can't) are perfectly OK
- Use simple transitions more often than long ones:
 - *However -> but*
 - *As well as -> and*
 - *Additionally -> also*
 - *Nevertheless -> still*
 - *Consequently, therefore -> so*
- You can use transition words (And, But) to start sentences!
- Just write your section without editing or looking back





OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Please, Complete an Assignment
for **Module 8** Prior to Proceeding
to the Next Module

Module 8 Quiz



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



- You should take professional pride in making sure that every paragraph you produce as a first draft is perfect right away.
 - ☐ a. True
 - ☐ b. False
- Using precise adjectives and adverbs will help you express your thoughts more accurately and create the right feeling in the evaluator's mind. That's the main creative focus of your section's first draft.
 - ☐ a. True
 - ☐ b. False





Module 9

Element 3 of the Speed Writing System:
Tools

Dr. Wicked's 'Write or Die'



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



<https://v2.writeordie.com/>
iPad and iPhone apps exist

(The usual site for V.3 hasn't been updated in years:
<http://writeordie.com>)



Use Voice to Text Apps



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



- Voice to text app in Windows – not very precise
- Use Dragon Anywhere app or Dragon NaturallySpeaking desktop software for more accurate dictation
- Use Otter.ai app for full sentences, interviews, and brainstorming – will guess your punctuation; records voice
- Edit the rough material



Neo Alphasmart to Cut Down on Distractions



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



- Neo 2
 - Inexpensive (\$114-\$145)
 - Keyboard and minimal text window
 - Write without looking and editing – but see enough to ensure you are not mis-keying
 - No distractions such as email
 - Easy upload or email to PC or MAC
 - Used at schools for writing



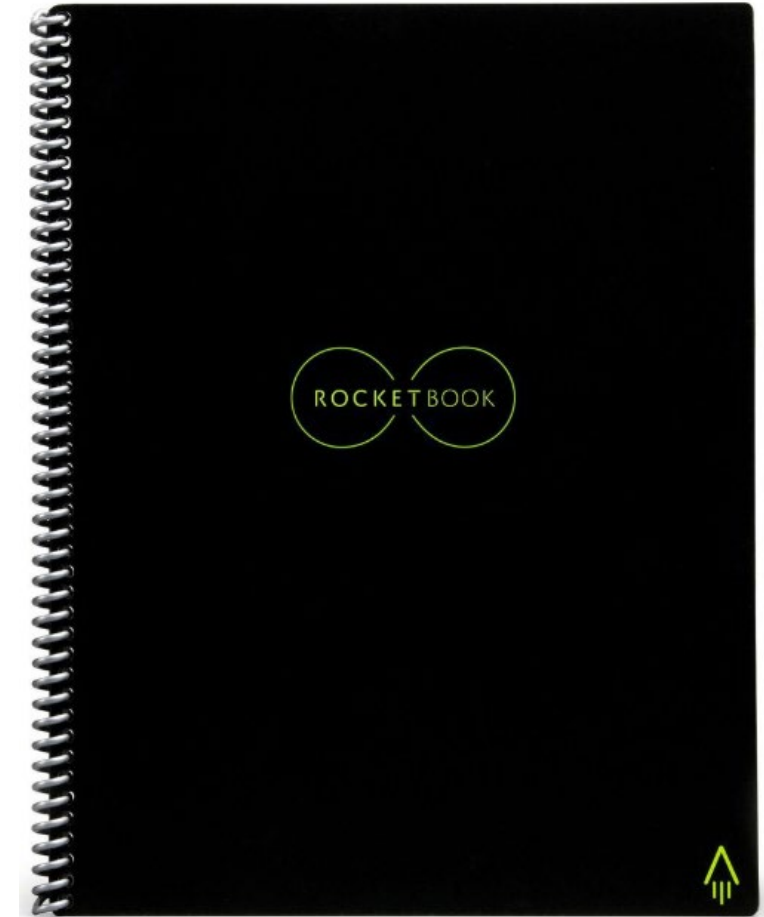
Write by Hand in a RocketBook



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



- Handwrite your sections so that you are not distracted, you don't rewrite, and don't have a back button
- The Everlast notebook provides a classic pen and paper experience, yet is built for the digital age
- Although it feels like a traditional notebook, the Everlast is endlessly reusable and connected to all of your favorite cloud services
- When you write using any pen from the Pilot Frixion line, your writing sticks to Everlast pages like regular paper
- But add a drop of water... and the notebook erases like magic
- Your writing is transcribed into text you can edit in Word





OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Please, Complete an Assignment
for **Module 9** Prior to Proceeding
to the Next Module

Exercise: Write the Mind Mapped Section



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



This is where everything you have done today comes together; feel free to use the tools provided

- Start with prioritizing your mind map
- Write the section that you have mind mapped using Word, Write or Die, or voice to text plus editing
- Do not edit or wordsmith at all – promise you can do it later
- You have to **complete** the section (bake the cake all the way)



Email your sections to the instructor at
service@ostglobalsolutions.com

Recap



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



Let's go over today's material

- Which technique for changing unhelpful beliefs about writing resonated with you the most?
- What are the three key elements of the proposal speed writing system and why are they important?
- Why are there three stages in the proper writing process, instead of just writing?
- What brainstorming tips are you going to adopt?
- Did you find the mind mapping process helpful in developing your first draft?
- What is the biggest take-away from today's class?



Thank You! Continue Taking More Courses to Advance Your Knowledge!



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



OST GLOBAL SOLUTIONS



7361 Calhoun Place, Suite 560

Rockville, MD 20855

Phone: 301-384-3350

service@ostglobalsolutions.com

www.ostglobalsolutions.com