

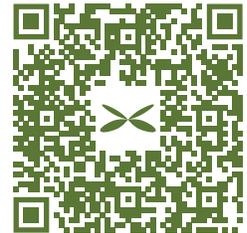


Tips and tools
FOR THE WRITING WORLD

How to Create a Proposal Style Sheet

When you're working on a proposal, you need to keep your team focused on winning content — instead of chasing down answers to style questions. Having a style sheet helps to streamline the process and avoid errors.

Scan the QR code to download an MSWord template, or click [here](#). Use the guide below to help you create a comprehensive style sheet for every proposal.



In in the left columns below, we've listed the key style questions you'll need to answer before you begin. Fill in the answers and any other relevant information in the right columns.

Critical terms	On first reference:	On following reference:
Client's name	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	HHS
Project name	Next-Generation Sensor Development	NGSD
Team name	Team Smith/the Smith Team/the Smith team	
Firm name	Smith Jackson Kline	Smith; never SJK
Partners	IT Solutions LLC	ITS
Subcontractors	Clarefour Jackson	Clarefour
Key personnel	Timothy Helmsley, Program Manager Sam Barnhart, Transition Manager	Mr. Helmsley Ms. Barnhart
References		
Use a house style guide?	Yes or no; find at ourcompany.com/styleguide	
Default style manual, for issues not address here or in house guide	<i>Chicago Manual of Style, AP Stylebook, or GPO Style Manual, for example</i>	
Dictionary	<i>Merriam-Webster's Collegiate or Webster's New World, for example</i>	
Acronyms		
Spell out acronyms on first reference in ...	Section, Volume, or Chapter, for example	
Delete some spellouts because of page limitations?	If so, allow spellouts for only these terms: x, y, z	
Create an acronym list as part of edit?	yes or no	
Use plural acronyms?	Use plural acronyms? subject matter experts (SMEs) or subject matter experts (SME)	

Capitalization	
Use initial caps for ...	You may want to capitalize these types of words and phrases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government or Federal Government • names of reports and deliverables • proper nouns • position titles • plans and programs • phases (Phase 1, Phase 2)
Figures and tables	
Naming convention	Call everything an “exhibit”? Or distinguish between “figures” and “tables”?
Number convention	Number exhibits sequentially per volume? Per section?
Call out exhibits in text?	yes or no
Formatting	Figure 1-1: Team Premier Proposed Personnel. <i>Our personnel bring essential skills to this mission.</i>
Numbers	
Use numbers for units of time, measurement, and money	3 years, 4 months, 5 miles, \$5 million. Use mixed number style for other types of numbers (five civilians and 50 engineers).
Money	Use comma in thousands: \$3,500; do not allow 500K or 500M, change to 500,000 or 500 million
Date format	military (11 June 2015) or standard (June 11, 2015)
Experience	6 years of experience or 6 years’ experience
Phone numbers	937.445.3213 or 937-445-3213 or (937) 445-3213
Superscript?	3rd or 3 rd
Volume numbers	Volume III or Volume 3?
Punctuation	
Serial comma	Yes or no
Degrees	BA, MA, PhD or B.A., M.A., Ph.D.
Bulleted lists	Introduce lists with a colon. Place a period after final bullet. The employee’s activities included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Led and managed Signal Analysis Team in a 24-hour operation • Performed signals intelligence (SIGINT) training • Obtained advanced knowledge of communications schemes.
Other style issues	
Locations	Use city + state in text. “Our facility in Dayton, Ohio, is up and running.” Use city + postal abbreviation in resumes/tables. “Analyst/Developer, Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, OH”



Words List

In your words list, include key terms used in the RFP, industry jargon, and terms of art unique to this proposal's service offering. Your list might include words such as:

\$16 billion (not \$16 billion-dollar)	Government (n), government (adj)
24x7 and 24x7x365	including (not to include)
ad hoc (no hyphen)	Internet, intranet
agencywide, firmwide, enterprisewide	near-real-time (adj)
antiterrorism	Program, when following an official program name (e.g., Army Data Management Program)
as-is, to-be (no quotation marks)	reachback
biweekly, bidirectional (no hyphen)	Secret, Top Secret, Top Secret/SCI
cross-platform (adj)	soldier
data (use as plural noun)	to, not in order to
database, data set	United States (n), U.S. (adj)
Day One	utilize—change to use
DoD (not DOD)	warfighter
e.g., (use only in parenthetical phrases)	website, the Web
email	workforce, workload, workstream
federal (adj)	worldwide
FY2015 (not FY15 or FY 15)	

Acronym List

In your acronym list, include all acronyms you expect to be used in the proposal. Also indicate how frequently acronyms should be spelled out (i.e., first use per section, first use per volume, or never). Your list might include terms such as:

Acronym	Definition
CONUS	Continental United States
SME	subject matter expert
CDRL	Contract Data Requirements List
COTS	commercial off-the-shelf
GFE	Government-furnished equipment
O&M	operations and maintenance
PMO	Program Management Office
WBS	Work Breakdown Structure

