

REVIEWS OF
Persuasive Business Proposals
BY TOM SANT



A persuasive book on persuasive writing., September 25, 2001

Reviewer: **Harold McFarland** from Florida

Tom Sant has put together one of the single best books on proposal writing. Whether you are responding to a bid request or just designing a basic proposal the book is filled with tips for getting the winning contract. Everything is covered here. There are examples of bad proposals and details of what is wrong with them, examples of how to make your proposal stand out from the others and even a primer on the basics of persuasion. It is well organized and flows well from the beginning to the end of the process not only defining what should be done but why you are doing it. This knowledge gives you the ability to adapt to unusual situations instead of just using a boilerplate method for all your contracts. It even comes with a small but thorough checklist in the appendix to make sure that you have left no stone unturned in creating the proposal.

There is however, one point that I would like to have seen added to the book. At the last of the book he emphasizes the importance of editing your proposal. When you are done then read it again as a whole to see that it contains continuity, check it for spelling errors, check it for grammar errors, etc. Read it from front to back two or three times to make sure that you catch everything so that you don't lose credibility with your audience. While I agree totally, on long proposals I also start from the back section and read the sections from back to front. Why? As you are rereading for editing your attention to detail tends to decrease and you become more careless after a certain point. Starting from the back sections gives you a chance to read those sections while still fresh. Does it work? Well let's take a look at his book itself. No errors jump out at me until page 178 where the word "about" is spelled "abut". Well if that is the only problem then he has still done well. Then I got to page 186 where he has an example of a badly worded item. After showing the better wording the book states "That's a little better, isn't it? A little easier to understand the first time through?" Obviously he meant to say that it is "easier to understand THAN the first time through". And then a third error on page 188 where he is discussing the importance of using "complement" and "compliment" correctly. But during the discourse he actually spells "complement" as "complemet". A perfect discourse that suddenly has three errors within ten pages.

This is still a fantastic book on the details of how to write a proposal, things to do, things to avoid, how to persuade, how to focus the proposal or contract, etc. It belongs on the shelf of anyone who writes proposals and contracts or any form of communication, which involves convincing other people to see your position. I even successfully used the information in the book to detail the current status and proposed direction of a mishandled project and was able to win the client back and keep the contract.



Very Helpful Book on Writing Proposals, May 30, 2001

Reviewer: **A reader** from Chagrin Falls, OH USA

This book is a must for everyone who has to write a proposal. It gave me some great ideas and different ways of writing, so my proposals were much better. The book is easy to read and I started to implement Sant's ideas immediately. I also hear that his company has very useful software to help automate proposal writing as well.



This Book helps you WIN!, May 29, 2001

Reviewer: **nicholas** from OHIO

Tom Sant's structure and approach to proposal writing and responding to RFP's has already helped me win more business. BY following his methodology, my proposals are far more persuasive and client-centered. It is a quick read, and gives you more than enough examples and some humor. If you write proposals, this is the book you need. Sant also has award winning software that follows the structure of the book and helps automate the proposal and RFP response process.



Technical proposal writers should read, too!, January 30, 2001

Reviewer: **Toni Burnham** from Washington, DC USA

Tom Sant achieves in his book many of the goals he sets out for good proposals up front: clarity, brevity, and getting good requirements.

I used Sant's book to write technical proposals for both strategic consulting and internal software product development purposes. In each case, Sant's book was a useful guide to making sure we ourselves properly understood the work, developed a coherent description of it for the customer, and pitched that understanding effectively. Selling the right services, skills, and perspective is critical to ANY project's success, whether the customer is external or your own company's budget committee!

Those who are less confident with their writing skills, or who do not enjoy writing, will find ample support and assistance in particular.



A Fine Proposal Writing Reference, July 7, 2000

Reviewer: **Steven Bell** from Kemp, Texas USA

Stop right here! This is the book you need for helping you write proposals (consultants take note). Tom Sant does a great job of presenting a difficult subject giving plenty of examples that you will find very useful (a CD with all of the examples would have made this 5+ stars). The author starts by giving you a short lesson on how to be a persuasive writer (there are lots of hints and tips here): how to persuade, you as a source, establishing credibility, and writing to your audience. Proposal development is then covered in detail: the process, getting organized, etc. Finally, the proposals: Letter Proposal, Formal Proposal, Research Proposal, Grant Proposal (with at least two and sometimes three examples of each; I especially liked the fact that I had three Executive Summaries to examine). The author also speaks on automating your process and adding bells and whistles to dress up the proposal. A pretty good index wraps up the package. An additional appendix with a proposal writer's checklist is included. I consider this book to be a must have for every manager doing proposals. It will definitely help you win business!



A great reference of the why's and how's of proposals., May 13, 1999

Reviewer: **Dan Heck** from Northbrook, IL USA

Tom Sant does a great job providing a practical tool for all of us, "proposal challenged" people! He explains why various parts of the proposal are necessary, why the order influences the recipient, and gives lots of examples of good and bad elements. I found myself reading some of the bad examples without understanding why they were so bad. Then I would read the good example and be amazed at what an improvement it was!

If you have to write even just a one page memo requesting money, time, people, or any other resource, get this book! It has significantly improved my approach, I know it will positively impact yours as well.