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The 4 Keys to High Quality Proposals in Commercial Real Estate



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New business proposals in commercial real estate are an essential part of daily agency activities. When you get it right, it helps you significantly in convincing the prospect of your relevance to them in moving on the property needs that they have.

This market is really challenging and for this reason the generic new business proposal is a waste of time and energy. You must be specific to the client's needs. Your new business proposals must be one of a kind and specific to the property, the market, the solution, and the timeline.

Having seen and prepared many proposals over the years, it is very clear that four specific rules apply to the process if you want to be more successful at what you submit to the client.

1. **Before you begin drafting your proposal, do you typically have a crystal-clear idea of the key issues that the customer wants you to address in the proposal or does it forever seem to be an obscure guessing game?** Highly effective commercial property proposals address only those specific needs, concerns, and expectations that a potential customer wants addressed. To achieve this essential awareness, you should have an initial meeting with the client and an inspection of the property. This allows you to tailor the proposal to the specific points of focus that you have identified. A question and answer process in your document is a wise strategy where you can display your total understanding of the clients concerns and your recommendations.
2. **Are your proposals well-focused, readable documents that effectively communicate your understanding of the customer's issues, or are they typically an inward-looking, unfocused compilation of filler, fluff, and the mundane?** Highly effective proposals are articulate customer-focused documents with a clear and specific purpose that is easily understood by anyone who reads it. The best proposal documents in commercial real estate are split into six or seven sections that are specific to the sale or leasing process. They will include the executive summary, the brief, market commentary, target market, marketing strategy, recommendations, and fee structure. The most important component is the recommendations that you

put forward. They must be innovative and clearly defined as relevant to the client's needs.

3. **Do your proposals offer measurable solutions to confirmed prospect needs, or are they only “capabilities and qualifications” documents that propose little, if anything?** Highly effective proposals offer specific solutions to confirmed customer needs and include, goals and objectives, roles and responsibilities, specific action steps and timelines, and most important, accountability. The client likes to know the relevance and qualifications of the person who will be serving them. Clearly defined methods and frequency of communication to the client should also be set out. It is of value and relevance to provide a time line that displays the stages of property marketing that you will take the client through.
4. **Confirm your findings clearly to the client. This is without question the most important and most powerful step in the proposal process.** Call or meet with the customer one more time in the proposal preparation process. Tell them that your objective is to deliver a brief, customer-focused document with specific solutions to their unique challenges. In order to do that, however, you need to be sure that you are addressing the real issues.

The proposal process and submission is likely to be the only chance you have to display your capabilities and potentially beat the competition at the same game. Your proposal should not focus on discounting of commissions or discounting of marketing costs. Both of these processes are counterproductive and do not produce the quality marketing campaign that a great property deserves.

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