

"Nobody does a better job of showing how to use design to build relationships than Roger C. Parker!"

Jay Conrad Levinson  
author, *Guerrilla Marketing*

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# Roger C. Parker's Guerrilla Marketing & Design

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William McKinley

Bill McKinley has been helping firms prepare more effective proposals for over 25 years. He initiated the Sales Program at the University of Washington Business School.

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## Write better proposals

### Increase your commissions and close more sales

By William McKinley, (guest editor)

In spite of elaborate presentation, most proposals fail to close the sale due to several reasons. These include:

- *Excessive pages*—too long and too detailed for today's busy prospects to read.
- *Too much dependency on price* as the principle subject and sales tool.
- *Too much emphasis on seller's "how,"* not enough on buyer needs and benefits.

Here's a formula with a 25-year track record used by myself and clients trained in "How to Write an Effective Proposal."

#### Part 1. Areas of concern

Focus on customer issues, rather than your product/services or company.

Your goal is to confirm that you understand the main issues your prospect would like to see improved. State each

previously discussed issue followed by a paragraph developing the problem.

#### Part 2. Objectives

On the next page, turn each "area of concern" into a proposal goal.

Write each goal, or objective statement in a short sentence beginning with "To." Follow with words like *reduce, eliminate, increase, improve, maximize, etc.*

The problems now become goals, and your prospect's focuses on: "Can you actually do this for me?"

#### Part 3. Recommendations

On the next page, describe your recommendations in order of importance. Some of the recommendations, of course, include purchasing your products and services.

#### Part 4. Benefits

Re-vist each of the areas of concern and point out how your *benefits* solve the prospect's problems and needs. Use the same numbers for benefits that you used in your Areas of Concern and goals.

Only discuss benefits that address the areas of concern; avoid introducing benefits that don't address these needs.

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*Emphasize that any delay accepting the proposal pushes back each of the following dates*

### **Part 5. Investment**

After describing the benefits, describe the investment needed to achieve them.

A simple, straightforward, list of what you will charge for various products and/or services works best.

Present options, if available. End with payment schedules and dates.

Refer prospects to the Addendum for additional information.

### **6. Implementation**

This section is extremely important. On a new page, set up a two-column table.

- *In the left-hand column*, enter the activities to be completed.
- *In the right-hand column*, enter the completion dates.

Write as if you knew your proposal had already been accepted. Begin with the date of your first meeting, and summarize what you discussed.

Enter today's date with the action being described as: "Proposal acceptance," or set a deadline for the next week.

Emphasize that any *delay accepting the proposal pushes back all future dates!*

This creates *urgency*, as prospects can easily grasp the costs of procrastination.

### **Part 6. Addendum**

Everything else that you want to include in your proposal goes into this section, including brochures, price lists, specifications, company background, testimonials, client lists, references, etc.

Only refer to information in the Appendix when prospects ask for more details.

### **Covering letter**

Add a one-page covering letter to introduce your proposal. Limit the letter to just four short paragraphs:

1. *Thank them* for the opportunity.
2. *Credit employees* who helped develop concerns or provided information.
3. *Summarize the objectives*, or benefits, of accepting your proposal.
4. *Confidently ask for the business*, i.e. "I look forward to your review and acceptance of this proposal and to working with you in the coming months."

### **For more information**

For assistance creating proposals, e-mail [Roger C. Parker](mailto:Roger.C.Parker@OnePageNewsletters.com) (phone, 603-742-9673) or e-mail [Bill McKinley](mailto:Bill.McKinley@PublishedandProfitable.com), (360-437-1800) for critiques, training, and workshops.



**Roger C. Parker**  
*Profit Builder*

- **\$32,000,000 author**
- 35 books, 37 languages
- 1.6 million copies sold
- NY Times* recommended
- **Speaker, consultant**
  - **Design educator**
- **Training, workshops**
  - **Marketing coach**

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