**Slide Deck: How to Write a Statement of Objectives (SOO)**

**Slide 1: Title Slide**

* **Title:** How to Write a Statement of Objectives (SOO)
* **Subtitle:** Shifting to Outcomes-Based Acquisition
* **Presenter Name / Date**

**Speaker Notes:** Welcome to today's session on how to write an effective Statement of Objectives, or SOO. We’ll explore what a SOO is, when to use it, how to prepare, and best practices for drafting one that enables vendor-driven innovation and better outcomes.

**Slide 2: What is a SOO?**

* High-level objectives and desired outcomes
* Enables vendor innovation
* Focuses on *what* the government wants, not *how* to do it

**Speaker Notes:** A SOO outlines what the government wants to achieve, not how to achieve it. This encourages vendors to propose innovative and flexible solutions tailored to those objectives, unlike the prescriptive nature of a traditional Statement of Work.

**Slide 3: When to Use a SOO**

* Vendor-driven solutions desired
* Outcomes are iterative, agile, or evolving
* Innovation and continuous improvement are needed
* Scope is service-oriented with flexible execution

**Speaker Notes:** SOOs are ideal when you're looking for creativity, especially for services or digital solutions that evolve over time. They’re perfect for iterative work, like agile development or continuous improvement contracts.

**Slide 4: Preparation Before Writing**

* Engage early with:
  + Technical leads
  + End users
  + Legal, finance, and contracting
* Define product vision and desired outcomes

**Speaker Notes:** Preparation is essential. Involve key stakeholders early to align on the mission, define what success looks like, and ensure compliance with all necessary guidance.

**Slide 5: Understand BANT Framework**

* **Budget:** Confirm funding is in place
* **Authority:** Identify decision-makers
* **Need:** Align to mission and urgency
* **Timeline:** Identify constraints and priorities

**Speaker Notes:** Use the BANT framework to check your acquisition readiness. A well-developed SOO begins with clarity around these four critical elements.

**Slide 6: Policy and Guidance Check**

* Review:
  + FAR Part 37
  + FAM/FAH
  + DOSAR
  + Agency-specific templates and guides

**Speaker Notes:** Make sure your SOO complies with all applicable policies. FAR Part 37, for instance, supports performance-based acquisition, which is the foundation of the SOO format.

#### **Slide 7: Background**

* Briefly describe the program, mission need, or problem to solve.
* Summarize the current environment (technical, organizational, or operational).
* Mention any prior efforts, pilots, or legacy systems relevant to the effort.

#### **Slide 8: Scope**

* Describe the general nature of the work without prescribing specific solutions.
* Identify key users, stakeholders, or beneficiaries.
* Include any known constraints (e.g., regulatory, technical stack, geographic limits).

#### **Slide 9: Objectives**

List 3–6 clear, outcome-based objectives the vendor must meet. Each objective should be:

* Measurable and aligned with mission outcomes.
* Flexible enough to allow for vendor innovation.

**Examples:**

* Improve the user experience of the visa application portal.
* Reduce FOIA request processing time by 30%.
* Deliver a functional MVP within 90 days of contract award.

#### **Slide 10: Deliverables**

* Identify expected high-level deliverables (e.g., MVP, user research report, roadmap, sprint demos).
* Focus on outputs and outcomes, not prescriptive tasks.

#### **Slide 11: Performance Standards / Metrics**

* Define how performance and success will be evaluated.
* Include relevant KPIs, service levels, or acceptance criteria.
* Align metrics with the objectives listed above.

#### **Slide 12: Constraints / Assumptions (Optional)**

* Identify known dependencies (e.g., data access, systems integration).
* Include mandated frameworks or compliance requirements (e.g., Section 508, FedRAMP, FISMA).
* Note any technology preferences, constraints, or assumptions critical to planning.

**Slide 13: Best Practices for Writing a SOO**

* Keep concise: ~15 pages or fewer
* Focus on outcomes, not detailed solutions
* Use clear, plain language
* Involve contracting early
* Align with modular acquisition if applicable

**Speaker Notes:** Aim for clarity and brevity. Focus on measurable results and leave room for vendors to propose the best method. Coordinate early with your contracting team to ensure alignment.

**Slide 14: Common Pitfalls to Avoid**

* Writing a SOW disguised as a SOO
* Overloading with technical specs
* Vague or unmeasurable objectives
* No clear success criteria

**Speaker Notes:** Avoid the temptation to revert to detailed instructions. Focus on the "what" and define success metrics. These are essential to evaluating proposals and measuring contractor performance.

**Slide 15: After the SOO is Drafted**

* Review with:
  + Legal
  + Contracting
  + Program leadership
* Use it to:
  + Guide industry engagement (e.g., draft RFP, industry day)
  + Enable vendors to propose SOW or PWS in response

**Speaker Notes:** After drafting, share the SOO for internal review. Then use it externally to engage with industry, gather feedback, and let vendors develop their SOW or Performance Work Statement in response.

**Slide 16: Final Thoughts**

* A well-written SOO empowers vendors and supports better outcomes
* Drives innovation and mission alignment
* Builds a strong foundation for performance-based acquisitions

**Speaker Notes:** SOOs are powerful tools when done right. They not only promote innovation but also help the government achieve better mission outcomes. Use them thoughtfully and strategically to deliver real value.

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