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# „Developing Winning Proposals“

Munich, 17.06.2015

Frank Mang, Accenture

# Agenda

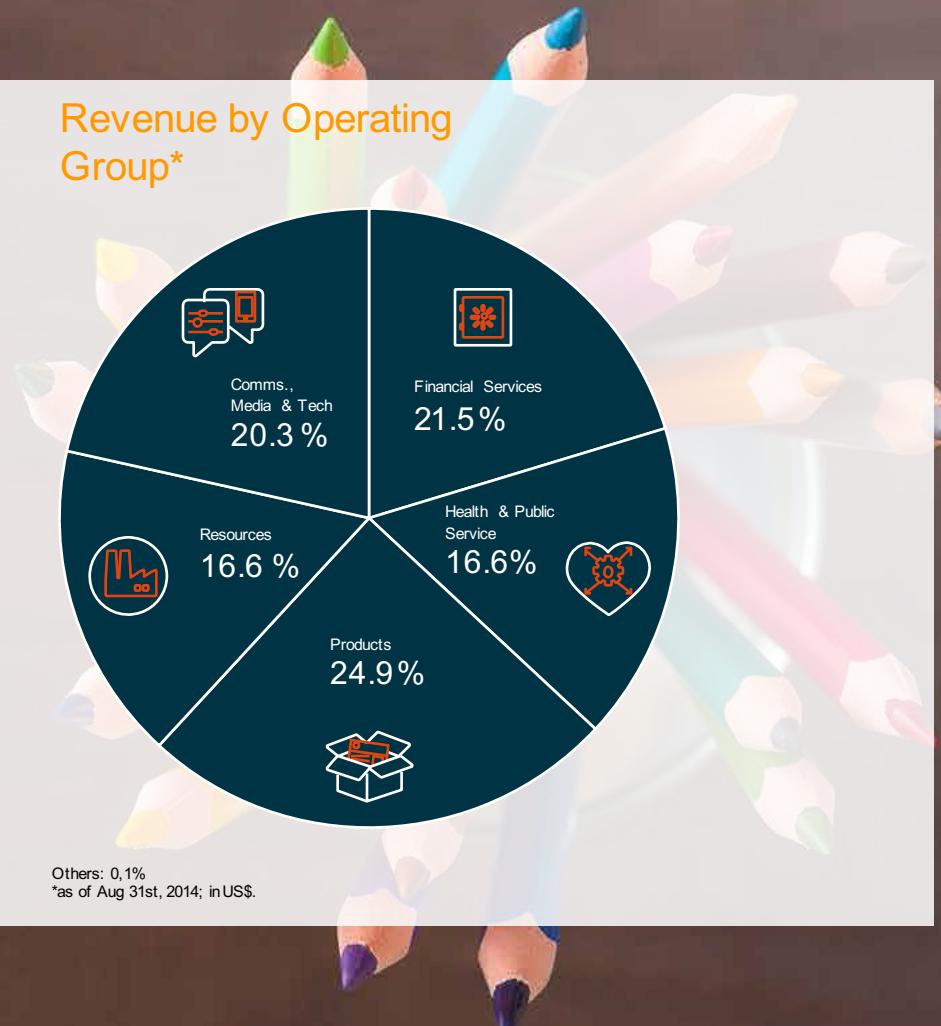
- Get to know Accenture
- Why proposals?
- What is a proposal?
- What is a proposal process?
- What makes a winning proposal?
- Discussion: Q&A

# Developing Winning Proposals

Get to know Accenture

# Who we are (1/2) – There's no better place to be for extraordinary candidates

- One of the world's leading management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company
- The world's leading partner for large-scale business transformation projects
- End-to-end solutions: a strategy leads to designing a digital transformation, this gets executed and finally the new set-up is operated
- Net revenue: US\$30.0 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2014
- Listed as one of the Top 100 Best Employers
- Ranked No. 44 on Interbrand's "100 Best Global Brands 2014"



# Who we are (2/2) – This is where you find us

Locations: worldwide in over 200 cities and 56 countries

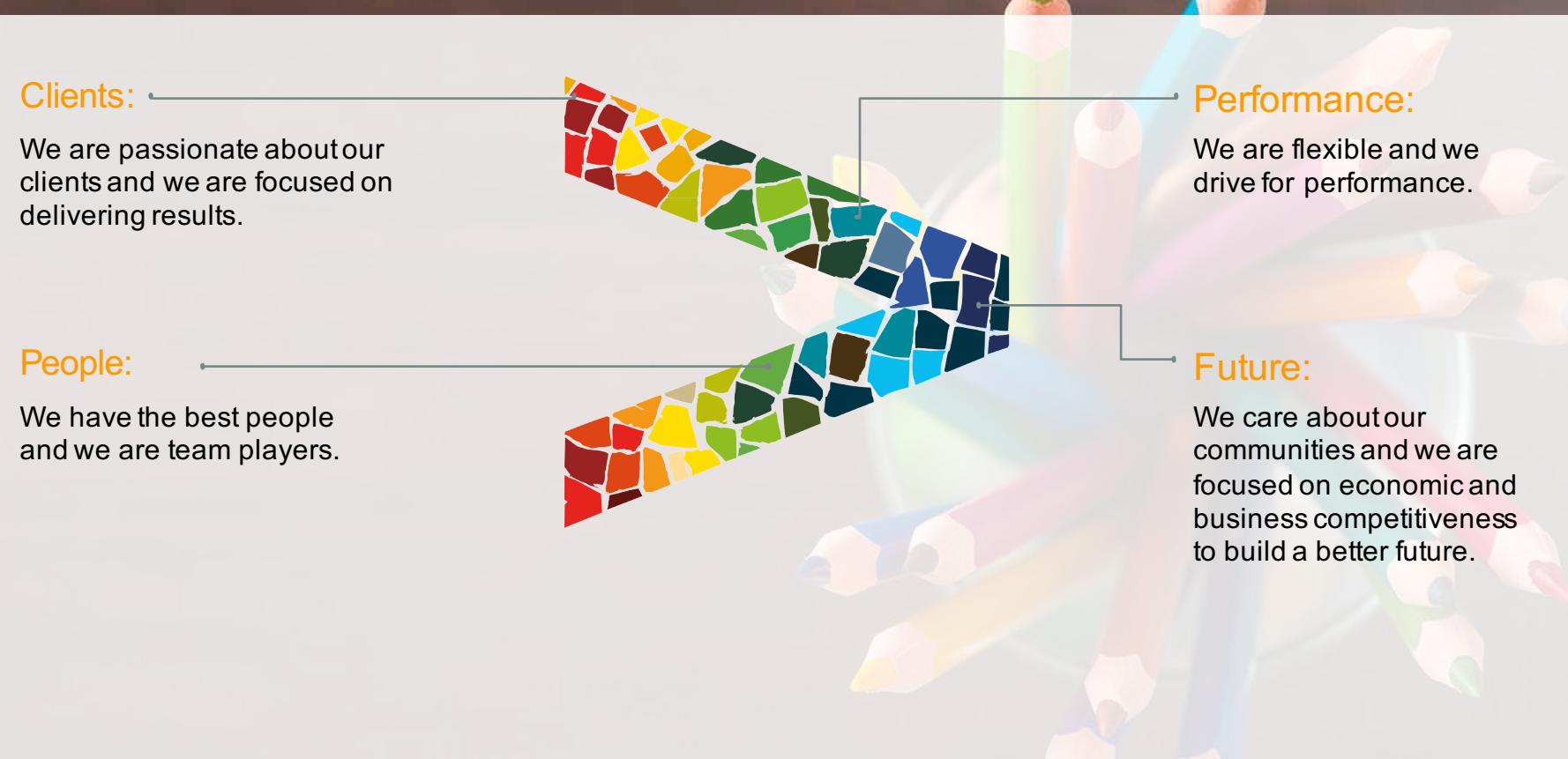
## Geographic Units:

- Austria
- Germany
- Switzerland



# How we work – The Accenture Way

The Accenture Way is how we do things. It is the way we innovate, collaborate, operate and deliver value—for our clients and our shareholders. It differentiates Accenture in the marketplace and is brought to life every day, in everything we do, through our unique passion, energy and style.



# Our Core Competencies – Overview



Communications,  
Media &  
Technology



Financial  
Services



Health & Public  
Service



Products



Resources

accenture strategy

accenture digital

accenture technology

accenture operations

# Developing Winning Proposals

Why Proposals?

## Definition „Project“

Project - here, as opposed to the ongoing activity found in **batch or continuous systems**, resources are brought together for a period of time, focused on a particular task, such as the development of a new product, and then disbanded and reassigned. The management of such projects requires a special type of organization to administer project resources in an effective manner and maintain clear accountability for the progress of the project.

Encyclopedia Britannica

# Are Proposals just something for Consultants?

- Project based organization are becoming more common
- Large Organizations are split into separate companies
- Selling and winning is just one part, understanding the scope the other, even more important

# Developing Winning Proposals

What is a proposal?

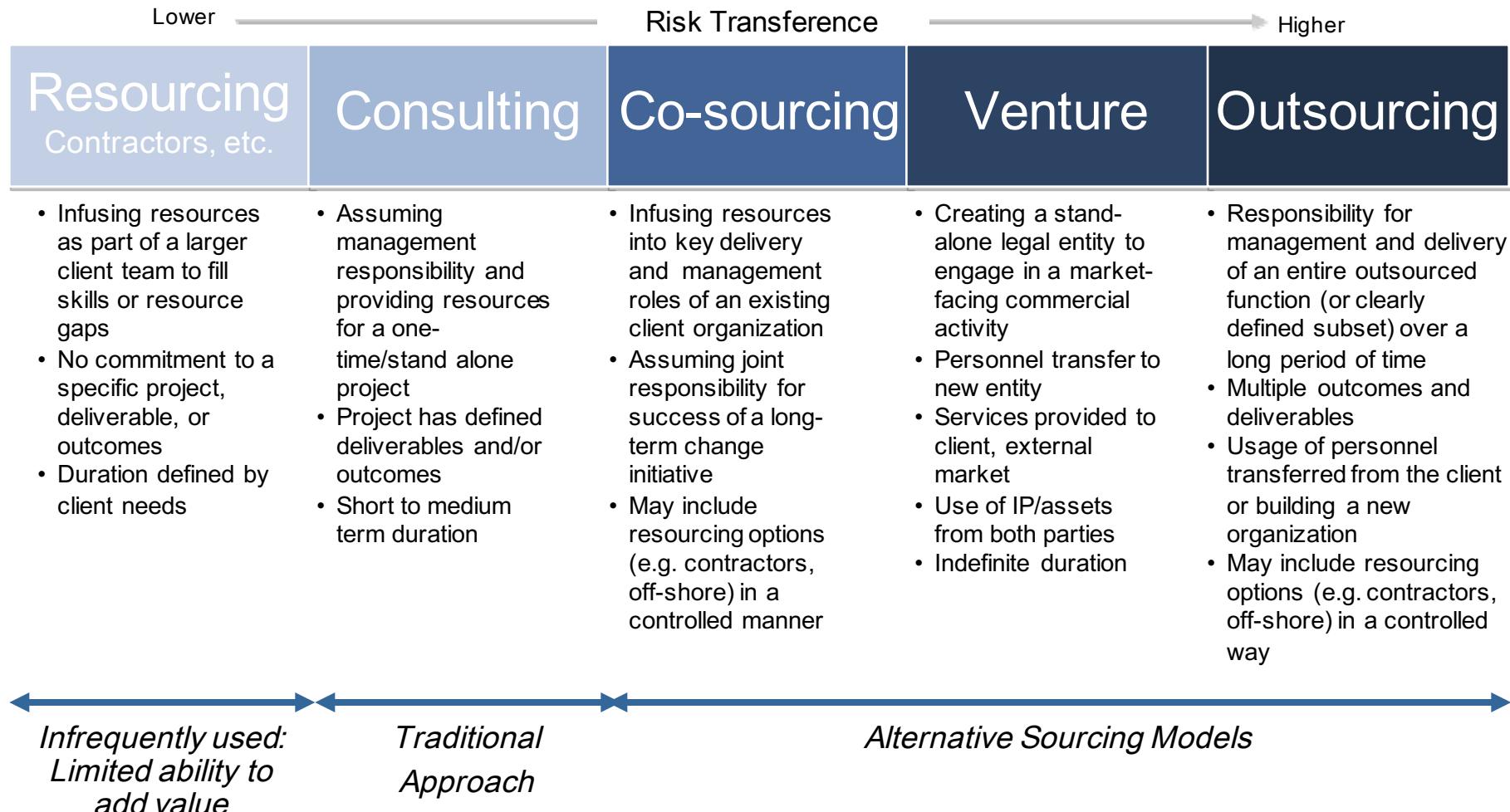
# Definition Proposal

Legally binding, formal and comprehensive offer to a client to solve a business problem by defining an appropriately tailored project to do so

NOT in this context: „an offer of marriage“



# Content and effort to develop a proposal is highly dependant on the scope of work proposed



# For „normal“ IT projects, a wide variety of project types exists

- Strategic work (IT strategy)
- Conceptual work
- Design and Implementation
- Project/Program management

# General structure of proposals

- Understanding the client's problem (status quo, problem description, goals)
- Describing the solution to the problem
- Work plan (tasks, time, budget and personnel) to solve the client's problem
- Prerequisites for the client (client time, client personnel involvement, project equipment etc.)
- Pricing
- Legal issues (warranty, AGB's etc.)

# Legal issues are an important part of an proposal

- At the end, the proposal is a legally binding offer /contract
- Highly important questions need to be answered (Werkvertrag vs. Dienstvertrag), warranty etc.
- Involve a lawyer as you can only loose if you do not
- Not covered here in detail

# At the end, the issue of pricing is always the final step

- Historically, most projects were priced at „time&materials“ with a prearranged and negotiated area (between x and y) and the price for an hour/day was key
- More options exist now and are becoming more common and important:
  - Fixed Price for fixed scope („all included“)
  - Bonus for ahead of time delivery
  - Value based billing

# Sample

- Goal
- Approach and Results
- Provisioning of Infrastructure for the Project and Participation Obligations
- Project Organization
- Milestones and Cost
- Additional Agreements

# Developing Winning Proposals

What is a proposal process?

# Homework has to be done before the proposal can be started

- Software Engineering usually does not cover this project phase, but structured approach is necessary
- Some clients/markets dictate the proposal process: Public tenders
- Developing Proposals is expensive, it is important to focus on the important ones
- Step 1 und 2 are necessary to define if you want to proceed, the rest of the process is used to deliver and win!

# **Step 1: Do you want to work for this client at all?**

- Select/Preferred Client (new client, existing client)
- History of client towards working with external contractors
- Own history with the client
- Win-Win Situation?



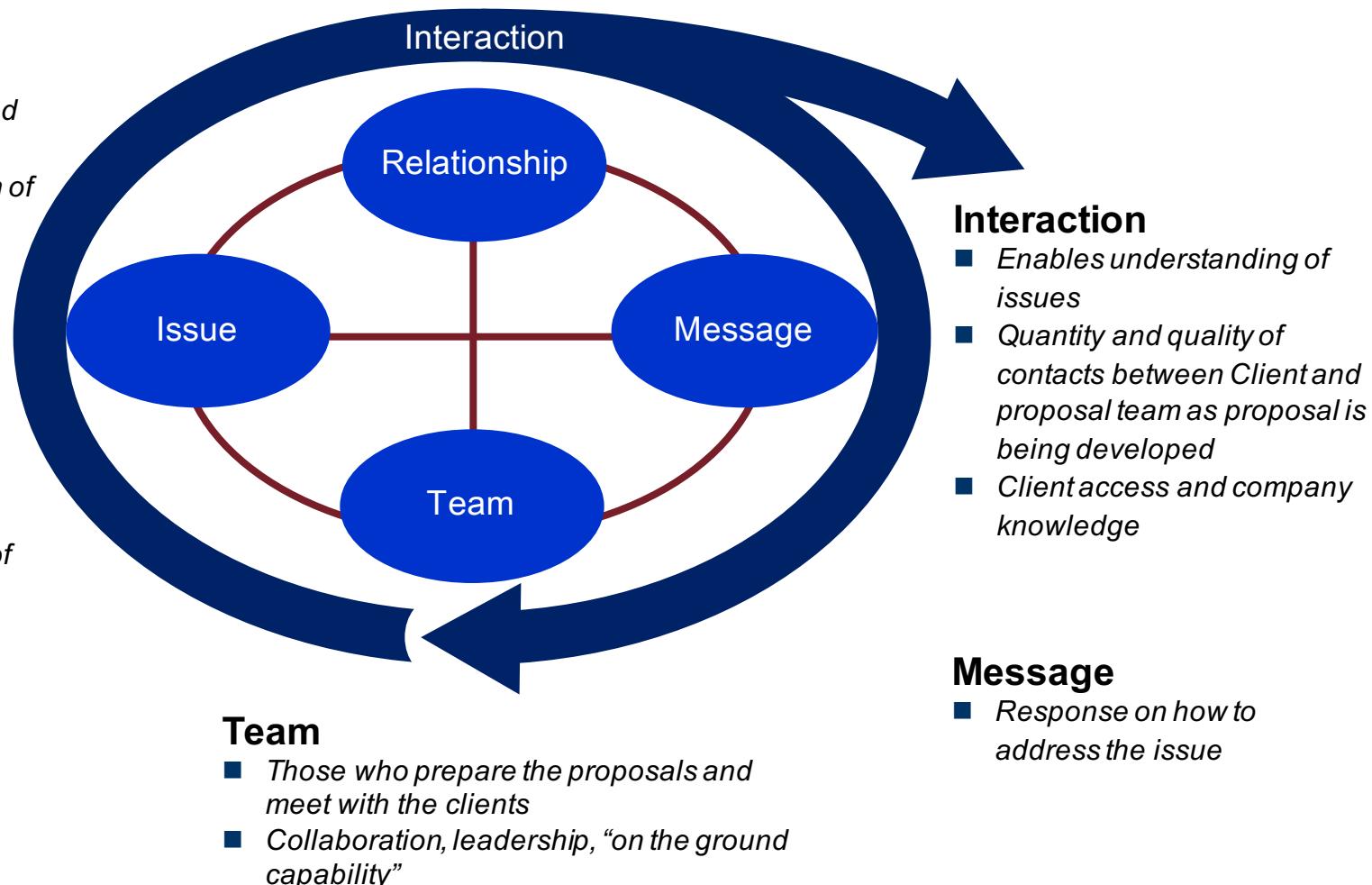
## Step 2: Do you want to bid for this project?

- What is the competition?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses important for this project?
- What is the estimated effort for developing the proposal?
- Does the project fit into your goals and strategy (move to new area, reference)?
- Evaluate cost/risk proposition

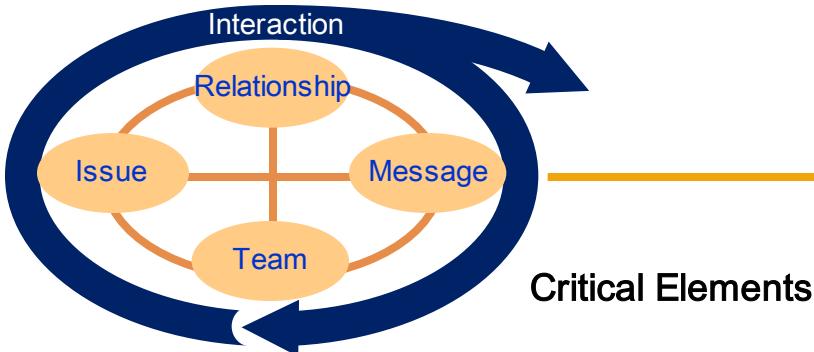
# While all proposals are different, five key elements influence a proposal's chance of success - when consistently applied.

## Relationship

- Professional trust and empathy
- Measurable strength of relationship



# Interaction is the means to pursue collaborative problem solving and to demonstrate commitment to the client.



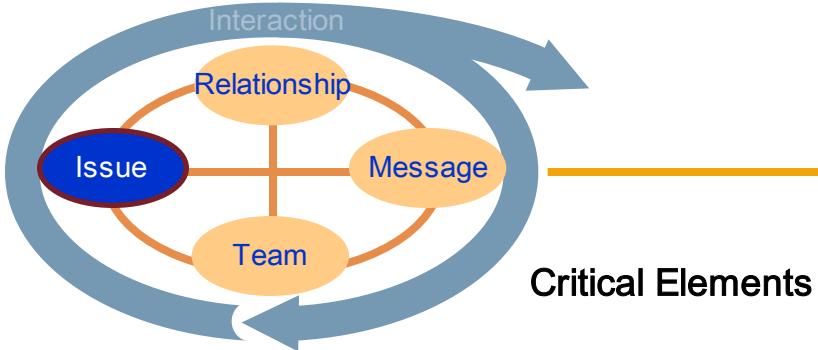
## Interaction

- Embark on Discovery Process
- Make Problem Solving Collaborative
- Demonstrate Disproportionate Commitment vs. Expectations
- Consistently Collect Feedback
- Consider Abandoning Bids where Client Interaction is Restricted

### Why we should do this

- Understand buyer values and demonstrate empathy for the client's situation
- Develop buy-in for capabilities, expertise, and client chemistry
- Show commitment and thereby gain client's trust
- Focus on the real issues of the client
- Invest resources wisely

# Framing an issue offers an up-front opportunity to demonstrate insight, creativity and depth of experience.



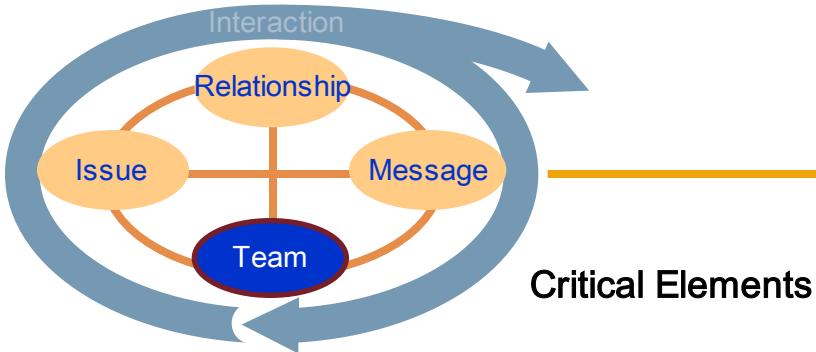
- Define Problem Accurately
- Frame Issues Insightfully
- Position Issues Within Solution Boundaries

Issue

Why we should do this

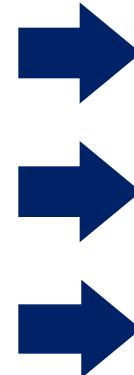
- Address vital client issues
- Demonstrate competence, insight, creativity, depth and value
- Ensure proposed solution is actionable

# Effective teaming is critical since it leverages team resources and mirrors the scope of the issue addressed.



## Team

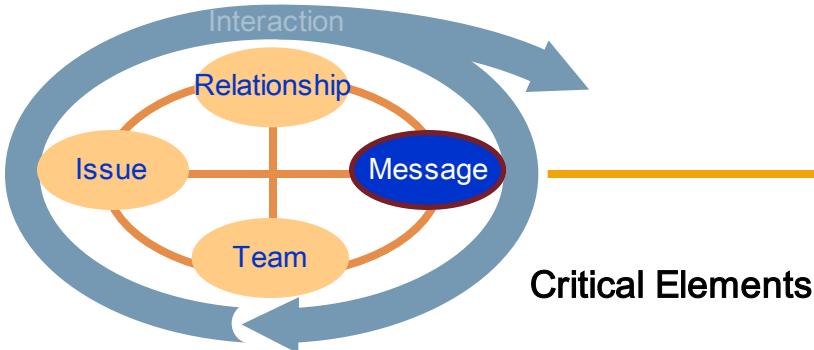
- Appoint and Empower a Proposal Leader
- Assemble Appropriate Team Early
- Dedicate Significant Time



## Why we should do this

- Centralize effort and ensure expertise, leadership and commitment
- Target team resources to each element of client problem (skills, expertise and chemistry)
- Demonstrate leadership, commitment and experience

# Message delivery allows to articulate competitive advantage and demonstrate subtle differentiation vs. competitors.

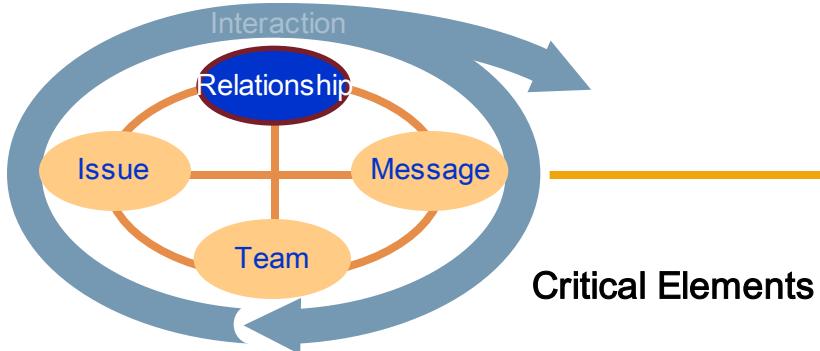


## Message

### Why we should do this

- Be Concise
  - Add Value Immediately
  - Emphasize Integrated Strategy
  - Demonstrate Similar Successes
- 
- Focus on key issues; avoid superfluous material
  - Articulate value proposition; propose solution hypotheses
  - Highlight competitive advantage
  - Foster trust and increase a client's comfort level with change

# Relationships are also the foundation for future projects and follow-on opportunities.



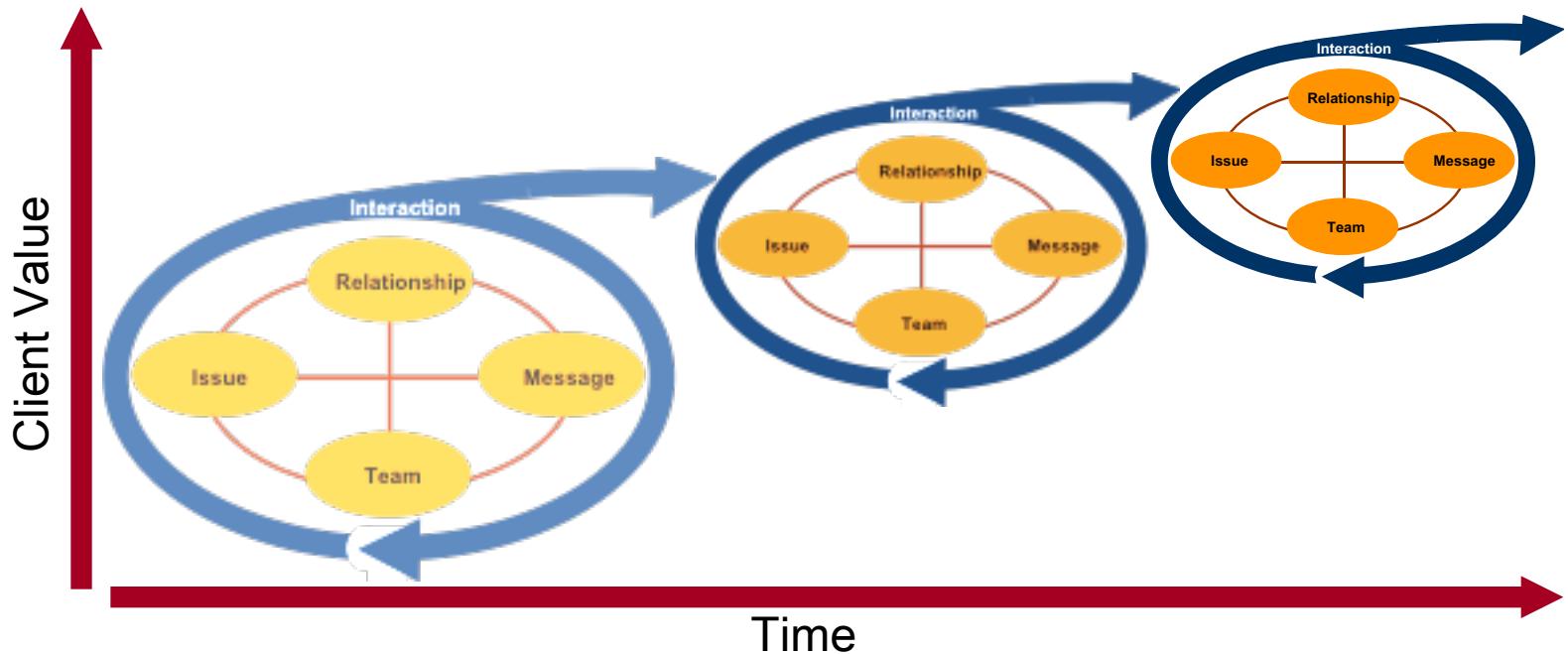
## Relationship

- Build Trust
- Nurture and Maintain Personal Relationships
- Understand Power Dynamics within the client
- Understand State of Mind

### Why we should do this

- Foster confidence and commitment
- Build basis of trust and commitment
- Identify relationship boundaries and barriers
- Better position ideas and messages

The focused pursuit of recurring relationships benefits both parties because it enables to understand client issues better and to ultimately add more value.



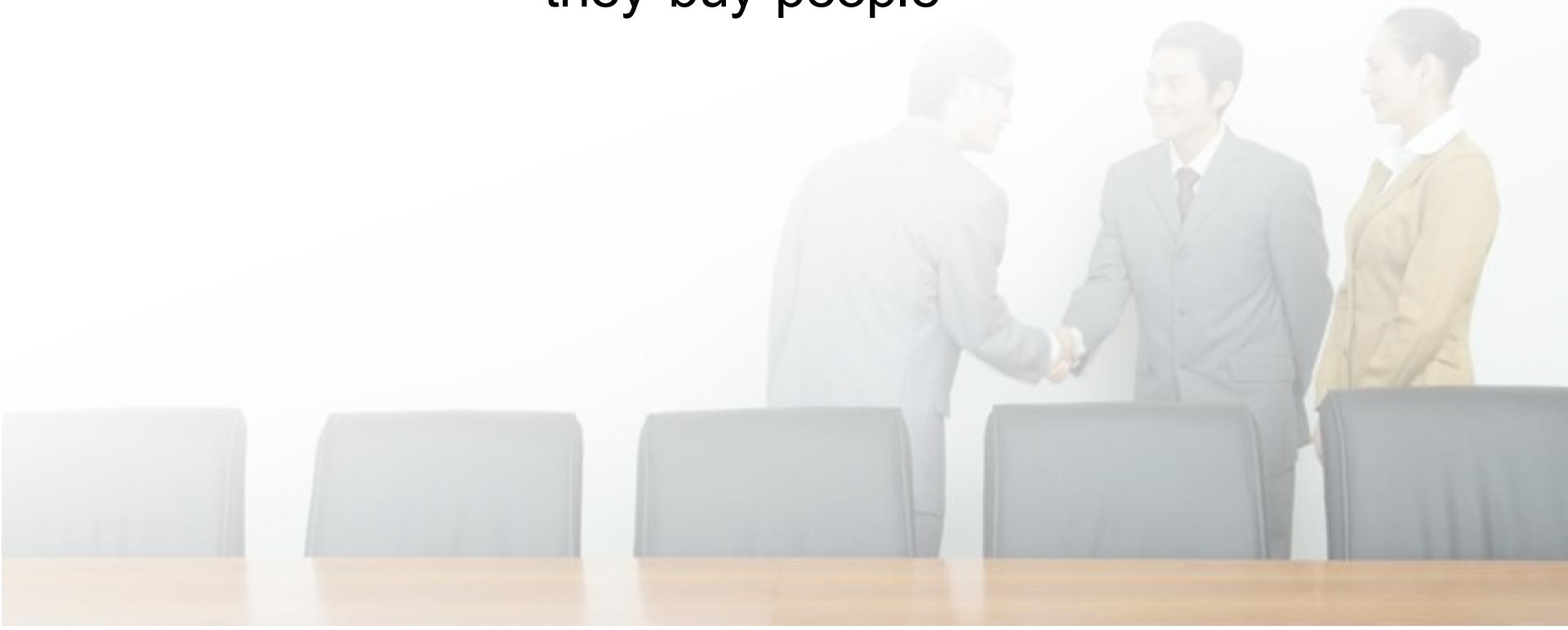
- Keep client's needs in the forefront
- Build peripheral vision of client issues while executing current engagement
- Reduce proposal efforts through better understanding of client issues (*smaller images*)
- Strengthen the five elements (*darker images*)
- These factors all lead to more value added to the client (*upward sloping images*)

# Developing Winning Proposals

What makes a  
winning proposal?

**Understand your client's intention and have him/her understand you.**

„People do not buy companies and even not ideas,  
they buy people“



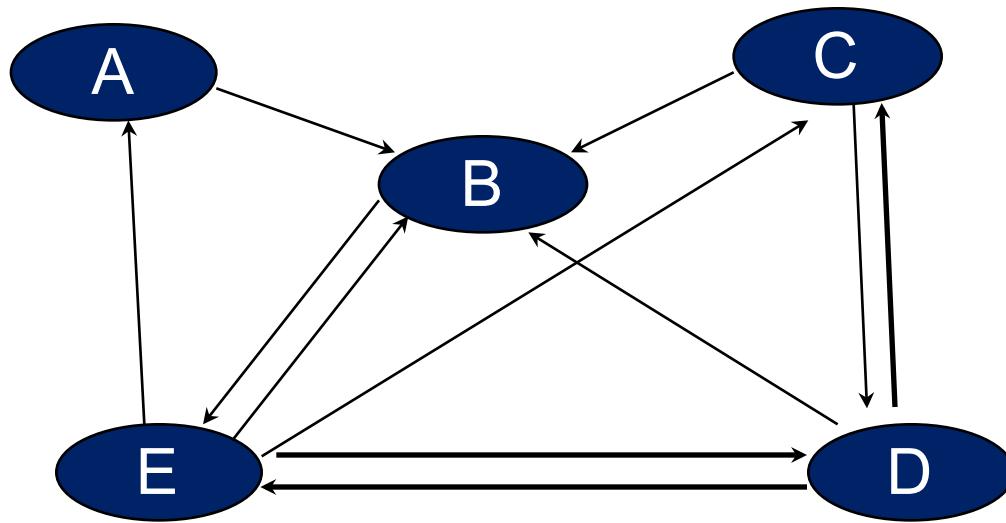
# Understand your client's needs and boundaries.

- Assess decision parameters of the client thoroughly
- A perfect 'full size' solution will not be pursued if it is way off the client's budget or the client just intentionally wants to fix a part of the problem

# Build the ‘right’ relationships.

- Assess the buyer situation with a ,power map‘ of the client
- Who is the ,real‘ buyer e.g. who decides about the proposal, what is his/her motivation for the project

# Powermap: Example



X Person

→ Communication  
Direction  
Intensity

## **Make sure that your team has the right skill-mix and be flexible to adjust.**

- The content of a proposal is the basic key to winning the project – therefore you need an expert team to deliver quality content, relationships, legal structure, etc.
- If through constant interaction with the client you should find out that the focus of the proposal shifts to another functional area than originally planned - make sure to include the necessary skills in your team

# Learn from every proposal – including failures.

- Assess reasons for failure and extract lessons learned
- Share your knowledge and actively seek support from others and their experience
- Identify advantages from competitors



failure

success

# Be careful with the language of your proposal!

Avoid	Use
Best (practice, solution, ...)	Good (practice, solution, ...)
Full / Fully (functional, compliant, ...)	As agreed / Complying with
Highest (quality, standard)	Agreed standards, our standards
Optimum / optimal (solution)	Appropriate (solution)
We will be your partner	We will collaborate / work with you
State-of-the-art technology	Current proven technology at the time of signature of the agreement

# Do not forget: The proposal is only the first step of the project

- Promise only what you can deliver!
- You have to deliver what you promised initially, otherwise it will be your last win.
- It is much harder to win trust than to loose it again!

# Developing Winning Proposals

Discussion: Q&A

# Your Step into your Future

Further information on Accenture and your career opportunities can be found on our career website:

- [accenture.de/karriere](http://accenture.de/karriere)
- [accenture.at/karriere](http://accenture.at/karriere)
- [accenture.ch/karriere](http://accenture.ch/karriere)

You can also reach us on the following social media platforms:

- [facebook.com/accenturekarriere](http://facebook.com/accenturekarriere)
- [twitter.com/erlebeaccenture](http://twitter.com/erlebeaccenture)
- [xing.com/companies/accenture](http://xing.com/companies/accenture)

Our Careers Info-line will answer all your questions:

- Germany/Austria: 00 800 - 450 450 45 (toll free)
- Switzerland: 00 41 - 44 219 5005

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