

Value Proposition

A value proposition is a clear statement of the tangible deliverables and benefits, not features or capabilities, a sponsor, partner or user will receive from your project or program, and why they are superior to those offered by others. It is the heart of a successful proposal. Your audience will want to hear or read more if the value proposition is relevant and you are credible.

To organize your value proposition as part of an oral presentation or written executive summary, fill in the blanks, below. In this monologue there is a dialog taking place. You are addressing, in sequence, the questions that are popping up in the listener's mind

1. For _____ (target sponsor, partner or user),
2. Who _____ (have what need, opportunity or problem),
3. The _____ (name of project or program)
4. Is a _____ (type of product or service)
5. That _____ (what product or service does for sponsors, partners and users).
6. According to _____ (credible source), there are _____ (number with this need, opportunity or problem), who _____ (spend what amount on this need, opportunity or problem).
7. Unlike _____ (primary competing project or program), which is weak or missing the opportunity, our solution is beneficial because _____ (how it is faster, better, cheaper, and safer).
8. We _____ (names of key personnel at the university and partner institutions) have already demonstrated our solution by _____ (pilot project).
9. We are recognized by _____ (credible source) as the foremost expert on _____.

Some tips:

Value is in the eye of the beholder. Value is discovered through interaction with a sponsor, partner or user. Each has different needs and problems. Effective value propositions are customized to the specific needs of each sponsor, partner or user.

After hearing or reading your value proposition, the listener likely will ask about the total value and total cost based on what you previously stated.

For example, if you are asking the university to contribute to your project or

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program in any way (space, money, letter of support, etc.), then complete this additional sentence:

"The total cost of this project or program is _____ during the next five years. The university's net return on investment (after paying costs) consists of revenue _____ (e.g., full indirect cost recovery, buy out of time, donation of cash or equipment, licensing revenue or equity position); research _____ (e.g., growth of research cluster, city and regional benefits, experiential student opportunities); and reputation _____ (e.g., high quality alliances with business and other institutions). These benefits will be realized _____ (when)."

Value for other sponsors might include: increase their revenue; decrease their costs; increase their profitability; create new opportunities; improve their productivity; improve their cycle time/speed; improve the satisfaction, retention, and growth of their customers; improve quality; improve the satisfaction of their employees; etc.

Value may also be in intangibles such as relationships, reputation, responsiveness, flexibility, integrity or trustworthiness, meeting expectations or aspirations, and many more things.