The State of AI in Proposal Development

What's Working, What's Not, and What You Need to Know

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Today's Agenda

1. 2025 in Review & What's Coming in 2026

2. The 20/80 Split: What's Working vs. What's Not

3. Three Make-or-Break Factors for 2026

4. Leveraging AI in the Capture Phase

5. Government as AI-Powered Buyer

6. AI Governance & Compliance Requirements

Three Shifts That Changed Everything in 2025

1	2	3
Agentic AI Emergence	**Government Adoption of AI AI Evaluation**	**AI Governance in Procurement**
AI executes multi-step workflows autonomously	Agencies using AI for compliance checking, comparative analysis, initial scoring	RFPs requiring AI usage disclosure, data handling, audit trails
10x productivity gains vs. basic AI usage	Must optimize for both human and AI AI review	Non-compliance = disqualified before technical evaluation

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What's Coming in 2026

2026 is NOT 2025 with incremental improvements.
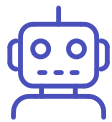
Agentic AI evolution

Multi-agent systems, increasing autonomy, BD lifecycle integration

Enhanced government AI evaluation

More agencies adopting, automated preliminary scoring becoming standard

Advanced governance

Industry standards emerging, certification programs, automated compliance tools

Organizations treating this as slow evolution are falling behind permanently.

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The 20/80 Split - What's Working vs. What's Not Not

Research from MIT CSAIL and McKinsey confirms the split

What separates the 20% from from the 80%

The root causes of struggle

The 20% vs. The 80%

THE 20% WHO ARE WINNING:

- Implemented agentic capabilities and autonomous workflows

- Achieving 30-40% time reduction

- Established governance frameworks before RFPs demanded it demanded it

- Prepared for AI-powered government evaluation

THE 80% WHO ARE STRUGGLING:

- Treating AI as a better search engine or typing assistant

- Basic ChatGPT prompting, isolated tool adoption

- No workflow integration, poor content foundation

- No governance framework

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Three Make-or-Break Factors for 2026

| Knowledge | Process | Methodology |

These three factors explain WHY the 80% are struggling. Without these foundations, it doesn't matter which AI tool you choose.

Knowledge, Process, Methodology

1	2	3
KNOWLEDGE	**PROCESS**	**METHODOLOGY**

KNOWLEDGE

- "Garbage in, garbage out" is amplified by AI
- Must be structured, tagged, and optimized for AI retrieval
- Poor content + AI = poor proposals, proposals, faster

PROCESS

- Agentic AI runs multi-step workflows workflows without you in the loop loop
- If you can't define your process clearly, you can't automate it
- You won't see output until pink team team or red team

METHODOLOGY

- AI amplifies whatever methodology you bring
- Without proven BD methodology, methodology, "agentic AI" is just a just a buzzword
- The winners know HOW to do each each step, then translate that into AI into AI workflows

AI in Capture - Practical Applications Applications

EARLY READINESS ASSESSMENT

- Run readiness reports on draft SOWs from Industry Day
- No RFP yet, just early gap analysis with past performance alignment

CAPTURE INTELLIGENCE INTEGRATION

- Extract win themes and pain points from CRM notes automatically
- Run prompt templates before key customer meetings
- Synthesize capture notes into proposal-ready content

DEEP RESEARCH CAPABILITIES

- AI-generated agency intelligence reports
- Five-year plans, recent announcements, strategic priorities

Government as AI-Powered Buyer

The reality of AI in government evaluation

What this means for your proposals

How to prepare

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Preparing for AI-Powered Evaluation

WHAT AI EVALUATION DOES

- Automated compliance verification against Section L/M
- Comparative analysis across proposals
- Pattern recognition for quality indicators
- Initial scoring algorithms

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

- Compliance is more critical than ever (AI catches everything) everything)
- Clarity and structure matter more (AI struggles with ambiguity) ambiguity)
- Must optimize for both human evaluators AND AI systems systems
- Consider testing proposals with AI tools before submission submission

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AI Governance & Compliance Requirements

Governance is now a procurement criterion

What you must demonstrate

How to prepare before RFPs demand it demand it

What You Must Be Prepared to Demonstrate

1
AI USAGE DISCLOSURE
• Which tools used, how deployed, human oversight processes

2
DATA HANDLING & SECURITY
• CMMC/NIST 800-171 compliance, data residency

3
QUALITY ASSURANCE
• How AI content is reviewed, SME verification, handling hallucinations hallucinations

| 4 |
|---|
| **EXPLAINABILITY & AUDIT TRAILS** |
| • Documentation of human vs. AI decisions |
| • Can you explain AI's role if asked |

BUILD YOUR FRAMEWORK NOW

- Start with policy framework
- Implement tracking and audit capabilities
- Train teams on governance
- Test with internal audits before RFPs demand it

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Key Takeaways

1   2026 is not 2025 with minor improvements. The game changed fundamentally.

2   The 20/80 split comes down to three factors: Content, Process, Methodology.

3   AI value extends beyond proposal writing into capture.

4   Government buyers are using AI to evaluate you. Prepare accordingly.

5   AI governance is now a procurement requirement, not optional.

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Thank You!
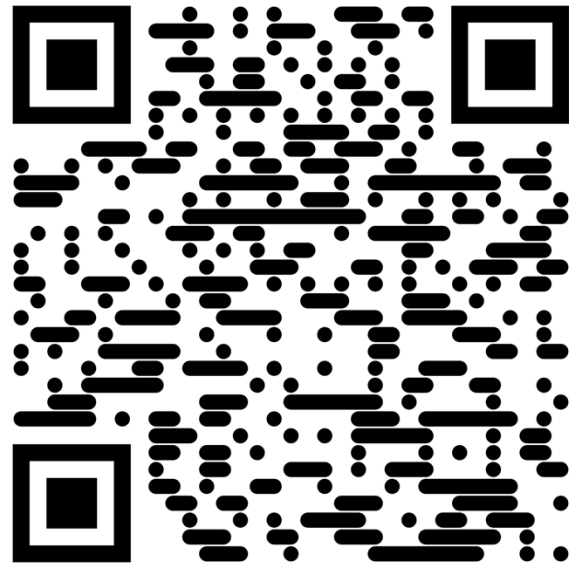
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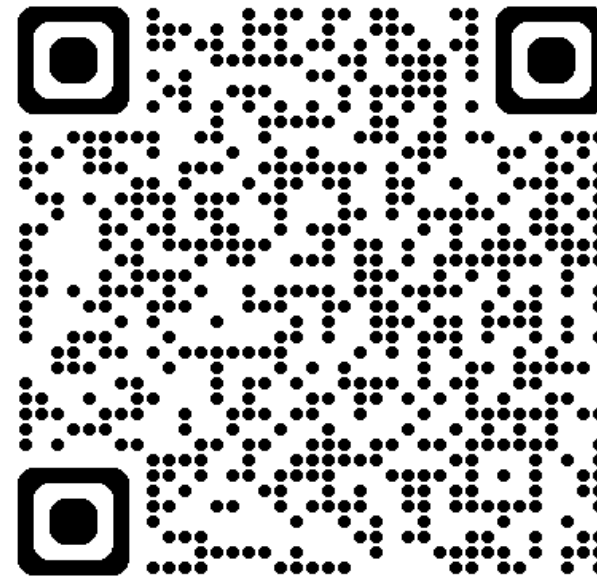
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