

Say Whatttt???? Writing Clean, Straightforward and Easy to Follow Specifications

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Facts and Figures were provided by:

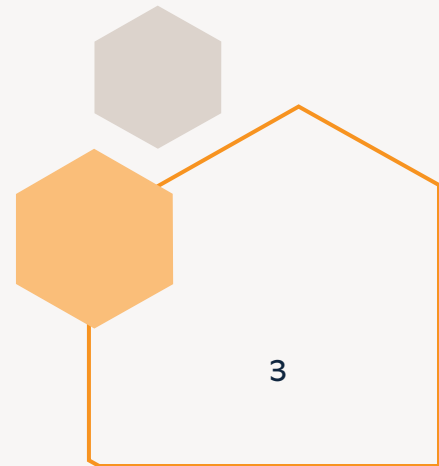
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- English-efl.com, “What is Good Grammar and Why Does it Matter”, accessed April 2024, <<https://www.English-efl.com/methodology/good-grammar-matter>
- Instructional Solutions “How to Write a Technical Specification Document”, Kara Latz, May 16, 2023, updated December 7, 2023. <<https://instructionalsolutions.com/blog/technical-specification>.
- The University of Texas at Austin Human Dimensions of Organization “Why Spelling and Grammar Matter, John W. Traphaga, Ph.D. October 19, 2021; <https://hdo.utexas.edu/why-spelling-and-grammar-matter/>
- 22 Horrifyingly Hilarious Mistakes, LorraineDelp, March 12, 2020 <<https://bookbub.com/blog/scary-grammar>
- The Northern Territory Government’s Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics :Master Spec: Guide to Writing Specifications” (NT.GOV.AU)
- NIGP: The Institute for Public Procurements, Public Procurement Dictionary of Terms, 2022 Edition
- Calvin and Hobbes, Bill Watterson



FAPPO Annual Conference 2024

Say What? Writing Clean,
Straightforward and Easy to Follow
Specifications

9:20 AM - 10:20 AM



**CROCODILES
DO NOT SWIM HERE**



Why are we here?



SPECIFICATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION
It is Pasco County's intent to award a contract for the removal, disposal of the existing roofing materials and replacement of the roof at the following site location: Hickory Hills Well House.

Hickory Hills Well House
37439 Layton Rd
Dade City, FL 33525

1.1 See Exhibit A for building schematic, pictures, and approximate size.

2. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

2.1 All bidders must have the proper licensing from the State of Florida and must be licensed to do business in Pasco County, Florida.

2.2 The Contractor must comply with all Local building codes and State and Federal Regulations.

2.3 All bidders must be properly insured and provide a Certificate of Insurance of their General Liability policy to be approved by the County.

2.4 Published Product Specifications and warranty information must be supplied with the quote.

2.5 Contractor must supply a list of all subcontractors with bid, if any.
• Contractor will be responsible for all subcontractors approved by Pasco County Utilities (PCU).
• Pasco County Utilities Reserve the right to approve any/all subcontractors.

3. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

3.1 The contractor must be a licensed contractor with a minimum (3) years' experience in roofing for commercial or industrial facilities.

3.2 All bidders must provide a copy of a General Contracting and/or Roofing Contractor licenses to qualify for this specified scope of work.

4. VENDOR RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 All additional work must be preapproved and authorized by the PCU Project Manager.

4.2 The Contractor must supply a schedule prepared two (2) weeks in advance.

1

This belongs in scope...

Not enough for a whole section - more to General part.

Additional work should be mentioned at the end of the scope - not here.

provide the PCU project manager with notice that

move to Vendor responsibilities

prior to advance, before commencing any work.

4.3 If any delays or changes in the schedule are required, the Contractor must advise PCU representative 24-hours in advance, including change in work schedule due to inclement weather conditions.

4.4 Application of all permits are the responsibility of the Contractor.
Contractor is responsible for all costs associated with the application and maintenance of all permits and licenses required to perform services as described herein.

4.5 All costs for permits and fees; including but not limited to, all building permit fees, dump fees and inspection requirements are the responsibility of the Contractor and are to be included in the bid price.

4.6 All dimensions in these specifications are approximate and the contractor is responsible for the entire roof design and replacement, including all measurements. The bid price must include all parts and labor.

4.7 All existing roofing materials are to be removed down to the underlayment including insulation and any decking that needs replacement in order to obtain a smooth workable deck.

4.8 Contractor is responsible for protecting the project from any water damage, once the project begins, will be the responsibility of the contractor.
Any water damage that occurs during the project

4.9 The Contractor must provide PCU signed and sealed record drawings from a licensed architect or engineer prior to processing of final payment.
Contractor is responsible for removing

4.10 Removal and replacing all flashing, as needed, is the responsibility of the Contractor.

4.11 All debris must be removed in a consistent, continuous, and timely fashion to not cause a hazardous environment because the buildings will remain occupied during the work and Contractor must comply with all safety requirements, including OSHA.
(include removing nails)

4.12 The Contractor is responsible for the restoration of facilities, grounds or vegetation damaged during the work.
General requirement

5. SCOPE OF WORK

5.1 Remove existing roofing, insulation and existing flashing as required for complete roof replacement.

5.2 Installation of two (2) layers of 1.5" ISO insulation that is mechanically fastened, not tacked or glued.

5.3 Install a sixty (60) mil White Thermoplastic Polyolefin (TPO) Roof System, mechanically fastened.

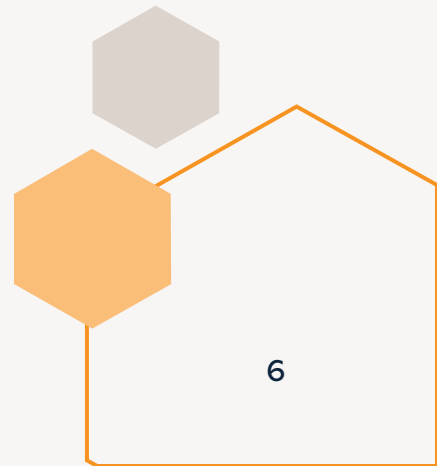
2

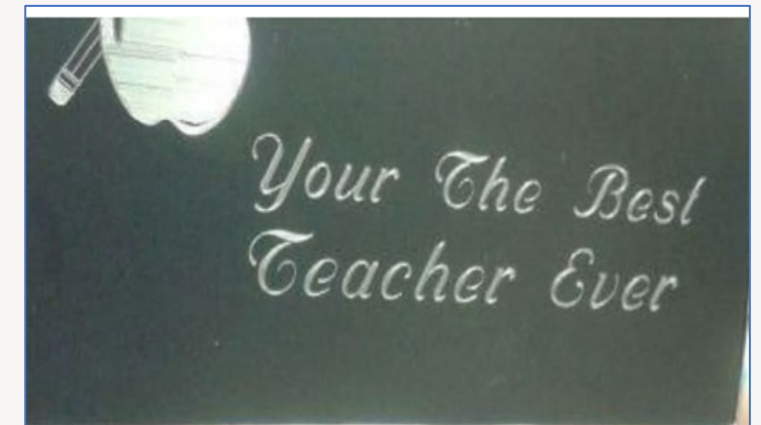
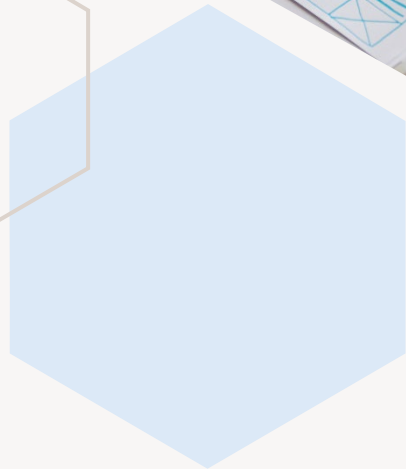
Add a whole new statement: Bid price is inclusive of all labor, materials, permitting/fees, and overhead and other costs associated with the completion of this project.

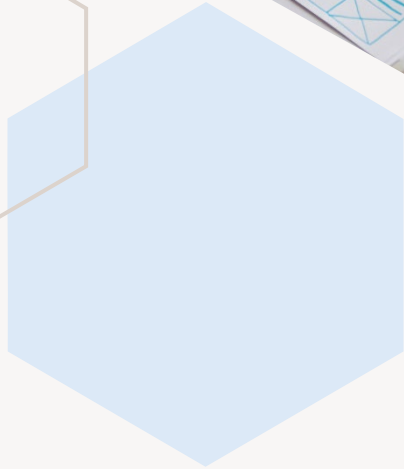
You pick 1 - Installation or Stay in place

EXERCISE

ARE MISTAKES REALLY THAT
COMMON???







**SHOPLIFTERS WILL
BE PROSTITUTED**

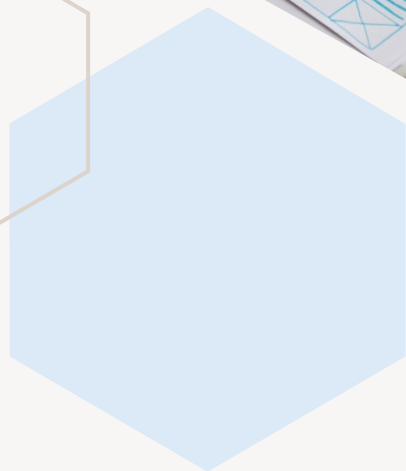
**TABLES
ARE FOR EATING
CUSTOMERS ONLY**

NO LOITERING

*Plain
Bagels*

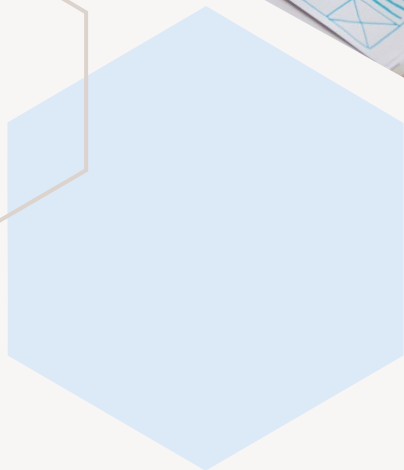
Please use Tongue or
Tissue Paper when
making your
selection, Thank u

**THIS
IS
ARE YEAR**

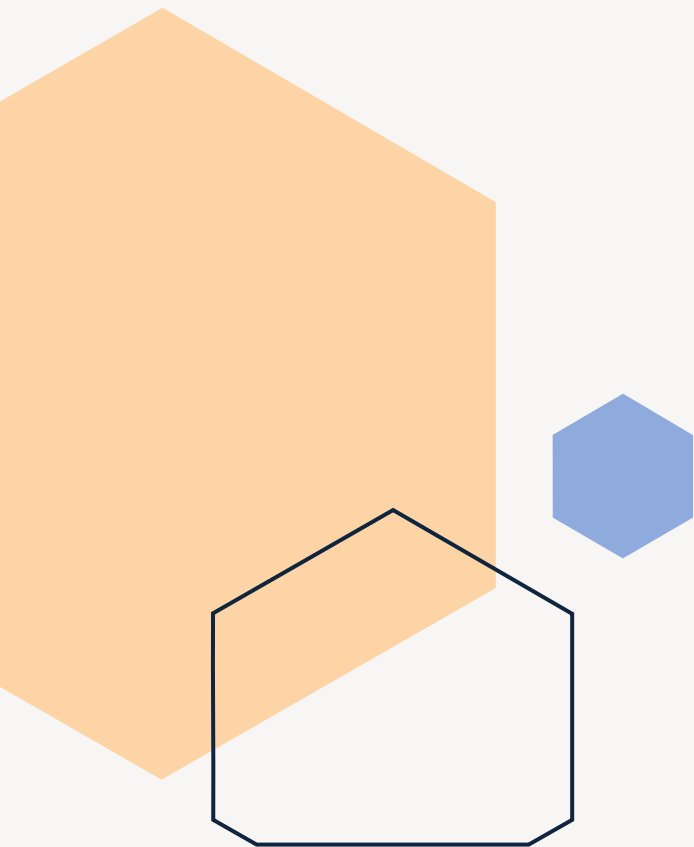


**Pump's Are Not Taking Debit Card's
Please Fill Up Gas And pay In Side
With You're Debit Card OR Use As
Credit At Pump. Thank you
Sorry For Inconvenius**





What are the consequences of a poorly written specification?



Time

- Will you have to postpone a bid opening because of errors?
- Will the project take longer than expected because of mistakes in the spec?

Money

- Will your mistakes cause change orders that will increase prices?
- Will you get fewer bids because the specs were incorrect or unreasonable?

Reputation

- Do you know what you are talking about?
- Will you accept sloppy work from the vendor?
- Will vendors want to work for an agency that puts out a poor work product?

Spec Writing Basics



#1 thing to remember when writing specs- **BUILD RELATIONSHIPS**

- If you are in Purchasing, get to know your customers.
- If you are the customer, get to know your Purchasing team.

STOP being the Roadblock

- If you are Purchasing, be the **SOLUTION** for your customers
- If you are the customer, be the partner Purchasing can count on- not our adversary

Most Importantly

- Take pride in your work- bad specs reflect poorly on everyone. Purchasing should have the authority to edit specifications received from our end users (but remember to stay in your lane!).
- Insist on Management support- from both Purchasing Management and Customer Management

It's All the Same, Right?

Specification

A precise description of the physical characteristics, quality, or desired outcomes of a commodity to be procured that a supplier must be able to produce or deliver in order to be considered for a contract.

You submit a SPECIFICATION when you are looking to purchase goods or commodities.

Scope of Work

A written description of an entity's needs and desired outcomes for a procurement developed at the beginning of the procurement cycle. The scope of work is the basis for any resulting solicitation; it helps ensure that the product or service meets the stated outcome and establishes the parameters of the resulting contract.

You submit a Scope of Work when you are looking for a vendor to provide a service. If you are looking for a vendor to provide the goods AND the service, you would submit a Scope of Work WITH a Specification section.

Types of Specifications

Standard Spec	Design Spec	Technical Spec	Performance Spec	Restrictive Spec
A specification that is to be used for all or most purchases of an item; describes all required physical and functional characteristics of goods, services, or construction.	Establishes the characteristics the item must possess, including details about how it is manufactured. May include engineering plans or drawings.	A subset of a design specification that establishes the material and operating requirements of a good.	Describes the desired outcome of the service or intended use of the goods and how the goods will perform.	Specifications that unnecessarily exclude a potential bidder or proposer from competing for a procurement. Precludes full and open competition.

BAD!!!!

HEADINGS & SUBHEADINGS

1. Introduction
2. General Requirements
3. Minimum Requirements
4. Contract Term
5. Scope of Work
6. Entity Responsibilities
7. Traffic Control
8. Staffing/Personnel Requirements
9. Out of Scope Work
10. Site Visit
11. Damages
12. Warranty



Professional Organizer confession #12

I sort my m&m's
by color before eating
them



Headings & Subheadings



INTRODUCTION

- Describe in 1-2 sentences what we are buying or trying to accomplish
 - DO NOT get too detailed in your Intro
 - It's like an "Elevator Speech" to grab the Vendor's Attention
-
- Pasco County is seeking a vendor for the removal, replacement, and inspection of designated pond liners, building berms, and manipulating soil cover.
 - The Pasco County Board of County Commissioners (County) is seeking written proposals from qualified firms to provide an Inmate Commissary Program and Inmate Banking System for the Pasco County Corrections Department at no cost to the County, whereby commission on the sale of goods and services will be paid to the County.
 - Pasco County is seeking to contract with one or more contractors to provide utility treatment plant specialized maintenance and repair services, on an as-needed basis.

Headings & Subheadings



GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- Standard items that should be in MOST solicitations
- Usually regulatory in nature
- Information every Vendor should know in every solicitation
 - All work must be performed in accordance with all applicable state, local and national laws and codes.
 - Vendors must provide Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for all chemicals used on all Pasco County properties.
 - All work must be performed according to the manufacturer's installation requirements and recommendations and in accordance with all plans and specifications.
 - All work must be completed by a contractor licensed in the state of Florida to perform all work as described herein.

Headings & Subheadings



MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- Factors that can be used to weed out Vendors who are not qualified
- Must be clear and reasonable
 - Vendor must have a certified Master Arborist on staff and assigned to this contract at all times.
 - Vendor must be located within 100 miles of the West Pasco Government Center.

CONTRACT TERM

- Give the expected start date of the contract
- State the original length of the contract and outline any extensions available
- For projects, define the duration
 - The term of this contract is for an initial period of three years to begin on October 1, 2025.
 - This project must be completed no later than one hundred and eighty (180) calendar days after the Notice to Proceed is issued.

Headings & Subheadings



SCOPE OF SERVICES (SPECIFICATIONS)

- Detailed description of what you are looking for or trying to accomplish
- Can include subheadings such as:
 - Item Descriptions
 - Permitting
 - Equipment
 - Schedule of Service
 - Pricing
 - Delivery
 - The selected vendor must provide waste tire management services that meet FDEP Rule Chapter 62-711 requirements.
 - The facilities are open to the public and receives waste tires from residents as well as businesses in Pasco County.
 - An estimated average of 1000 tons of tires will be managed and will need to be removed annually.
 - Bid price of whole tires for incineration for power generation, use in manufacturing process, and/or recycling will be per-ton.

Headings & Subheadings



ENTITY RESPONSIBILITIES

- What will your entity be responsible for?
- Are there any actions the entity must take before the Vendor can do their part?
 - The County is responsible for the site preparation for all new sod installation.
 - The County is responsible for the watering of all newly installed sod.

TRAFFIC CONTROL

- Maintenance of traffic (MOT) requirements.
- Should be standardized throughout your entity.
 - Vendor is responsible for ensure all Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) is conducted in accordance with FDOT Standard Plans Index 102.
 - The vendors must provide all personnel, signs, barricades, and any other items or devices necessary for the maintenance of traffic and safety, at no additional cost to the County.

Headings & Subheadings



STAFFING/PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

- Expectations we have for the Vendor's staff
- Requirements for:
 - Background checks
 - Uniforms
 - Certifications
 - On-Site Supervisor
- Vendors are responsible for ensuring staffing levels are adequate to perform services described herein and are responsible for all costs associated with labor under this contract.
- Personnel must wear appropriate uniforms, carry photo identification, and always present a neat and professional image.

Headings & Subheadings



OUT OF SCOPE WORK

- Is there any related work/goods the vendor can provide?
- How will they price it?
- Do they need prior approval?
 - Additional work identified outside the scope of this contract must be authorized in advance and in writing by the County.
 - The vendors must provide a price for any additional work identified prior to commencement.

Headings & Subheadings



SITE VISIT (PRE-BID CONFERENCE)

- Date/Time/Location
- Mandatory/Non-Mandatory
 - What happens if they skip the mandatory site visit?
 - A pre-bid conference will be held on September 1, 2025, at 1:00pm.
 - Attendance at this pre-bid conference is MANDATORY. Failure to attend will result in the Vendor being deemed non-responsible.

DAMAGES

- Who is expected to repair damages to the entity's property or private property?
- If the entity must bring in someone else to repair damages, who pays?
 - Vendors are responsible for all damage or personal injury resulting from its operations, including, but not limited to:
 - excavation and backfilling
 - Vendor will be responsible for any costs (from neglect damage or personal injury) determined to be caused by the vendor.




Headings & Subheadings



WARRANTY

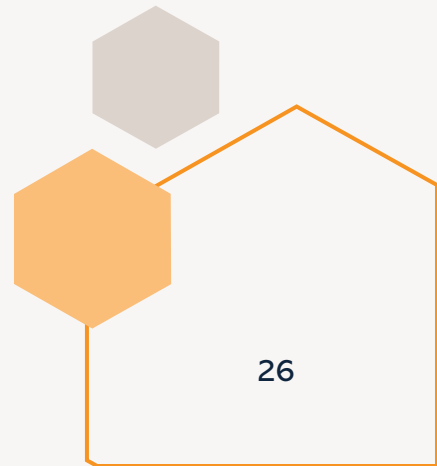
- Length you expect
 - Who is responsible for claims?
 - Do you require literature to be provided with the submission?
-
- The Vendor will request and provide to the County a warranty of no less than twenty (20) years from the liner manufacturer.
 - All labor will be under warranty for one (1) year from the completion of each individual repair or replacement.
 - Should the vendor fail to perform damage repair or warranty work as scheduled, the County will procure services from another vendor. These costs will be the responsibility of the vendor.

Templates Can Be Helpful

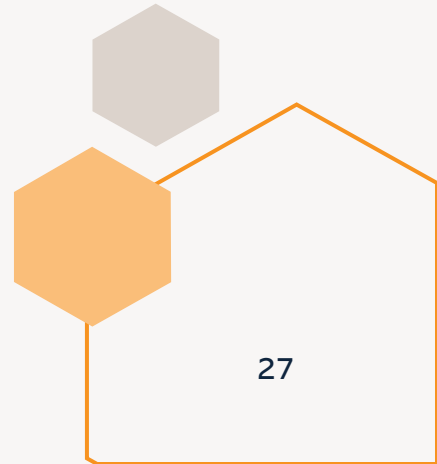
SPECIFICATIONS	
AS NEEDED XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	
1. INTRODUCTION (or INTENT)	<div><div></div><div>Carrie C. Roberts Describe in 1-2 sentences what the project is/what we are buying, what we are trying to accomplish.</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Carrie C. Roberts These should stay the same for most projects. Use your judgement to determine which are applicable.</div></div> <div><div></div><div>Carrie C. Roberts It is better to make a general statement about legal requirements. If we name a specific law or regulation, vendors may feel they can ignore ones not specifically spelled out.</div></div>
Pasco County is seeking XX.	
2. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS	
2.1 All work must be performed in accordance with all applicable state, local and national laws and codes.	
2.2 All quantities stated in this solicitation are estimates for bidding purposes. The County does not guarantee any quantities mentioned herein.	
2.3 All work shall be performed according to the manufacturer's installation requirements and recommendations and in accordance with all plans and specifications	
2.4 All work must be completed by a contractor licensed in the state of Florida to perform all work as described herein.	
2.5 Vendor is responsible for all processes and costs associated with obtaining and maintaining any required permits.	
2.6 All work assigned under the agreement will be performed at various locations throughout Pasco County.	
2.7 In addition to the XXXXX Department, other Pasco County departments may utilize this contract (at the same terms and conditions) for similar work.	
2.8 Vendors must provide Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for all chemicals used on all Pasco County properties.	
2.9 The County reserves the right to award to the lowest, responsive, responsible vendor per line item.	

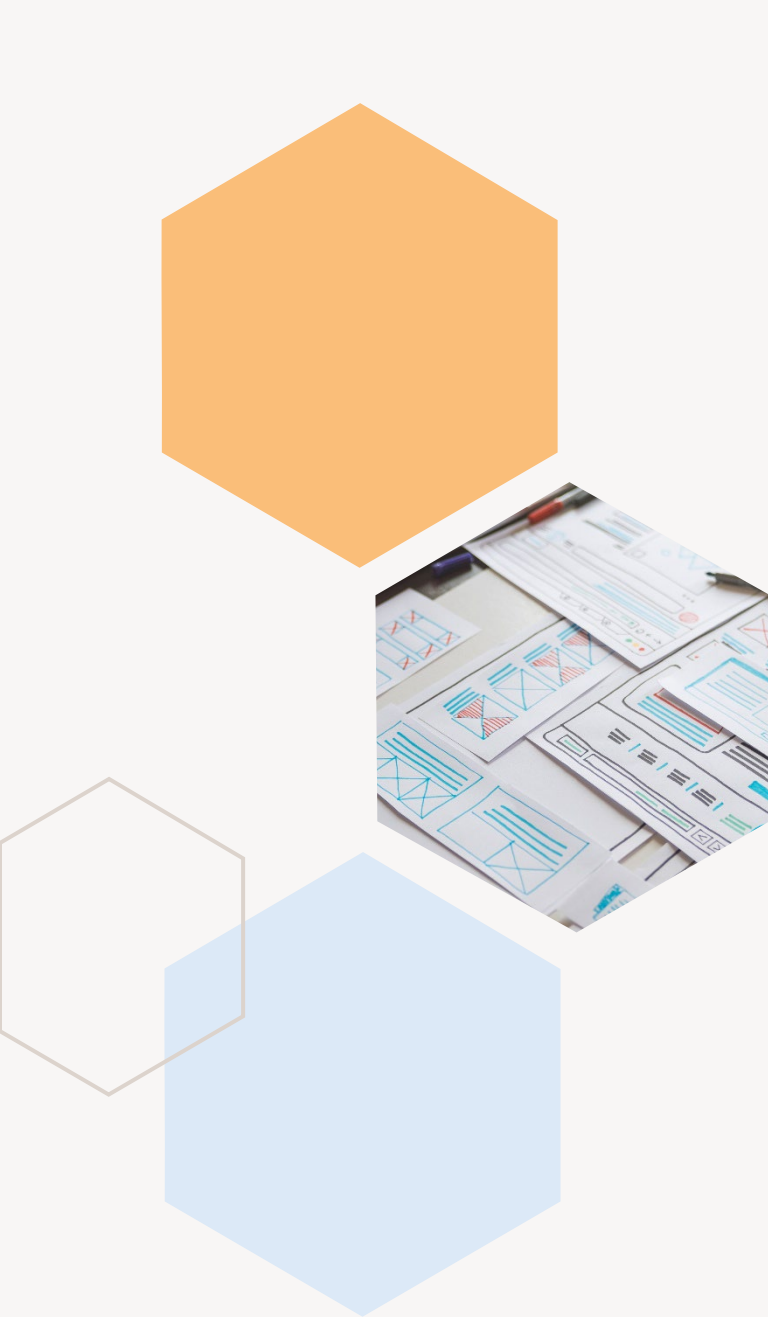
EXERCISE 2

NAME THAT HEADING!



Introduction
General Requirements
Minimum Requirements
Contract Term
Scope of Services
Entity Responsibilities
Staffing/Personnel
Out of Scope Services
Site Visit





1. The successful vendor will be awarded an initial three (3) year contract. The County reserves the right to extend the agreement for up to two (2) additional one (1) year optional renewal periods.

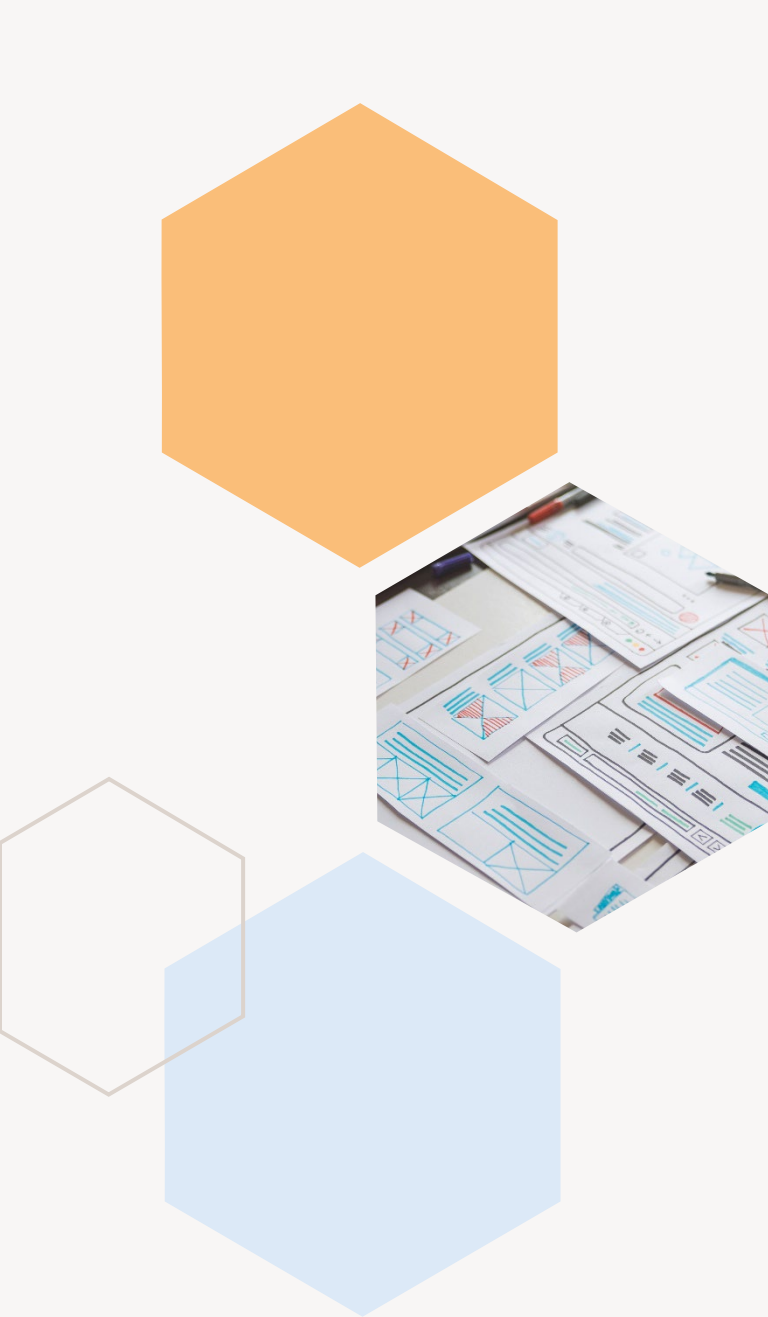
CONTRACT TERM

2. County will host a meeting annually between the vendor and the Board personnel at the event location prior to the event, at a mutually agreed upon time and date, to discuss set-up arrangements, staff, menu and any final instructions pertaining to the event.

ENTITY RESPONSIBILITIES

3. While it is the county's intent to award the contract to one Vendor, we reserve the right to award to multiple Vendors if found to be in our best interest.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS



4. Pasco County (“the County”) is requesting proposals from food providers to cater our Annual Employee Picnic (“the Event”) and provide the food, beverages, paper goods, utensils, and serving staff required to host the event.

INTRODUCTION

5. Vendor will provide tables, equipment, and related materials needed for food serving and set-up, including appropriate serving trays and utensils.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

6. All work must be performed in accordance with all applicable state, local and national codes.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The slide features a decorative graphic on the left side consisting of four hexagons: a large orange one at the top, a smaller white one with a black outline to the left, and a light blue one at the bottom. Overlapping the orange and blue hexagons is a photograph of a document with various charts and graphs.

7. Vendor must be a restaurant or caterer, having been in business for a minimum of two (2) years.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

8. Vendor will only utilize food products that are fresh, wholesome, of good odor and taste. Food must be processed under sanitary conditions.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

9. Interested Vendors are invited to participate in a walk through of the picnic location. Attendance is strongly encouraged.

SITE VISIT



10. The County will provide a dumpster for disposal of trash.


ENTITY RESPONSIBILITIES

11. Vendor pricing shall extend to other County events of similar size and nature.

OUT OF SCOPE WORK

12. Vendors' employees will be attired in uniforms that clearly and properly identify the company. The employees shall be neat and clean in appearance and courteous towards county personnel.

STAFFING/PERSONNEL



13. Vendor must provide a lump sum cost for serving 3,000 meals as outlined in this Statement of Work.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

14. Vendor will provide an on-site supervisor at all times on the day of the event.

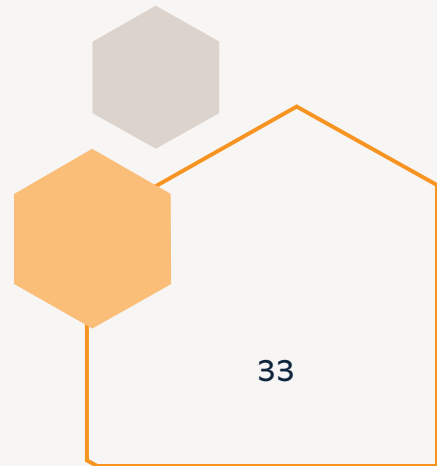
STAFFING/PERSONNEL

15. County reserves the right to immediately cancel the vendor's contract without penalty if the food and/or services provided do not meet the quality required within the contract.

CONTRACT TERM

EXERCISE 3

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS





GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 2.1 All work must be performed in accordance with all applicable state, local and national laws and codes.
- 2.2 All work must be completed by a contractor licensed in the state of Florida to perform all the work as described herein.
- 2.3 Vendor is responsible for all processes and costs associated with obtaining and maintaining any required permits.
- 2.4 Work shall be performed conforming to Occupational Safety and Health Association (OSHA), American National Standards Institute (ANSI), and American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) requirements.
- 2.5 Vendor will provide all labor, consumable materials, tools, equipment, and services required for the annual certification, inspections, and preventive maintenance of the cranes, on an as needed basis.



GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 2.6 Personnel must wear appropriate uniforms, carry photo identification, and always present a neat and professional image.
- 2.7 All work assigned under the agreement will be performed at various locations throughout Pasco County.
- 2.8 The vendor must be onsite for an emergency breakdown within three (3) hours after notification by the County's personnel. The vendor will be compensated based on the emergency hourly rate. Time to be billed in one-quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) hour increments.
- 2.9 Vendors must provide Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for all chemicals used on all Pasco County properties.
- 2.10 In addition to the requesting department, other Pasco County departments may utilize this contract (at the same terms and conditions) for similar work.
- 2.11 All work must be performed according to the manufacturer's installation requirements and recommendations and in accordance with all plans and specifications.



GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 2.12 Upon completion of each inspection, the Vendor must provide the County with a detailed report (Exhibit B) including deficiencies and recommendations found.
- 2.13 The County reserves the right to award the lowest, responsive, responsible vendor per line item.
- 2.14 While it is the county's intent to award the contract to one Vendor, we reserve the right to award multiple Vendors if found to be in our best interest.
- 2.15 All quantities stated in this solicitation are estimates for bidding purposes. The County does not guarantee any quantities mentioned herein.
- 2.16 Pricing must include all labor, tools, materials, and equipment needed to complete all the services described herein.



Let's Dive In



Major Topics

- A. Grammar**
- B. Disorganization**
- C. Spelling**
- D. Being Bossy for the Sake of Being Bossy**
- E. Malicious Compliance**



We'd love to hire you, but your spelling mistakes and poor grammar show you're not as "detail-oriented" as you claim.

Sorry.



Grammar



The online learning platform English-EFL is a great resource for understanding the role good grammar plays in our everyday lives. From the spoken word to the written word, your grammar can reflect both positively and negatively on you.

“A writer with good grammar knows how to use words and punctuation to convey meaning while putting their point across in a way most readers would understand”.

“Grammatical errors can make spoken language confusing and hard for listeners to follow.”

The slide features a large orange hexagon in the top left, a light blue hexagon in the bottom left, and a white hexagon with a thin brown border in the middle left. A photograph of a document with various charts and graphs is positioned in the center-left, overlapping the orange and blue hexagons.

GRAMMAR

1. Using Commas Correctly

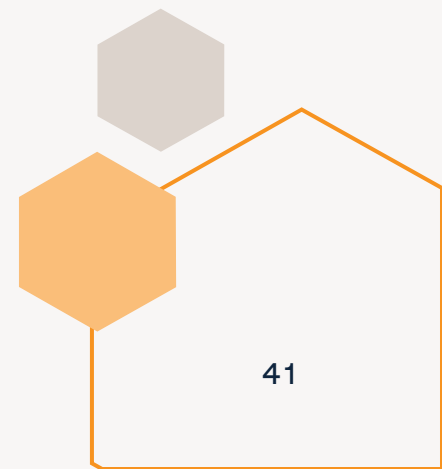
2. Subject-Verb Agreement

3. Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

4.
Homophones

If I ever use "there" instead of "they're" and "your" instead of "you're" in the same post, I've been kidnapped and am signaling for help.

Word Porn



Grammar: Using Commas Correctly



To avoid run on sentences:

- There was nothing to do in town this weekend so Marjory went to the mall.
- There was nothing to do in town this weekend, so Marjory went to the mall.

To break an introductory clause apart from the main part of the sentence

- The class was bored, so they turned on a movie.

Coordinate Adjectives

- The man had a loud and obnoxious voice.
- The man had a loud, obnoxious voice.

Name of direct address (when you are speaking directly to someone).

- Let's eat Grandma
- Let's eat, Grandma.

Grammar: Subject-Verb Agreement



The subject and verb must agree in number (singular or plural). If the subject is singular, the verb must also be singular.

- ⊖ ~~The cats chases the mouse.~~
- The cat chases the mouse.
- ⊖ ~~The cat chase the mouse.~~
- The cats chase the mouse.

Singular forms of verbs are used when collective nouns act in unison, whereas plural forms of verbs are utilized to signify collective nouns that act independently.

- ⊖ ~~The team members is in disagreement over the plan of action.~~
- The team members are in disagreement over the plan of action.

Grammar: Pronoun- Antecedent Agreement



An antecedent is a word that is replaced by a pronoun

- **Shelby** ran into the backyard because **she** saw a squirrel.
- The **student** completed **her** assignment.
- Each **child** should bring **their** own lunch.

Example #1- Basic Grammar Anyone?

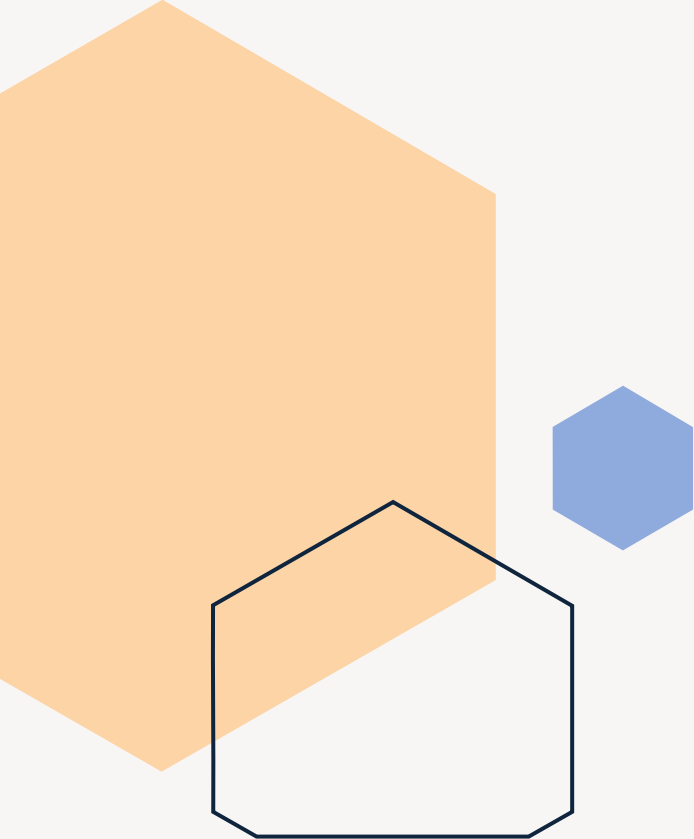
ORIGINAL WORDING

Removal and replacing all flashing, as needed, is the responsibility of the Contractor.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

The Contractor is responsible for the removal and replacement of all flashing.

Grammar: Homophones

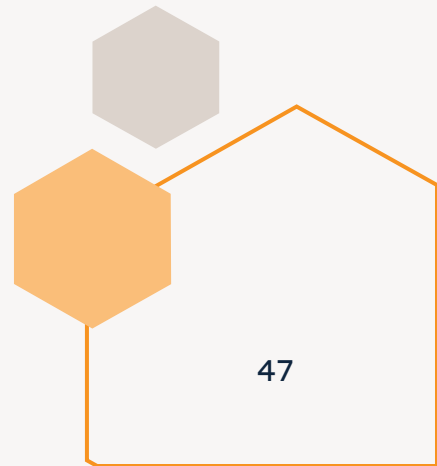


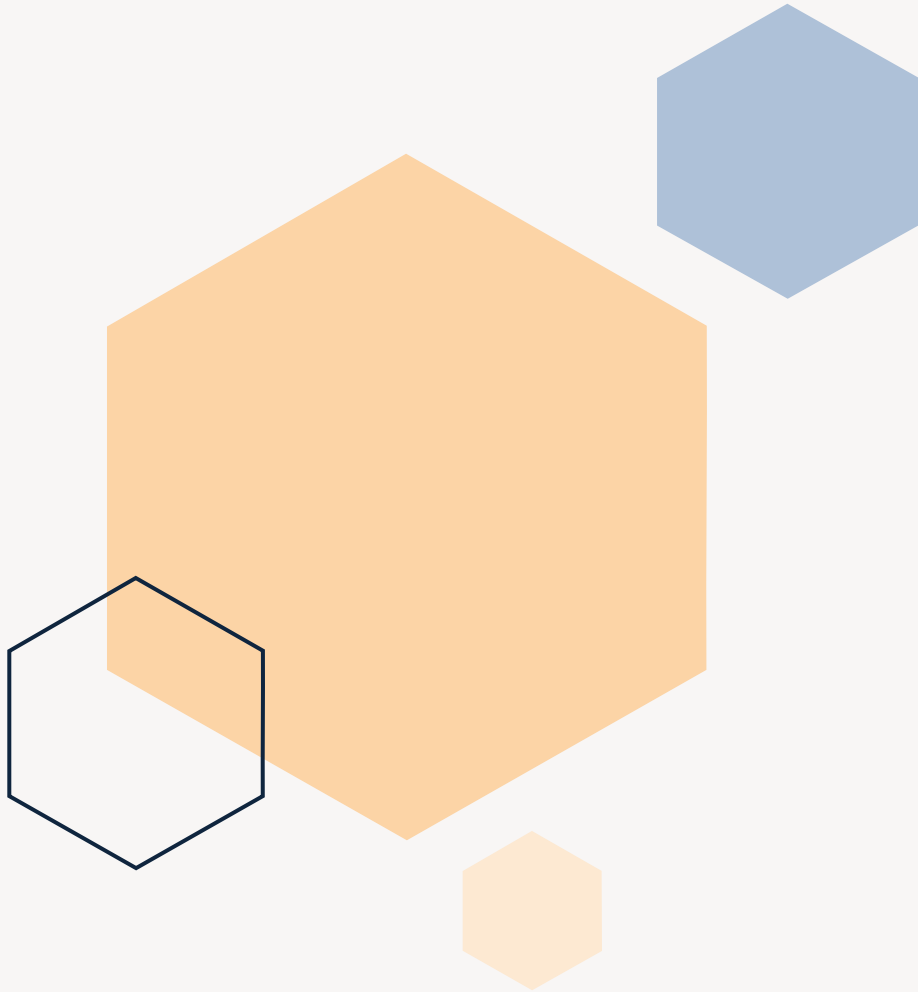
Homophones are two or more words that have the same sound but have different meanings

- Their/There
- Your/You're
- Week/Weak
- Bare/Bear
- To/Too/Two

EXERCISE

LOOK AT THAT BARE BEAR!



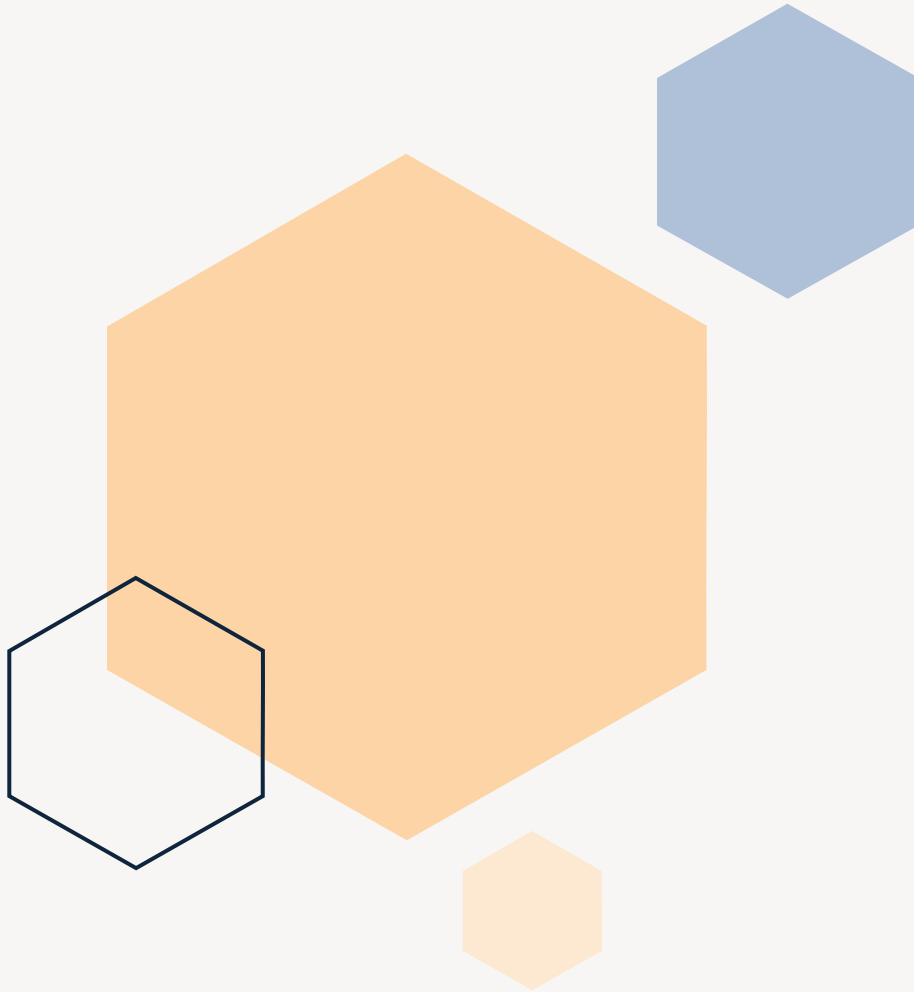


I have been dieting all _____. Not eating as much food has made me very _____.

I have been dieting all **WEEK**.
Not eating as much food has made me very **WEAK**.

Roger was so hungry he _____
_____ biscuits!

Roger was so hungry he **ATE**
EIGHT biscuits!

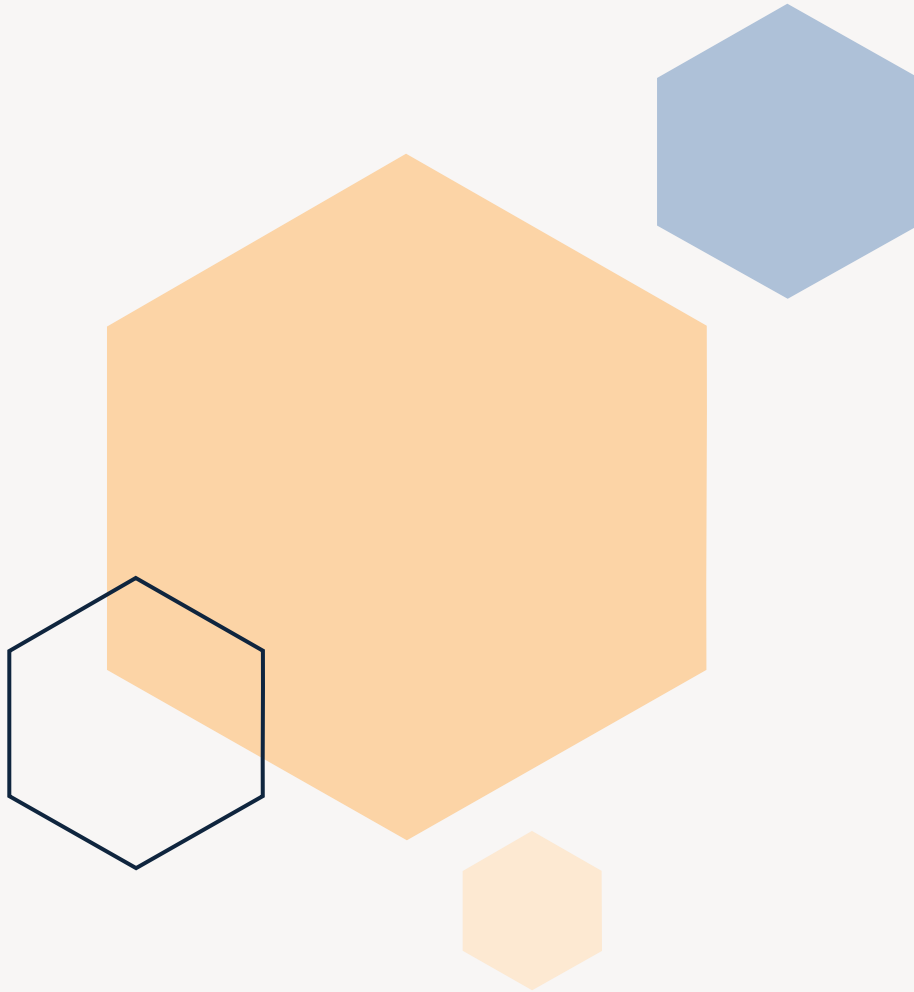


1. _____ are people who never paid attention to _____ teachers in school. _____ probably wondering what this means.

***THERE** are people who never paid attention to **THEIR** teachers in school. **THEY'RE** probably wondering what this means.*

2. The specifications failed to _____ the _____ of the pre-bid meeting. As a result, there were no vendors in _____!

*The specifications failed to **CITE** the **SITE** of the pre-bid meeting. As a result, there were no vendors in **SIGHT!***

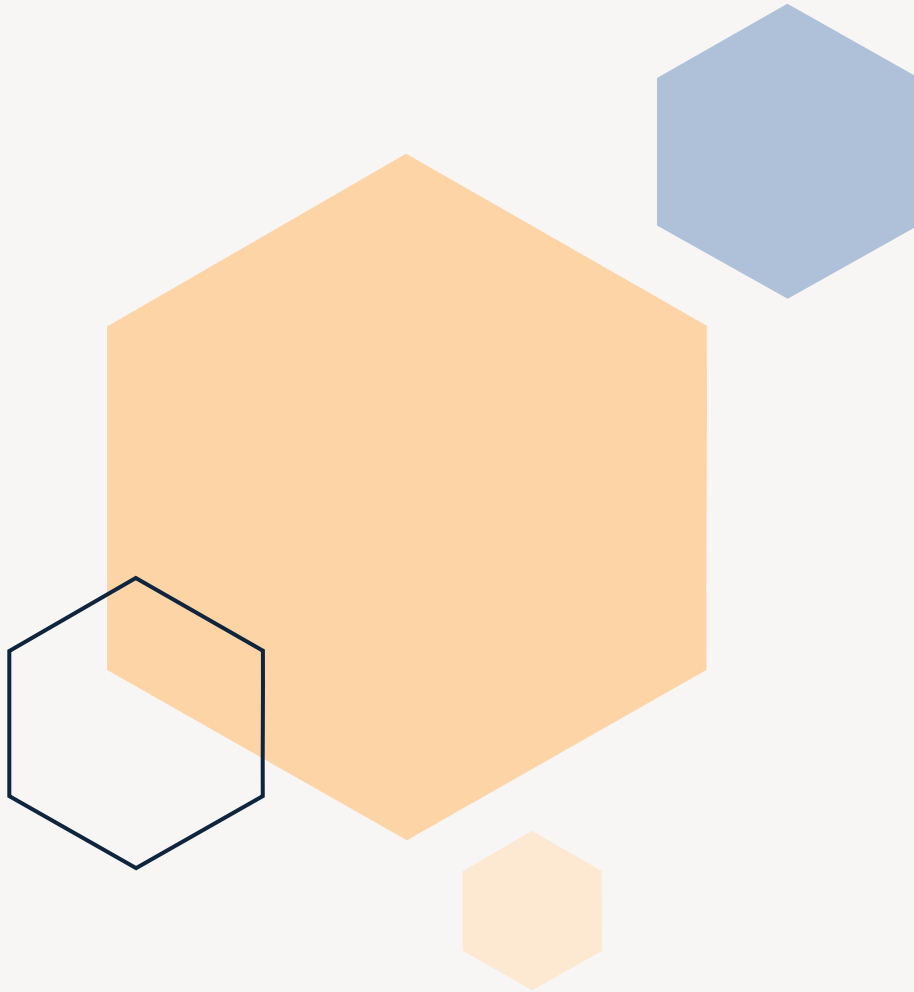


3. A visit to the tallest _____
to take a _____ at the
amazing view should
_____ anyone's interest.

*A visit to the tallest **PEAK** to take a **PEEK**
at the amazing view should **PIQUE**
anyone's interest.*

4. _____ a wonderful site to
see a child with _____
kitten.

***IT'S** a wonderful site to see a child with
ITS kitten.*

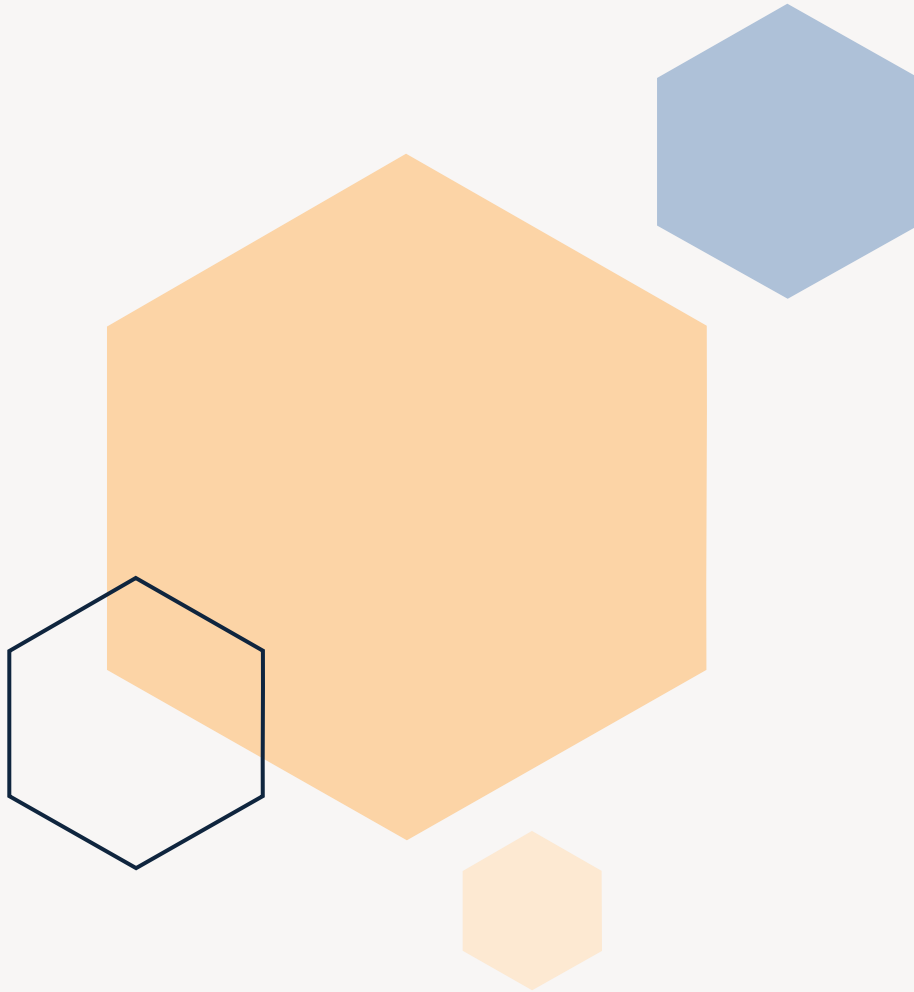


5. As a known thief, the ferret likes
to _____ the _____
wool.

*As a known thief, the ferret likes to **STEAL**
the **STEEL** wool.*

6. It can be difficult to know what to
_____ if you do not know
_____ you are going to
dinner.

*It can be difficult to know what to **WEAR**
if you do not know **WHERE** you are going
to dinner.*

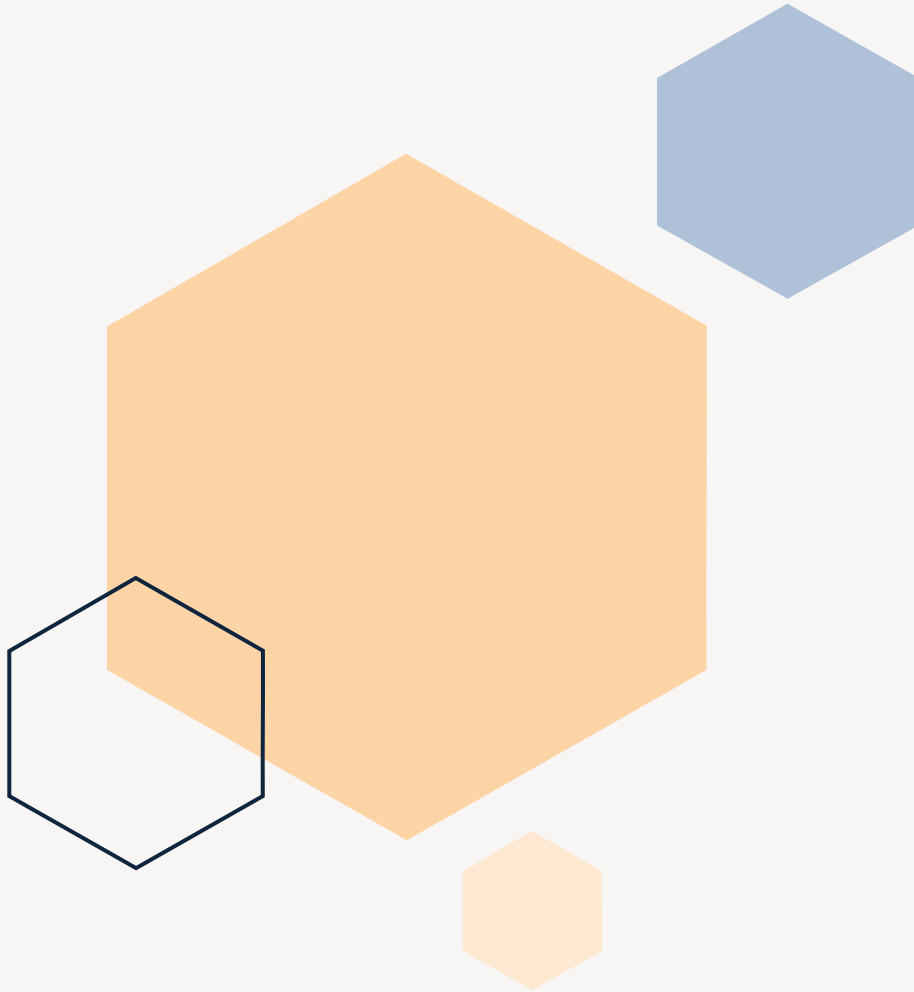


7. Marjory has such a tiny _____ . On her new diet she is going to _____ away to nothing.

*Marjory has such a tiny **WAIST**. On her new diet she is going to **WASTE** away to nothing.*

8. The grandmother tells quite a _____ about her puppy chasing its _____.

*The grandmother tells quite a **TALE** about her puppy chasing its **TAIL**.*



9. The _____ block of Swiss cheese only had one large _____ in it.

*The **WHOLE** block of Swiss cheese only had one large **HOLE** in it.*

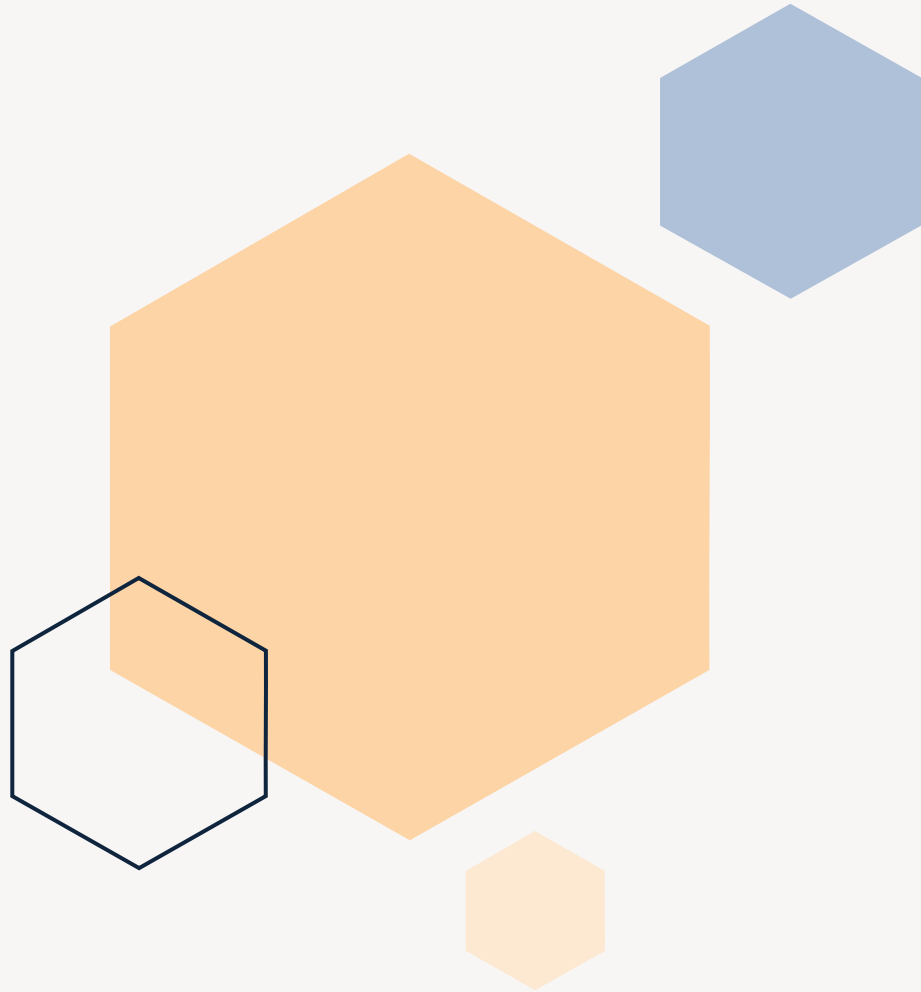
10. There are boards on the dock next to the _____ that _____ every time you step on them.

*There are boards on the dock next to the **CREEK** that **CREAK** every time you step on them.*

DISORGANIZATION

When creating a specification, it is important to make your points clear and organized. Having clear headings and subheadings, along with laying out your thoughts in a numerical ordering system will help the reader by:

- Clearly identifying what you are talking about, and where
- Breaking up complex thoughts into individual thoughts that are easier to understand
- Allowing the writer to emphasize points that are important
- Group “like” thoughts together so that it “flows” for the reader
- Avoiding the impression that you are “burying” important details in a long paragraph.



There is no right or wrong system for numerically a specification, but the most common appears to be:

1.0	<u>MAIN THOUGHT</u>	
	1.1	Heading
	1.1.1	Detail
	1.1.2	Detail



DISORGANIZED!

1. Specifications

- 1.1 Widgets must be 2" in diameter
- 1.2 Widgets must be the color purple
- 1.3 Widgets must be delivered to the County Warehouse
- 1.4 Widgets must be made of plastic
- 1.5 The Warehouse will only accept deliveries on Tuesdays
- 1.6 Widgets must be $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick



REORGANIZED!

1. Specifications

1.1 Widget Description

1.1.1 Widgets must be made of plastic

1.1.2 Widgets must be 2" in diameter

1.1.3 Widgets must be ¼" thick

1.1.4 Widgets must be the color purple

1.2 Delivery

1.2.1 Widgets must be delivered to the County Warehouse

1.2.2 The Warehouse will only accept deliveries on Tuesdays

SPELLING



“Errors like selecting the wrong word or putting an apostrophe in the wrong place are like wrinkles in a shirt—they say something about a person.”

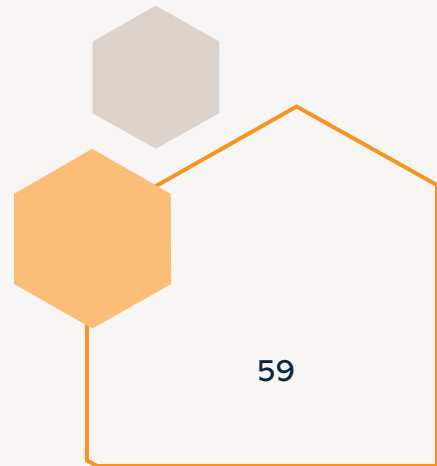
John W. Traphagan, Ph.D.

Spelling errors can:

- Cause confusion and misunderstanding
- Give the impression the author is sloppy or doesn't really care much about the reader
- Make the writer look unprofessional

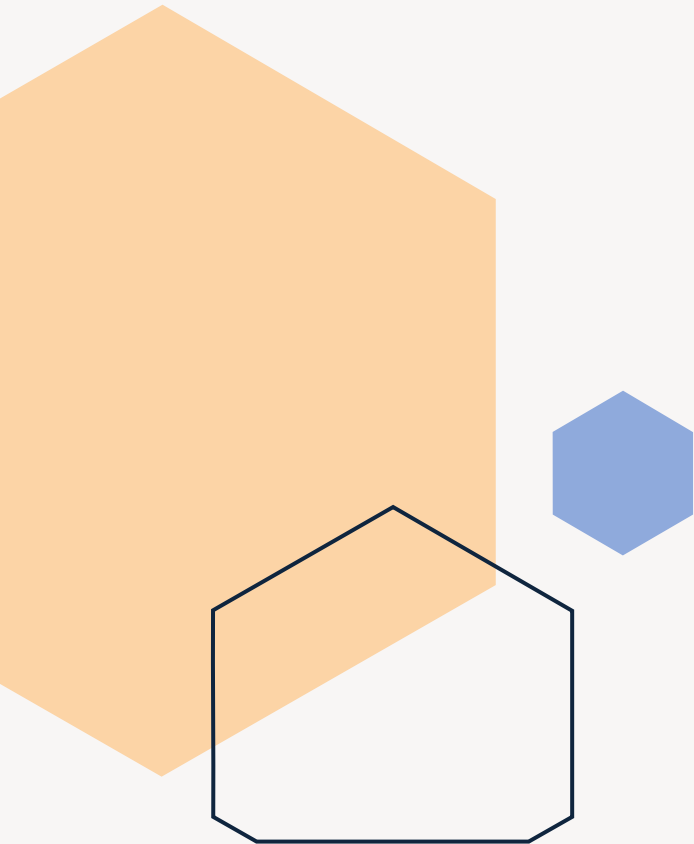
EXERCISE

I SPY....



BOSSY FOR THE SAKE OF BEING BOSSY

- Avoid telling the contractor how to run their business
- Unless you are dealing with an extremely technical situation, your specification should state the outcome, but let the vendor determine what is needed to make the contract successful.



BOSSY FOR THE SAKE OF BEING BOSSY



It is not necessary to tell a landscaping contractor how many riding mowers, chain saws, leaf blowers and other tools they must have to complete the work. Use general statement such as:

“Contractor must provide all tools necessary to complete the work as described herein.”

If you are worried about the quality of those tools, you can always reserve the right to inspect them.

“The County reserves the right to inspect any equipment used in the performance of this project at any time throughout the duration of this contract.”

“The County reserves the right to require equipment to be replaced if found to be in disrepair or a danger to the public.”

Example #2- Don't be so BOSSYYYYYYYY!!!!!!

ORIGINAL WORDING

Contractor must have a minimum of two (2) crews, with six (6) staff members per crew. Proof of crew members to be provided with bid submittal.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

Contractor must have sufficient staff to complete the requirements of these specifications.

MALICIOUS COMPLIANCE

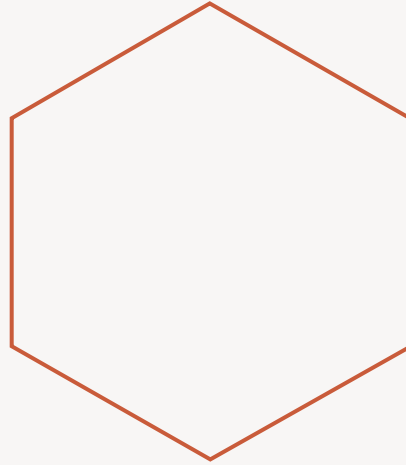
SelectHub defines Malicious Compliance as:

When an employee follows a rule exactly how it is written, even when there is a known flaw, taking advantage of the rule in ways that the “rule writer” didn’t anticipate”

Malicious Compliance can affect your specifications when not written clearly.



BEWARE! MALICIOUS COMPLIANCE



Did the specs say the vendor must
paint the room?

How detailed were the specs about
WHAT should be painted?



BEWARE! MALICIOUS COMPLIANCE

Did the specs say build a staircase?

Did the spec mention any building
code or ordinance the stairs must
meet?





**ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION**

HELPFUL HINTS

ARDOT says...

Just because a specification has “ALWAYS BEEN DONE THIS WAY” does not mean we have to do it that way AGAIN!

Each specification should be reviewed and evaluated EACH TIME it is solicited to make sure it is providing the best value for your entity




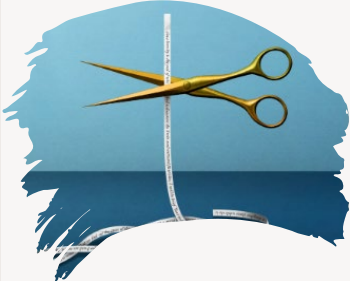
Specifications should always be:

- CORRECT
- EFFICIENT
- EFFECTIVE



NT.GOV.AU's

5 “Musts” of Specification Writing

CLARITY	ACCURACY	REPETITION	BREVITY	LOGIC
				

The slide features a large orange hexagon in the top left, a light blue hexagon in the bottom left, and a white hexagon with a thin orange border in the middle left. A photograph of several overlapping documents with charts and graphs is positioned in the center-left, partially overlapping the hexagons.

CLARITY

NT.GOV.AU Says....

- Use plain English
- Avoid legalese and jargon
- Don't use alternative words just to make the text more interesting (like "excavation" instead of "dig")

Experience Tells Us....

- Say it out loud! If you stumble when you read it, it's too complicated!
- You shouldn't have to get out a thesaurus to write a spec
- Remember: KISS (Keep it Simple, Silly)

Example #3- Keep it Simple Silly

ORIGINAL WORDING

If ever a tree must be replanted as a result of one being removed, the Contractor will notate this on the quote and the cost of the tree will be reimbursed to the Contractor using the Cost Reimbursement Clause.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

The cost of any removed/replaced trees must be added to the quote, utilizing the rates stated in the Cost Reimbursement Clause.

Example #4- Keep it Simple Silly

ORIGINAL WORDING

The scope of work will include, but is not limited to, in accordance with Attachment A- Maintenance Calendar:

- Mowing, trimming, edging of turf and lawn areas, maintenance of ground covers, perennials, shrubs, trees, and future irrigation systems in listed locations, and watering.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

All work under this contract shall be in accordance with “Attachment A- Maintenance Calendar”. Services include, but are not limited to:

- *Mowing*
- *Trimming*
- *Edging of turf and lawn areas*
- *Maintenance of ground covers, annuals, perennials, shrubs and trees, future irrigation systems*
- *Watering*

ACCURACY

NT.GOV.AU Says....

Use the same terms throughout
(‘use’, ‘supply’, ‘provide’)

AVOID:

- Generalizations
- Unclear words or phrasing
- Acronyms and abbreviations
- Redundant and misleading paragraphs
- Overly specific of indefinable requirements such as “acceptable standard” or “first class work”
- Only require “approval” or “inspection by” when there is a specific purpose

Experience Tells Us....

- Acronyms can be used IF you define them first... “Request for Proposals (RFP)”
- If you need to point to a standard, list the standard and tell them where to find it:

“Per FDOT Standards for XXX
as found at

”

Example #5- Accuracy is Everything

ORIGINAL WORDING

Dead palm fronds
need to be removed
as soon as they are
seen.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

*Dead palm fronds
must be removed
during each scheduled
visit.*

Example #6- Accuracy is Everything

ORIGINAL WORDING

Contractor shall replace all nets, net posts, center strap and anchors with brand new nets, net posts, center straps and anchors using standard tennis court sizes and dimensions.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

All work must be done in accordance with industry standards and Best Management Practices (BMP) for asphalt tennis court construction per the American Sports Builders Association (ASBA).

REPETITION

NT.GOV.AU Says....

- Say everything- BUT say it ONLY ONCE!
- Repetition is inadvisable and legally dangerous
- If information is in one document, you don't need to put it in another document

Experience Tells Us....

- If our documents mention the same item twice, and they don't match, we do not have a strong legally defensible position
- You can CLARIFY or EXPAND on information listed on the drawings in the specifications, but make sure the information MATCHES

Example #7- Rinse and Repeat

ORIGINAL WORDING

- Watering is required daily as needed in the dry months from March through June.
- Watering must be monitored in the summer for periods of low rainfall and high temperatures. Water as needed for signs of wilt.
- October will require supplemental watering as it is still warm with little natural rainfall.
- Minimal watering will be needed November through February.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

Vendor is responsible for ensuring that watering levels are adequate throughout the year, to include daily watering as needed.

Example #8- Rinse and Repeat

ORIGINAL WORDING

When newly hired County employees are added, 11 new uniforms will also be initially provided. Plus, a one-time new employee set up fee for each added employee if applicable.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

Vendor will provide eleven (11) sets of new uniforms per County employee. A one-time “new employee setup fee” may be charged.



BREVITY

NT.GOV.AU Says....

- DO NOT include irrelevant details on drawings or irrelevant clauses or redundant words in the specification

Experience Tells Us....

- Be short, straight and to the point!

Example #9- Spit it Out Already

ORIGINAL WORDING

The contractor must provide and bind itself to pay for all labor, equipment, fuel, insurance, taxes and other items necessary to provide tree cutting, trimming, and related services as specified herein.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

The contractor is responsible for all costs associated with completing the services listed herein. Bid prices shall be inclusive of all operating and overhead costs.

Example #10- Spit it Out Already

ORIGINAL WORDING

The successful Contractor, as specified on the work order, must dispose of waste and debris associated with the performance of this work to an approved landfill or disposal site.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

All waste and debris must be disposed of at an approved landfill or disposal site.

LOGIC

NT.GOV.AU Says....

- Set points in an easily recognized pattern, using logical and meaningful headings and subheadings
- Use a logical numbering system
- Keep all cross-referencing within a specification to a minimum- if you must cross reference use headings instead of numbers

Experience Tells Us....

- You should standardize on a numbering format:
 - 1. Heading
 - 1.1 Subheading
 - 1.1.1 Detail
- If you cross reference using numbers, you may forget to update numbers if items are added/deleted from your specification
- A few of our favorite sayings:
 - As found herein
 - As described below

Example #11- As Mr. Spock Would Say...

ORIGINAL WORDING

All four courts to be winter green inside the perimeter lines and red on the exterior of the lines.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

1.1 *Color*

1.1.1 All courts are to be painted winter green inside the perimeter lines.

1.1.2 All courts are to be painted red outside the perimeter lines.

Example #12- As Mr. Spock Would Say...

ORIGINAL WORDING

Vendors must provide with their bid a list detailing procedures and operating system in managing rental uniform services described in their bid. This shall include:

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

Vendors must submit a detailed description of their system for managing rental uniform services. Include the following:






**A few more fun
examples!**

Example #13-

Things That Make you go HUH??

ORIGINAL WORDING



Termination History: If the Bidder's Company has had a contract terminated for default/convenience in the last five (5) years, the Bidder must submit full details including the other party's name, address, and the phone number. Present the Company's position on the matter. County will evaluate the facts and may, at its sole discretion, reject the bid on the grounds of Bidder's past experience.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

Vendors will submit evidence of any contracts terminated for default within the past five (5) years. The County reserves the right to consider this information when determining the responsiveness and responsibility of the Vendor.

Example #14-

Things That Make you go HUH??

ORIGINAL WORDING

Whichever method of auction is utilized, the Successful Bidder shall be responsible for removing surplus vehicles & equipment from County property when notified by the County and shall be responsible for all removal costs. The Bidder is cautioned that not all vehicles or equipment are necessarily in running condition.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

The County cannot guarantee the condition of vehicles selected for auction. It is the responsibility of the vendor to pickup/remove all vehicles when notified, no matter the condition of the vehicle at the time of pick-up.

Example #15-

Things That Make you go HUH??

ORIGINAL WORDING

1. Quality

Unless otherwise indicated in the request, all material shall be first quality. Items which are used, demonstrators, obsolete, seconds, or which have been discontinued are unacceptable without prior written approval by the County.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

1. *Quality*

1.1 *The County will only accept new items.*

1.2 *Used, samples, obsolete, or discontinued items will not be accepted without prior written approval from the County.*

Example #16-

Things That Make you go HUH??

ORIGINAL WORDING

Pricing for all districts is not required to submit a bid.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

Vendors are not required to submit pricing for all districts.

Example #17-

Things That Make you go HUH??

ORIGINAL WORDING

If a County employee is to leave Pasco County, uniforms must be returned to the vendor with no additional cost to the County.

ANOTHER WAY TO SAY IT...

When the uniform is no longer needed, all components will be returned to the Vendor at no additional cost to the County.



Thank you

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