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Perfecting Your Capability Statement




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<h2 style="margin: 0;">Gloria Larkin</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> President, CEO Creator of the FAST® Process and KickStart Program® Clients have won \$7 billion in federal contracts Nationally recognized federal contracting business development expert American Express Procurement Advisor Quoted in Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, INC Magazine, Bloomberg Author of <i>The Basic Guide to Government Contracting</i> and <i>The Veterans Guide</i> GloriaLarkinTG@targetgov.com 410-579-1346 x 325 	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>
	

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Agenda

- Types of Capability Statements
- First impressions are critical
- Capture the interest of agency contracting personnel
- Capture the interest of prime contractors
- Accurate representation
- Easily understood
- Tricks to target your capability statements to a specific audience
- Key elements you must include
- Common mistakes
- Omissions that cripple
- Book give-away!

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Capability Statements are Different from Other Marketing Documents



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Types of Capability Statements

1. **Door-opener**, used to begin relationship-building process
 - Obtain decision-maker meeting
 - Tool to use during meetings
2. **Customer-specific** electronic capability statement
3. Requested as part of a **Sources Sought or RFI response**
4. Required in a **Request For Proposal response**



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First Impressions Are Critical

- Be professional
 - Ex: email, web site, typos
 - No clip art, stock graphics
- Do not try to be all things
- Know your niche market!
- Lead with your expertise
- Prove it!
- Mitigate risk



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Where to Use a Capability Statement

Person to Person (virtual too)

- Conferences
- Vendor outreach sessions
- Agency and base events
- Matchmaking
- Associations, social events

Referral

- From decision-makers

Virtual

- Email, web site, blog, LinkedIn

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POLL #2



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Identifying Targets for Your Capability Statement



<u>Your Company</u>		<u>Possible Target</u>
You as a Prime contractor	→	GOVERNMENT
You as a Subcontractor	→	PRIMES
You as a Team member	→	Other VENDORS

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Layers of Government Decision-Makers

Small business representatives

- OSDBU, SADB, SBLO, PCR

Contracting and acquisition staff

- CO, KO

Program and technical managers

- PM, COTR, end-user

Primes

- CEO, President, SBLO
- Project or program manager



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A Poor Capability Statement

- Locks you out
 - Highlights your weaknesses
 - Proves that you are not competent
 - Highlights the risk to hire you
 - Proves you don't have a clue
- ...and you DO NOT understand the customer
...or the market!



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Let's Start! How can you distinguish yourself?



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Five Section Titles

1. Capability Statement
2. Core Competencies
3. Past Performance
4. Differentiators
5. Company Data

Capability Statement

Core Competencies:
Tailor your Capability Statement to reflect your audience. An example first sentence is: "Your Company" is able to help the [Target Agency or Prime Contractor] in their requirements for [specific requirements].
Short introduction statement relating the company's core competencies to the agency's specific needs followed by keyword heavy bullet points.

TargetGov Tip:

- No long paragraphs
- Use short sentences followed by keyword heavy bullet points
- Create a new document for each agency mission or specific opportunity
- Call this document a Capability Statement
- Preferably, this Capability Statement is one page, one slide
- Go to two slides only if absolutely necessary
- Save and distribute as a PDF, not a Word, PowerPoint, or other format

Differentiators:
Identify what makes you different from your competitors and how this benefits the target agency.

TargetGov Tip: Relate your key differentiators to the needs of the agency: price, or timing partner.

Sample Differentiator Questions:

- Why did your biggest customer want you?
- How and why is your company the best choice for the needs of this opportunity or agency?
- What is it about your services/products that make you stand out from the rest?

Past Performance:
List past customers for whom you have done similar work. Prioritize by related agency: to all federal to all other government to commercial contracts. If the past projects do not relate to the targeted agency's needs, do not list.

TargetGov Tip: Ideally, include specific contact information for immediate references. Include name, title, email, and phone.

Your Logo Here

TargetGovTip: This is a content & design template. Show your logo and contact information, with a specific person's name, phone, and email.

Company Data:
Company History
One very brief paragraph of company description detailing pertinent facts.
TargetGovTip: Readers will visit your website for additional information. Make sure your website is constantly updated and government focused.

List Specific Codes:

- DUNS
- Self-economics certifications: 8(a), HUB Zone, SDVDB, etc.
- NAICS (40)
- CAGE Code
- Accept Credit and Purchase Card
- GSA Schedule Contract Number(s)
- Other federal contract vehicles
- BFA's and other federal contract numbers
- State contract Numbers

Your address, phone numbers (voice, mobile, and fax), email, website, and other related contact information

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1. “Capability Statement” as Title

- Call it what it is!
- First words are “Capability Statement”
- Then your logo
- Then your contact info
- A mini business card across the top of the document



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2. Core Competencies

- Section title: **CORE COMPETENCIES**
- Laser-focused on the target!
- Relate your company’s core competencies to the target’s specific needs
- Short introduction statement mentioning the target



*Ex: Your Company provides the services that the **[agency]** requires to meet its mission of _____ by providing:*

- Followed by **key-word heavy target-related** bullet points using the target’s key-words!



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3. Past Performance

- Section title: PAST PERFORMANCE
- List past customers for whom you have done similar work. Prioritize by:
 1. Internal to that target
 2. Similar target
 3. Other government entities: federal, state, local
 4. Commercial or consumer contracts
- Show the benefit to the customer
- This is NOT a resume!



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Past Performance: Example 1

If you were the **Prime**:

[**Customer Name**]: Date from-to; Name of contract, or vehicle, & dollar amount. Describe what you provided: Provided x-y-z services to enable the effective use of a-b-c thereby [reducing costs by \$xxx,xxx over three years.] Give contact reference, name, title, phone and email.

Notes:

If past projects do not relate to the target's needs, **do not** list.

If a reference is not available, **do not** list the project.



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Past Performance: Example 2

If you were the **Subcontractor**:

As a subcontractor to **PRIME** [*company name*] at **[Agency]**, Date from-to; \$ Amount.
Describe what you provided: Provided the x-y-z services to enable the effective use of a-b-c thereby reducing costs by \$xxxxx over three years. Give contact reference, name, title, phone and email.

Notes:

If past projects do not relate to the target's needs, **do not** list.

If a reference is not available, **do not** list the project.



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Past Performance: Example 3 → Experience

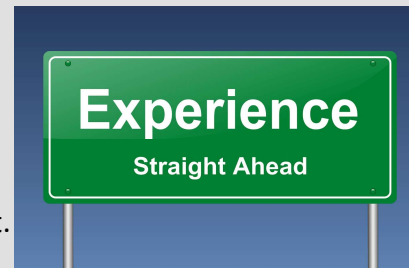
If you were an **employee**:

As an employee of [*company name*]; Date from-to for contract;
Describe what you did: Provided the x-y-z services to enable the effective use of a-b-c thereby reducing costs by \$xxxxx over three years. Give contact reference, name, title, phone and email.

Notes:

If past projects do not relate to the target's needs, **do not** list.

If a reference is not available, **do not** list the project.



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Past Performance vs Experience

To use your or your employee's experience when they worked elsewhere

(note: It is NOT considered your company's past performance):

"Key staff members have experience providing....."



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4. Differentiators Defined #1

Unique features and/or benefits of a product, or aspects of a brand, that set it apart from competing products or brands



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Differentiators #2

Identify **what makes you different** from your competitors

- Location
- Training
- ISO Certification
- Exclusives
- Relationships
- Experience
- Metrics

And **how this benefits** the targeted:

- Agency
- Prime
- Team



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Differentiators Defined: #3 Government Contracting

- A **succinct** statement
- **Focused** on
 - Customer needs
 - Specific decision-maker
 - Upcoming contracts
- Highlights **benefits**
- Incorporate **metrics**
- Separates you from
 - Real competition
 - Wanna-be's



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Ideal Differentiators

- Speak **EXACTLY** to requirements
- Speak exactly to that decision-maker
 - CO, COTR, PM, OSDBU, SBLO
- Are benefit-focused
- **Include metrics**
- Are straightforward, easy to understand
- Better to have only 2 or 3 strong differentiators than an entire list of mediocre or poor differentiators



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Differentiators are NOT

- Socioeconomic certifications
 - Generic statements
 - Static, never changing
 - One type fits all
 - “Quality” people, services, products
 - “100” or xx years of experience
 - “Solutions provider”
 - “Best in class”, “world class”, “best of breed” or other superlatives
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5. Company Data

- Federal: DUNS & CAGE Codes
- NAICS (grouped)
- DOD: PSC & FSC codes
- GSA Schedule Contract Number(s)
- BPAs and other contract numbers
- Socio-economic certifications: WOSB, 8(a), HUB Zone, SDVOB, Small, MBE, WBE, DBE
- Financial capacity and stability (Bond requirements?)
- Number of employees
- Capacity
- Teams
- YOUR contact information:
 - Name and title
 - Email
 - Website
 - Phone: Office, direct
 - Printed on the Capability Statement, not attached as a business card

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Graphic Design Elements

- Use your own branding elements
- Your logo
- Your colors
- Your style
- Your fonts
- Complement your web site, business cards
- Use up the entire page, do not think “letterhead”
- Spare the graphics: Usually large file size
- Keep it in Word, save as a PDF
- Do NOT save as graphic file: tif or jpg



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Tips for Success

- Tailor the Capability Statement to the target
- Use their terminology
- You will have many versions, one for each target
- Make sure the file size is small, under 1MB
- Save the PDF as

YourCompanyNameCapabilityStatement_DISA.pdf

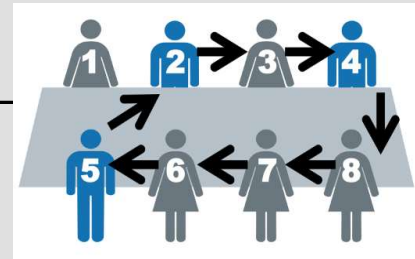
- Follow similar content/format for your website
- Follow same format for capability briefings



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Ideal Matchmaking Pitch

- Develop a focused “Matchmaking Pitch” to communicate *specific* offerings *matching their current needs*
- No company does “Everything”
- An ideal Matchmaking Pitch:
 - ▶ I am __[your name]__, with __[company name]
 - ▶ We provide _____
 - ▶ Our core competencies are _____
 - ▶ We are the *absolute best* at _____
 - ▶ We are *different* because _____
 - ▶ We can help your agency/office/company by _____



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TargetGov Rule of Three™

- Never reach out to any decision-makers for a meeting
- This includes all targets!
- Agencies, Primes, Teaming Partners, Subs
- Until:
- You have identified at least three solid opportunities to discuss
- Be prepared, no matter with whom you are meeting, to discuss at least 3 upcoming opportunities
- Use: Forecast, sources sought, recompetes, FPDS, EZGovOpps, USASpending, other data resources



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Now you can be a business champion!



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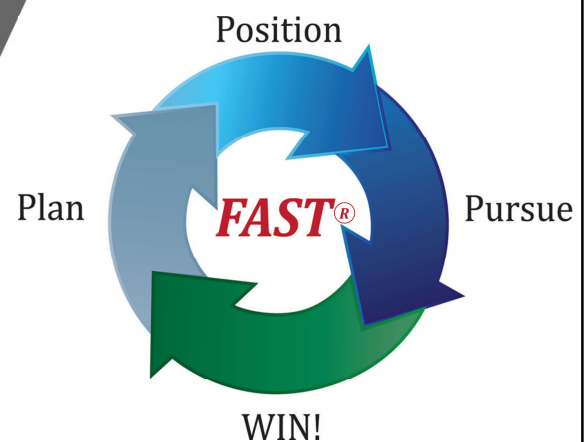
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FAST® Process

- Do you want to dramatically increase revenues?
- The proprietary, proven **TargetGov FAST® Process** is the most cost-effective approach to *planning, positioning, pursuing and winning* profitable government contracts.
- You can take advantage of our 20+ year track record and national reputation for success to build your revenues.
- The **TargetGov FAST® Process** leverages where you are now and propels you to higher revenues.
- Large, mid-size and small businesses see dramatic results and high ROI.



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- A focused plan, process and tools to successfully market your company to the federal government.
- This program is especially designed for small companies ready for an accelerated entry in the federal marketplace.
- It is a proprietary combination of training and consulting – leaving you with the knowledge you need and actual tools for implementing the plan.

KickStart®



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Handouts: email
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Subject line:
May 25 Capability Statement Training

- Session Slides
- TargetGov Rule of Three™
- TargetGov Matchmaking and Briefing Pitch
- TargetGov Sample Capability Statement
- **FAST® Process and KickStart Program®**

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