

# Why RFPs Fail to Engage Vendors

And what you can do to prevent it from happening again





# Instructions

# Learning Objectives

- Examine the most common reasons vendors no bid
- Learn strategies to achieve your desired results
- Transform the way you write and tender staff augmentation RFPs



# Jennifer Wowk

- Excited to be here!
- VP Operations @ QMR
- Founder @ Punchy Content
- 20+ years industry expert
- THSAC, CIPMM, AWI



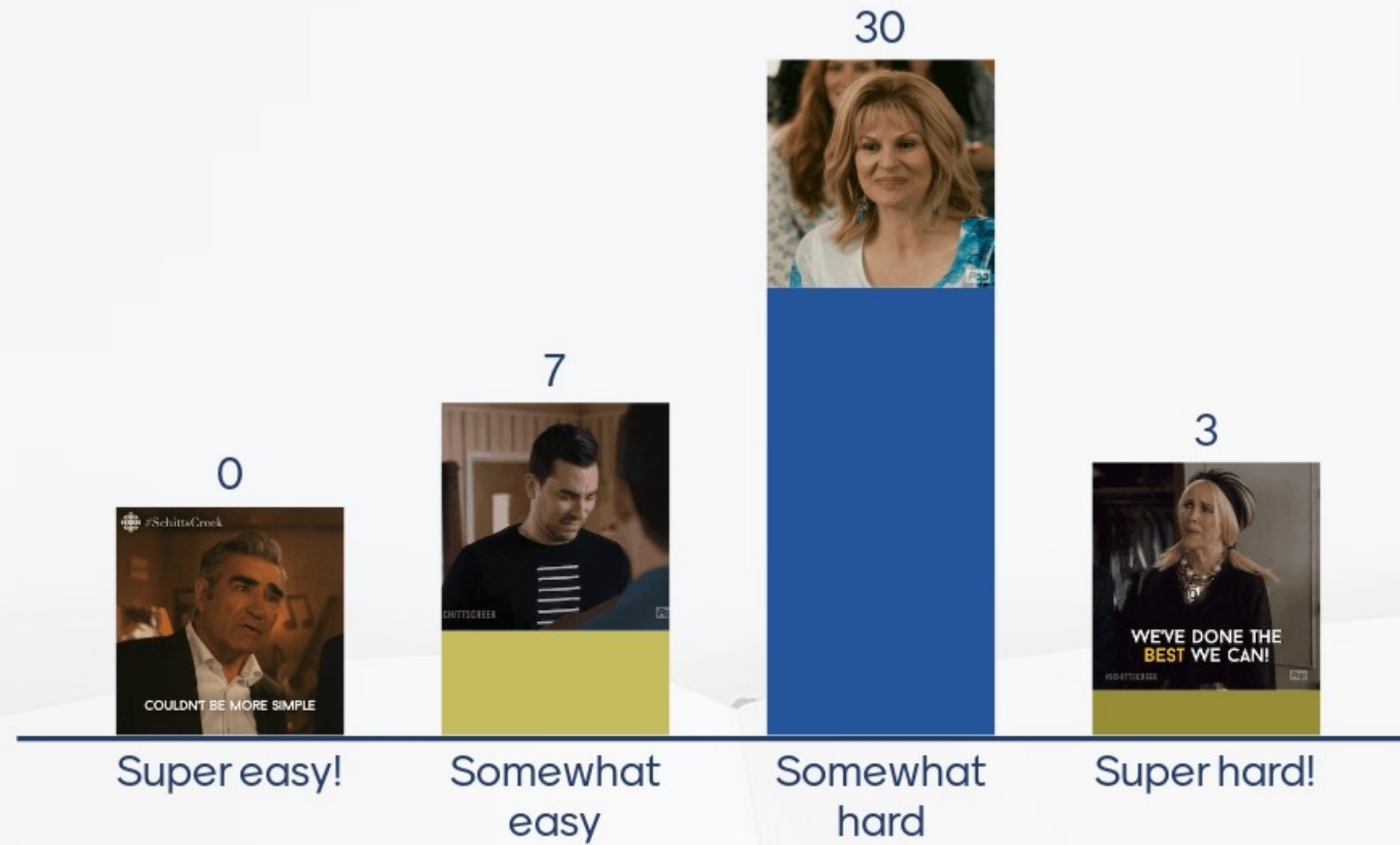


# Today's Agenda

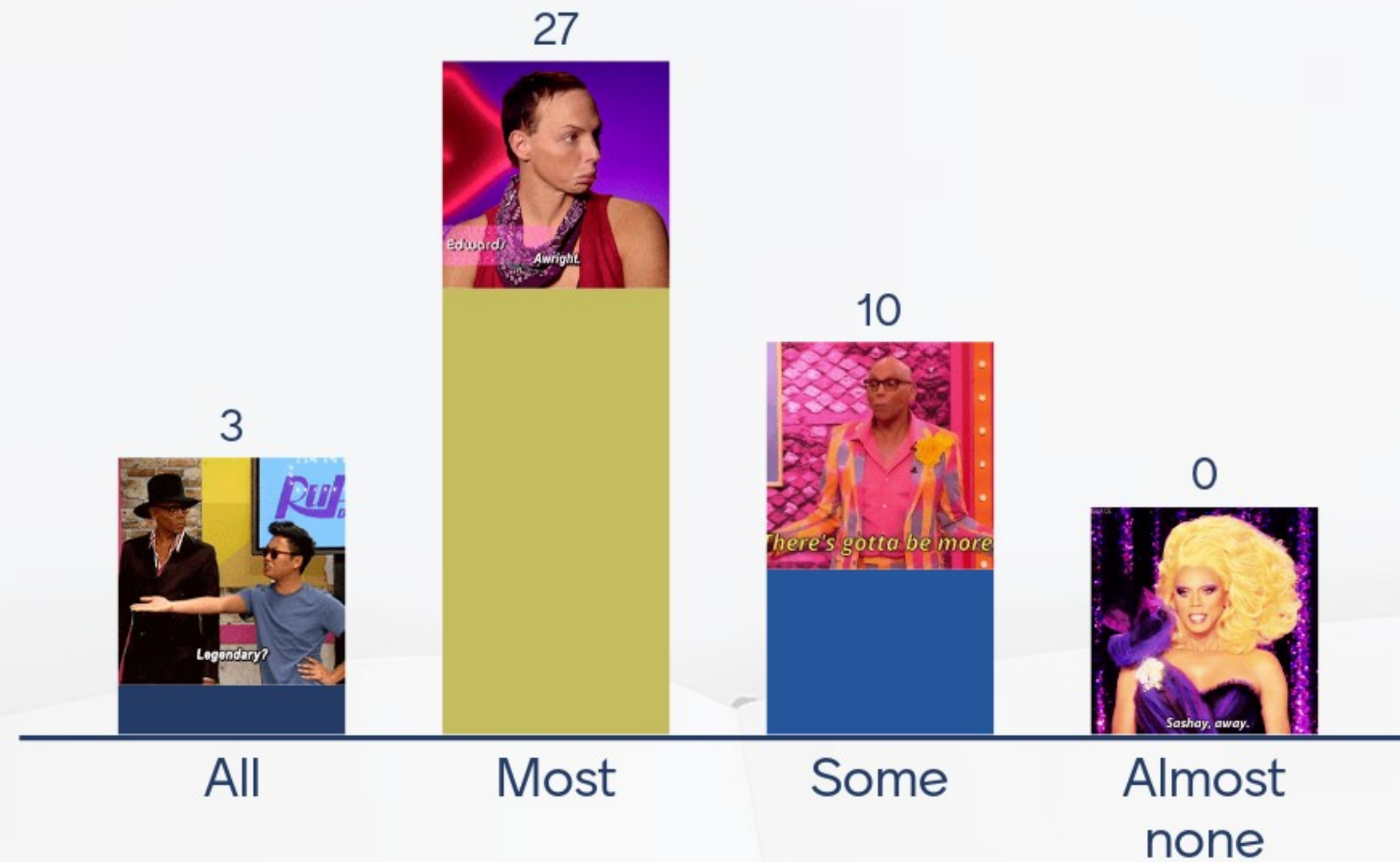
- Finding common ground
- Review the top reasons why vendors no bid
- Learn how to write a rock solid statement of work
- Examine common RFP pitfalls (mandatory and rated criteria)
- Discover why Vendor Q&As are everything
- Answering your Questions!



# In general, how easy or hard is it to prepare an RFP?



# In general, how many of your RFPs achieve the intended result – a vendor award?





# Top 10 Reasons Vendors No Bid





1. Outside core business
2. No available resources
3. No compliant resources
4. Corporate – Project References
5. Corporate – Strategy
6. Delivery risk on award
7. Incumbent identified
8. Preference for Indigenous Supplier
9. Mandatory/Rated risk
10. Unrealistic pricing



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- Non-IT vendors for IT RFPs
- Solutions-based vendors for staff augmentation
- Employee-based vendors for contract RFPs
- Vendor cannot fill categories or roles



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- Impossible timelines based on # of resources
- A primer on vendor internal deadlines
- Full-time work vs part-time work
- RFP issued during peak volume season



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- Mandatory or rated are too restrictive
- Criteria is subjective vs objective
- Resource scarcity (bids needing multiple levels)
- Purple squirrels!



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- Unrealistic vendor project \$ values or timeframes
- Requests to submit examples of won contracts
- Requests to submit invoices
- Expecting perfection



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- Request to submit samples of work
- Requests for full project methodology
- Objective vs subjective criteria
- Requests for specific vendor certifications



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- Deliverable-based milestone payments
- Lack of resource volume
- Department is known for late payments
- Department is known to be difficult to work with



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- Client identifies there is an incumbent
- Incumbent vendor has been invited to bid



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- Request was not sent using Indigenous set-aside
- Request includes criteria for Indigenous certification or identification
- Request includes specific wording related to awarding to Indigenous vendors



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- Impossible mandatory criteria
- Not enough rated points to win
- Rated criteria is subjective
- Too many vendors bidding

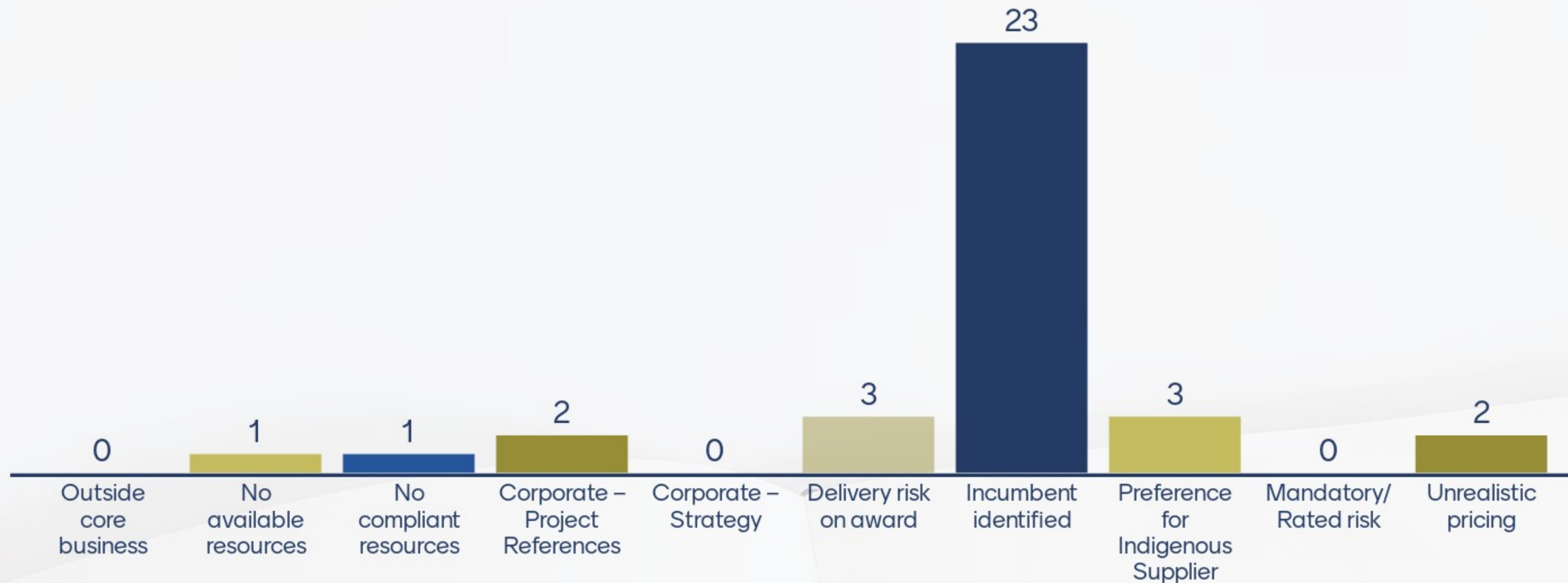


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- Request includes a cap on pricing
- The # of days scoped does not facilitate successful delivery of project
- Vendors are asked to anticipate the # of days
- Requests for percentage discounts



# Which Top 10 no-bid reason did you find the most surprising?





# How to write a rock-solid statement of work



journalism secrets



## THE INVERTED PYRAMID

Lead with the most important information at the top:  
who, what, why, where, when, how

The Body contains the argument, evidence & hooks

Tail call to action!





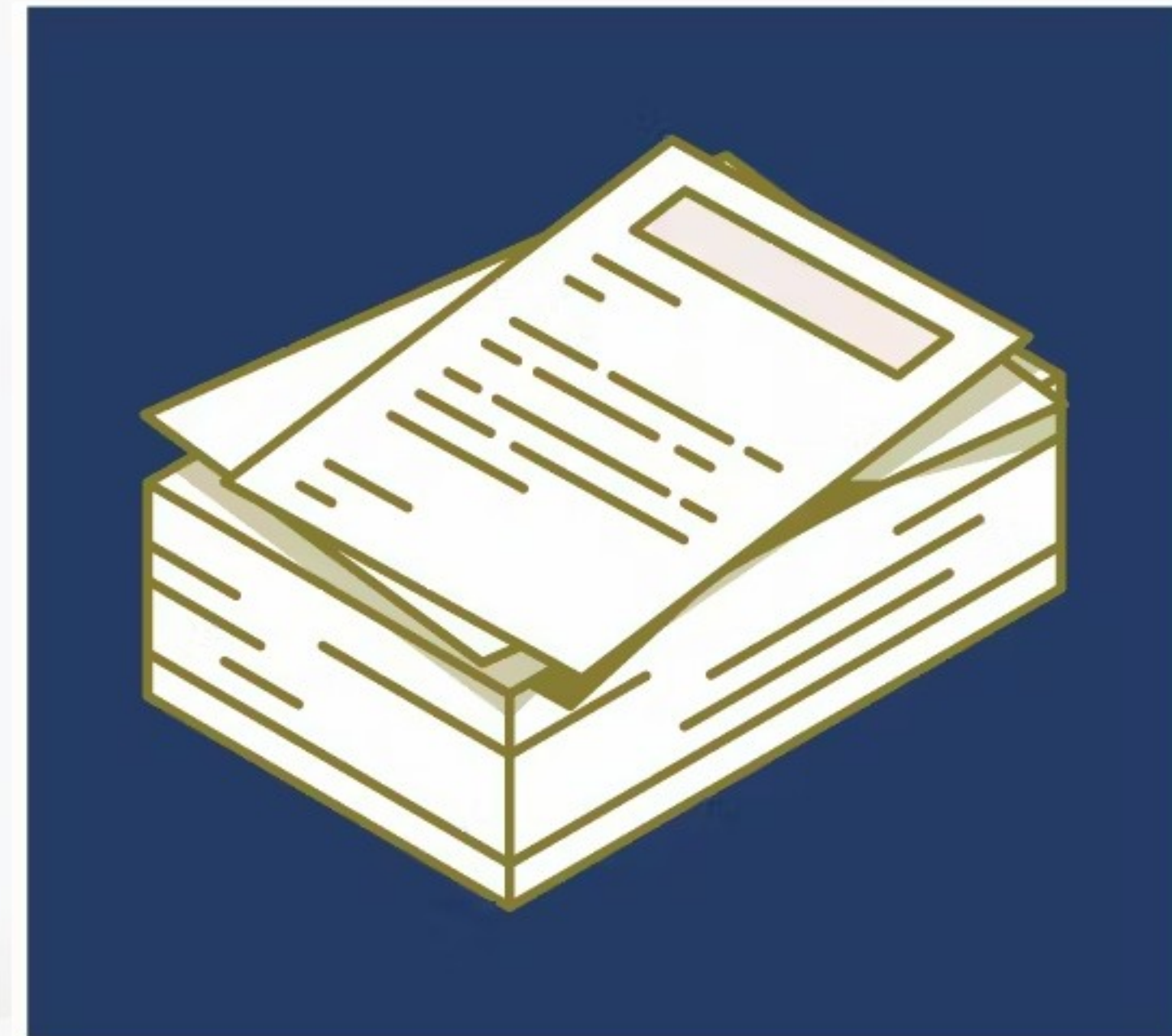
# How to increase vendor compliance





# Mandatory criteria show-stoppers

- Too much content
- Too many mandatory criteria
- Inviting the incumbent to bid





The Bidder must clearly demonstrate that the proposed resource has a minimum of ten (10) years' experience within the last fifteen (15) years providing advice in a Federal Government of Canada environment as it relates to Real Property portfolio planning activities including aligning Real Property Portfolio Project Management Frameworks, activities, policies and procedures to applicable Real Property legislation, regulations, and policies.

To demonstrate, the Bidder **must** provide the proposed resource's resume with the following details:

- a) Start and end dates of the projects;
- b) Name and physical address of the client organization;
- c) Name, position, e-mail address and phone number of Project Authority;
- d) Brief description of the work completed under each project.

\*All experience must have been rendered prior to bid closure in order to qualify.

# What is the vendor thinking when they read this?

- 10 years in the last 15 years
- Federal government
- Projects must be completed
- 10 years of client references



MT1	advice	feds	real prop*	portfolio	plan	align	PM	framework	activi	polic	proced	legisla	regul	reference	ended?	months
P26	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	9
P25	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	4
P24	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	6
P23	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	38
P21	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	1
P19	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	17
P16	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	4
P15	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5
P14	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	1
P13	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	8
P11	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	4
P8	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	10
P6	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	32
																<b>139 TOTAL</b>

## Vendor Gap Analysis



# The best mandatory criteria:

- Contains exactly what you need
- Does not include 'nice to haves'
- Use more rated criteria



<b>RT1</b>	<p>The Bidder's Proposed Resource should have a minimum of 5 years work experience at a senior executive level within the Government of Canada.</p> <p>Points will be awarded for the number of months of experience as per the rating scale.</p> <p>The Bidder must demonstrate by providing examples that include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Project title;</li> <li>b) Project period (start &amp; end dates);</li> <li>c) Brief definition of project objectives;</li> <li>d) The role of the proposed professional resource;</li> <li>e) Description of the work undertaken</li> <li>f) Client organization name;</li> <li>g) Client contact name; and</li> <li>h) Client contact phone number and/or email address</li> </ul>	<p><b>Rating scale:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &lt;5 years: 60 months = 0</li> <li>• ≥5 years and &lt;6 years: 60 to 71 months = <b>5 pts</b></li> <li>• ≥6 years and &lt;8 years: 72 to 97 months = <b>10 pts</b></li> <li>• ≥8 years and &lt;10 years: 96 to 119 months = <b>20 pts</b></li> <li>• ≥10 years and &lt;12 years: 120 to 143 months = <b>30 pts</b></li> <li>• ≥12 years: 144 + months = <b>40 points</b></li> </ul>	<p>/40</p> <p>Passing mark 28/40</p>
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# Rated criteria speed bumps

- Minimum 5 years experience
- More than 12 years experience for full points
- Minimum 28/40 to pass



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# Rated criteria speed bumps

- No option to gain 28 points
- Get ready for a flood of vendor questions!

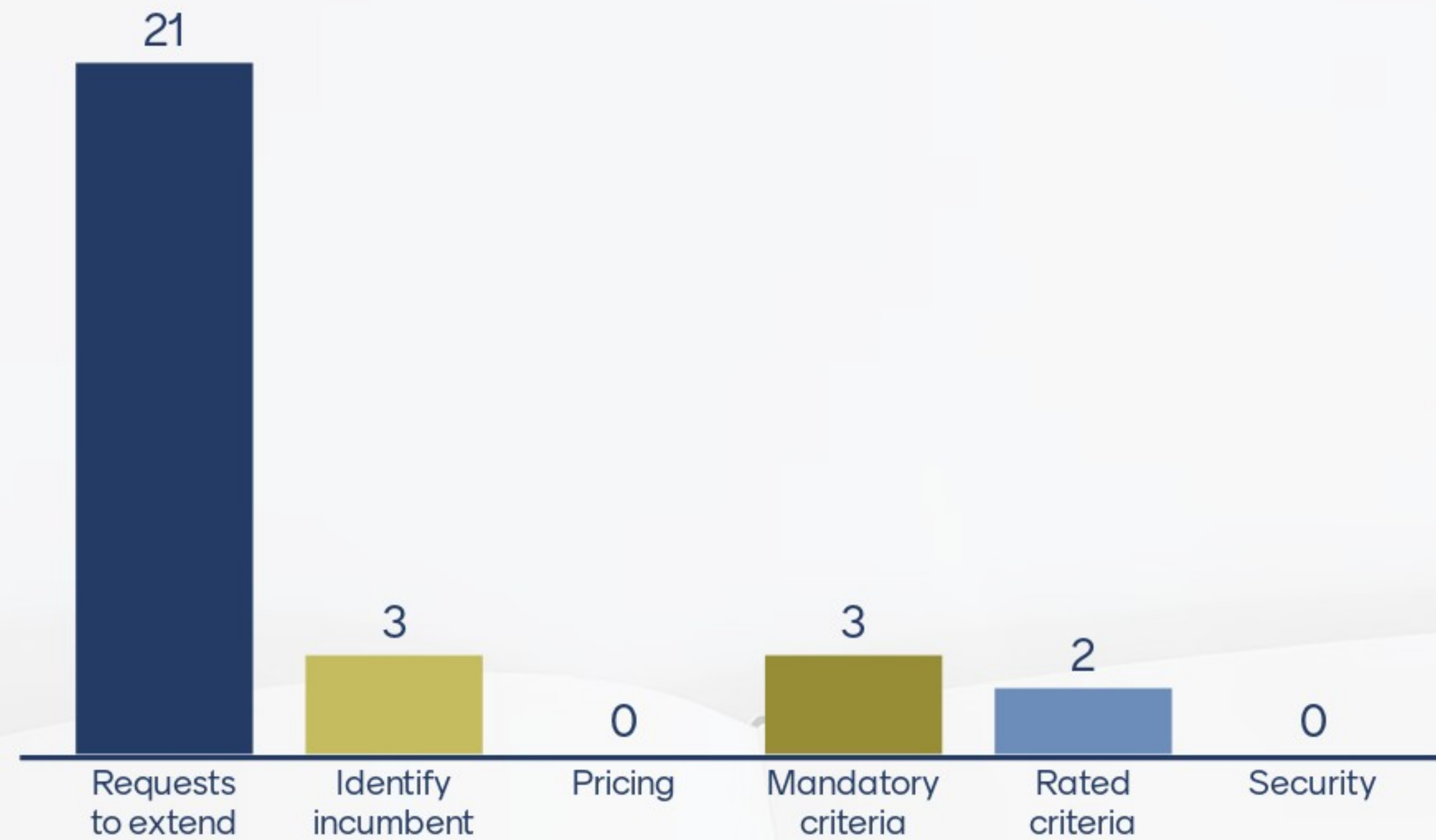


**Why Q&As are everything – are you listening to your vendors?**





# Which of the following is the most common question you get from vendors?





# Please give us more time!

- Requests to extend
- Identify incumbent
- Pricing
- Mandatory criteria
- Rated criteria
- Security

- High volume of procurements
- RFPs must be carefully analyzed
- Staff sickness / shortages
- Bids around Federal holidays



- Requests to extend
- Identify incumbent
- Pricing
- Mandatory criteria
- Rated criteria
- Security

## When possible, clearly state:

- The incumbent
- The related \$ value
- The timeframe of the contract
- If the incumbent has been invited



- Requests to extend
- Identify incumbent
- **Pricing**
- Mandatory criteria
- Rated criteria
- Security

## Why vendors ask for

- Budget increases
- Increase # of days
- Decrease # of days
- Flexible team-based pricing



- Requests to extend
- Identify incumbent
- Pricing
- **Mandatory criteria**
- Rated criteria
- Security

# Remember the show-stoppers!

- What do you absolutely need?
- Where can you compromise or be flexible?



- Requests to extend
- Identify incumbent
- Pricing
- Mandatory criteria
- **Rated criteria**
- Security

# Remember the speed bumps!

- Are your rated criteria too restrictive?
- Where can you compromise or be flexible?



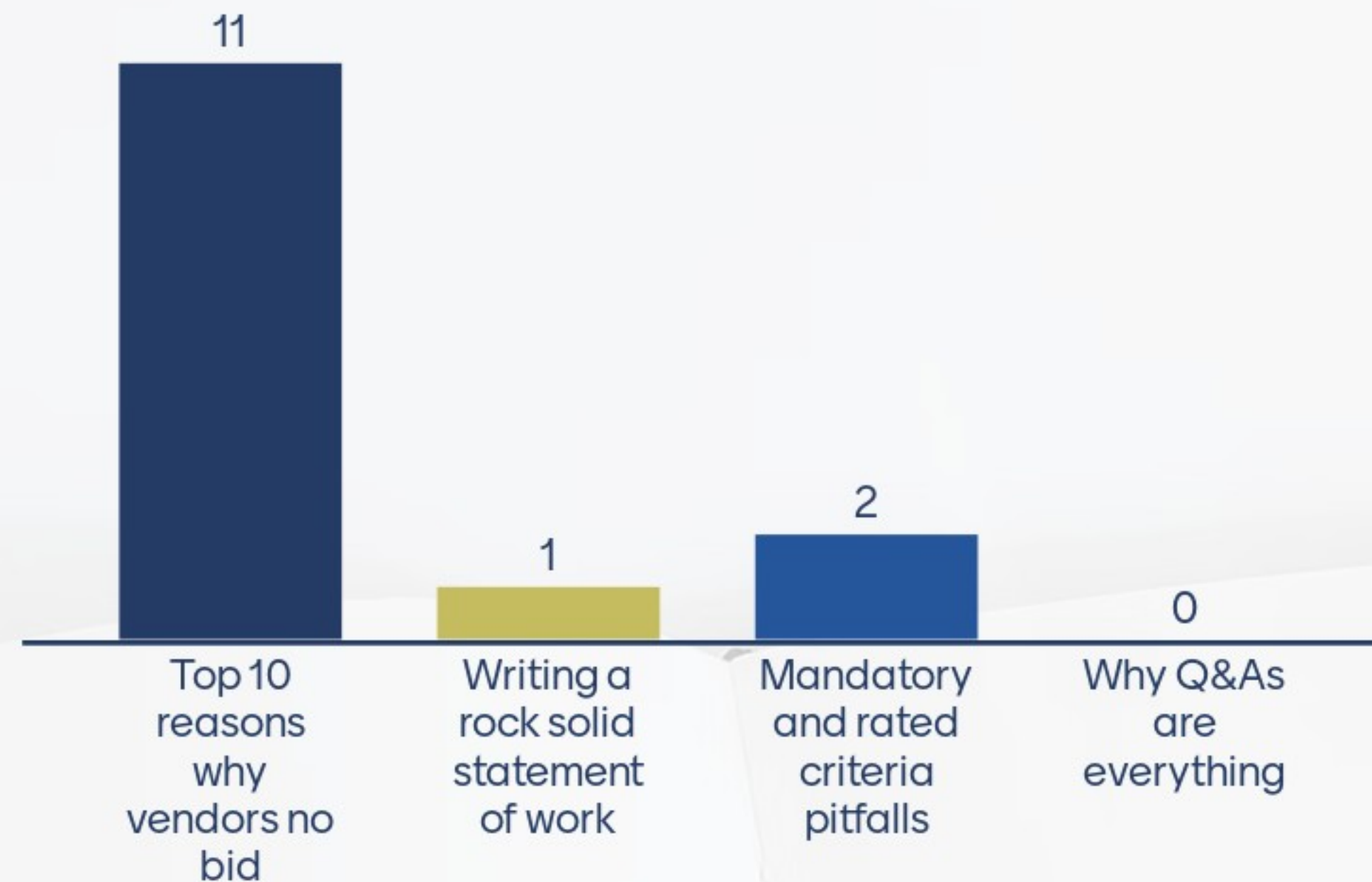
- Requests to extend
- Identify incumbent
- Pricing
- Mandatory criteria
- Rated criteria
- **Security**

## Hot Topic!

- Why security is an issue
- New rules for secret clearances
- Can you use enhanced instead?



# Which of the topics discussed today added the most value to you, your team, or the work you do?





# Ask me anything!

**7 questions**  
**2 upvotes**



# Let's be friends!

- QMR Requests: [jennifer.wowk@qmrconsulting.com](mailto:jennifer.wowk@qmrconsulting.com)
  - [QMR Website](#)
  - [QMR LikedIn](#)
- Punchy Content: [jennifer.a.wowk@gmail.com](mailto:jennifer.a.wowk@gmail.com)
  - [Instagram](#)
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