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7 Capability Statement Mistakes to Avoid if You Want to Win More Government Contracts

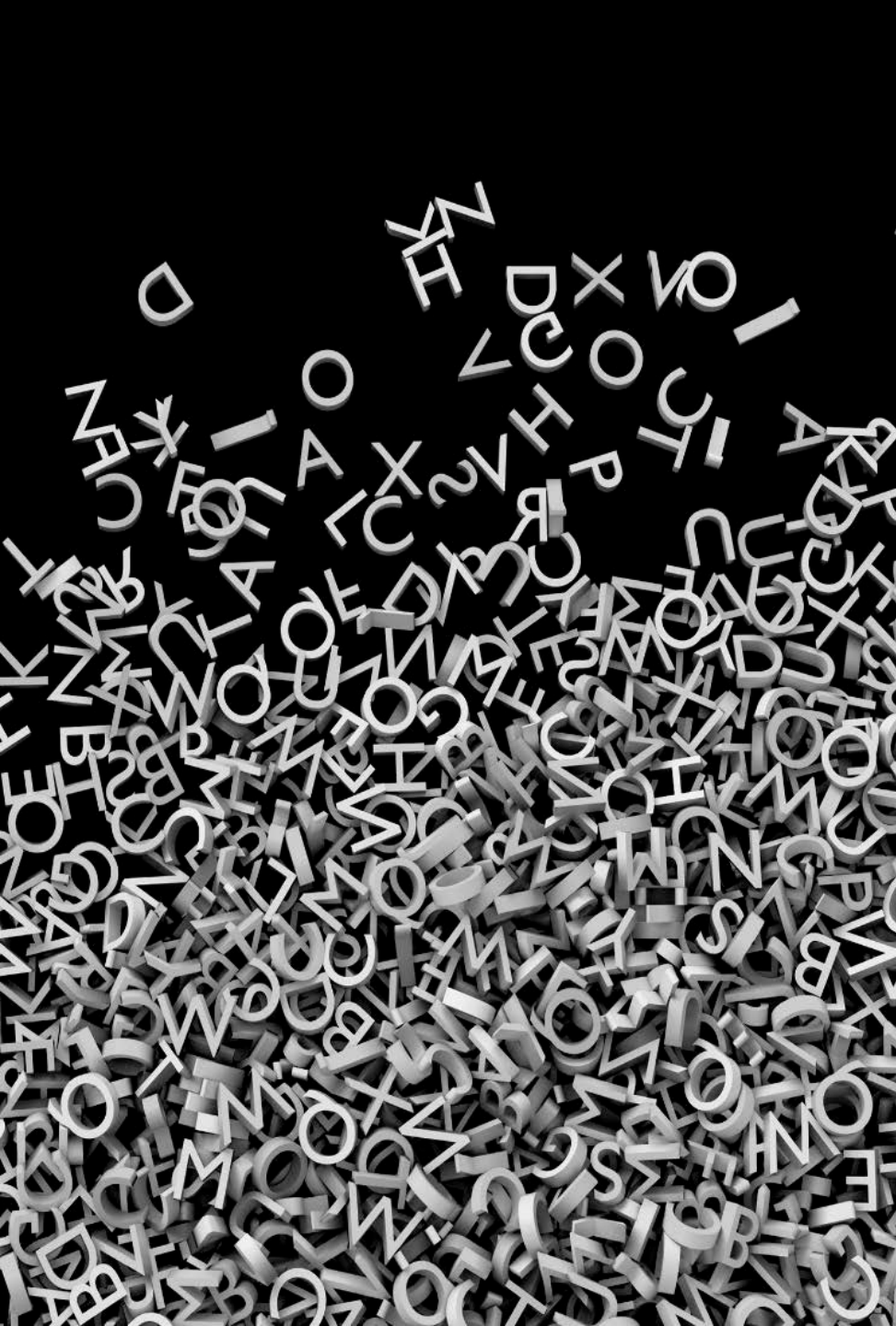
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What is a Capability Statement?



- Think of it as a “business card” for your company
- Two types:
 - 1-2 pages: used in most marketing situations
 - Slide deck that includes a more detailed breakdown of capabilities for specific opportunities
- Contains the most important information about engaging with your company
- Can be:
 - Generic: for unscheduled meetings, impromptu encounters, and industry events
 - Custom-tailored: for all planned meetings

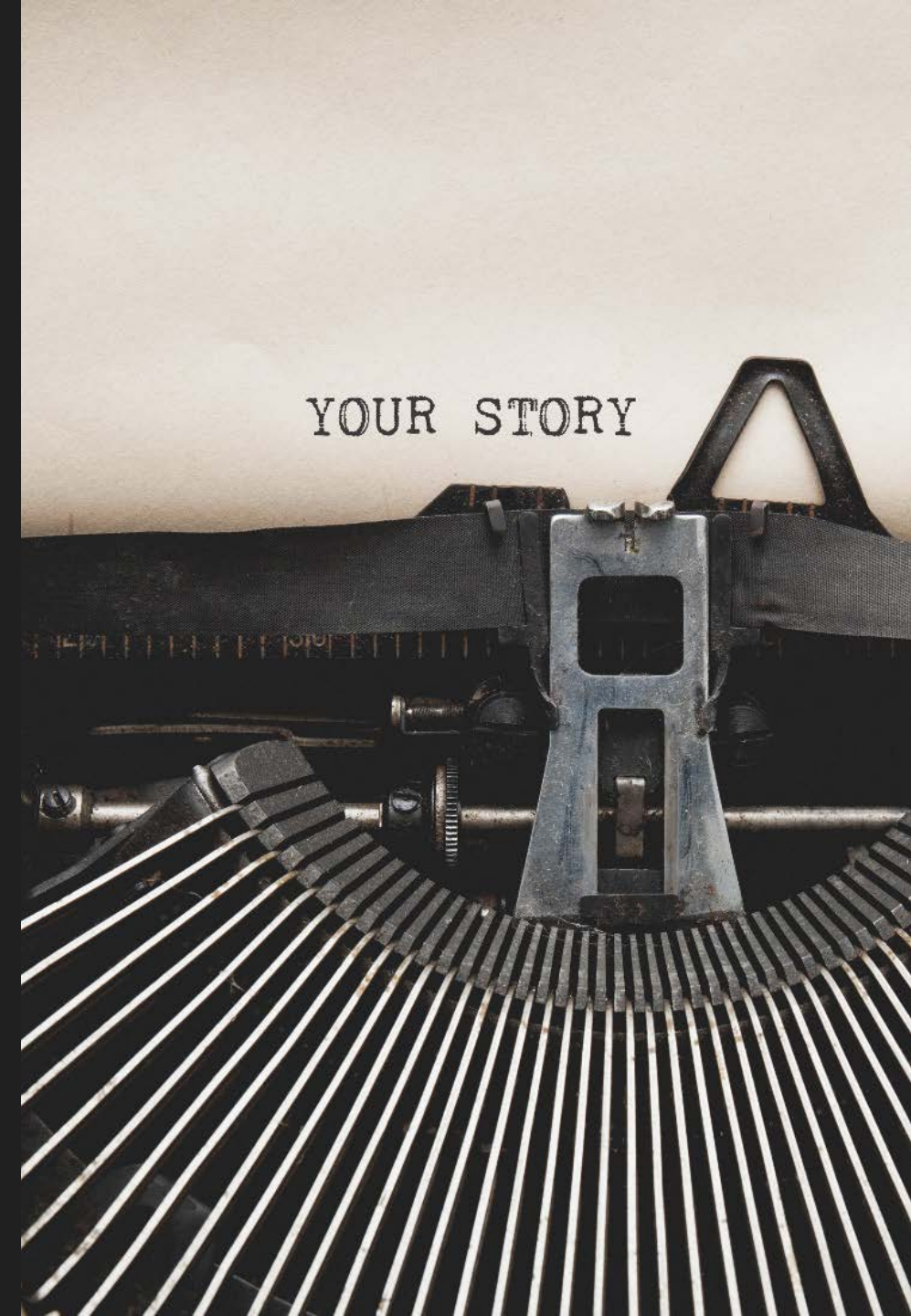


Mistake 1: Too Wordy

- Paragraphs and paragraphs of text
- MEGO: My Eyes Glaze Over
- A 1-2 page capability statement is meant to be read at a glance
- Use 1-2 short sentences, followed by bullets with keywords
- Use professional stock or custom photos, icons, professional artwork, logos to appeal to the emotional brain

Mistake 2: Fails to Tell a Story

- Sells features without benefits
- Fails to tell your company's story that resonates with your prospective customer or teaming partner
- Uses excessive industry-specific jargon that may confuse the client
 - Only your peers may understand, which limits the number of people who grasp what you offer





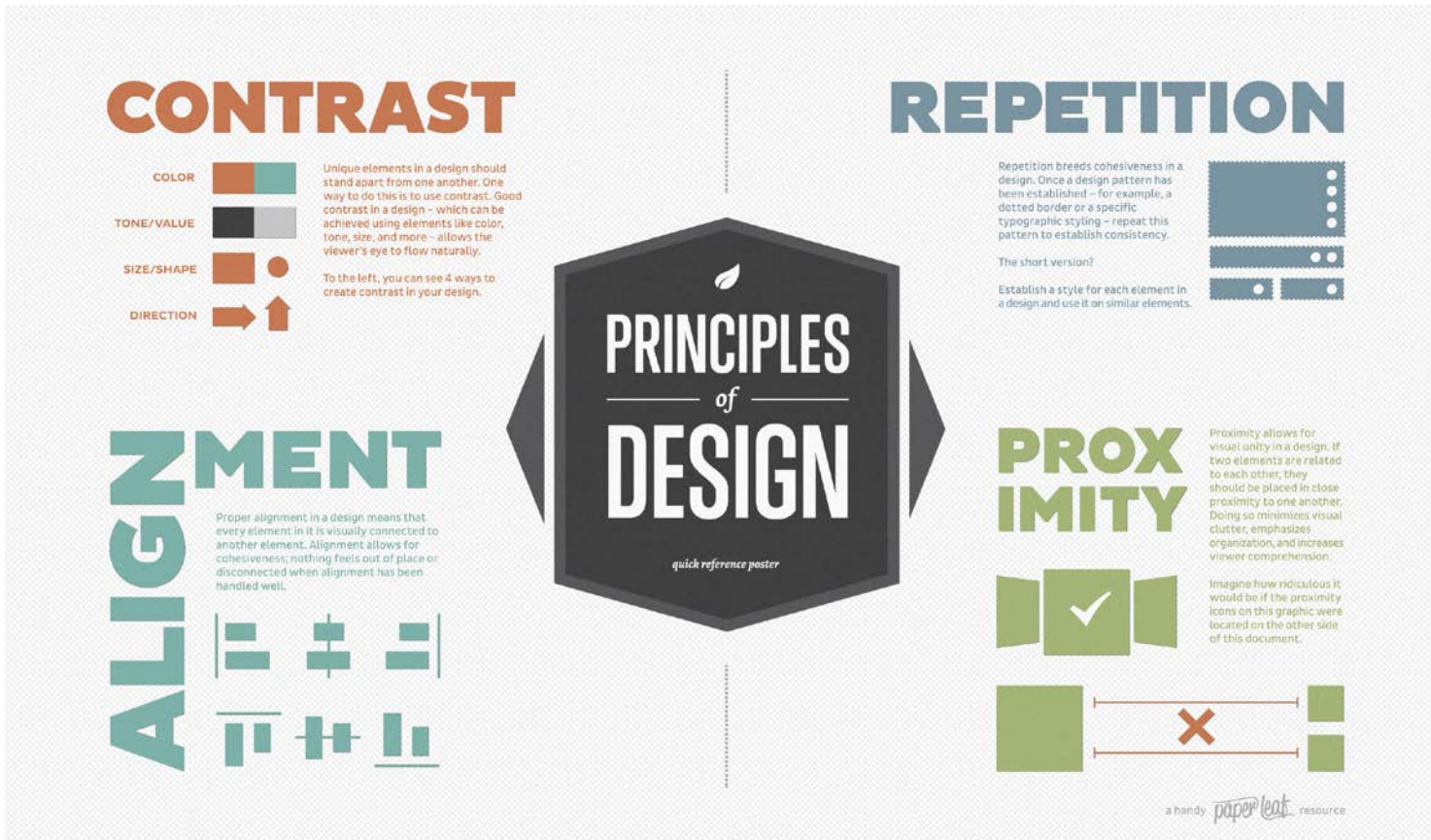
Mistake 3: Stays Unfocused and Generic

- Uses general words that sound good but don't convey any factual information
- States you do everything:
 - Lists several dozen NAICS codes
 - Includes unrelated disciplines: i.e. cybersecurity AND janitorial services
- List agencies and capabilities your prospective customer could care less about



Mistake 4: Is Focused on Your Company and Not the Customer

- Leads with your company and not the prospective customer's or teaming partner's hot buttons
- Dives straight into your company's awards and accomplishments without tying them to relevancy
 - Why is it good for them that you are the small business of the year?
 - Why should the customer concerned with retention care that you are the employer of the year?
- WHAT makes you great? Your solution to their problems!



Mistake 5: Uses Poor Design

- Design doesn't follow your brand (colors, style), failing to convey consistency and build trust
- Violates the principles of:
 - Contrast
 - Repetition
 - Alignment
 - Proximity
- Doesn't reflect what you do
- Can be simple, just make sure it is attractive!



Mistake 6: Misses Key Information

- This mistake usually stems from the fact that you are using an older version of the capability statement that doesn't reflect how your company has changed
- Perhaps it also omits key facts because you didn't think to include them
- Use a modifiable PowerPoint version for 1-2 pager to update it rapidly and often
- Think of your capability statement as your company's resume, never send it without updating and tailoring!



Mistake 7: Contains Typos and Grammatical Errors

- Must have a second, third, or even fourth pair of eyes look at your statement
- Typos and other errors don't reflect intelligence, but they make you look:
 - Disorganized
 - Unprepared
 - Or worst of all: careless

Let's Wrap It Up

- Use capability statements to make a good first impression
- Keep your generic version updated and create tailored versions for prospective customers and partners, based on specific opportunities or areas of focus
- Most mistakes are made by:
 - Rushing through creation and design
 - Creating a set-in-stone InDesign statement you don't have the software or source file to update
 - Forgetting to update your statements before each meeting



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ALL DONE!

Resources to Improve Results with Marketing to Customers

- **Value Proposition Development Workshop**
(GovCon Incubator)
- **Win Themes and Strategy Development Workshop**
(B&P Academy)
- **KNOW™ Portal**

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