

Creating an Effective Capability Statement

Government contracting has developed into a very competitive marketplace, thanks to its potential for being very profitable. Companies of all sizes, from small, micro-firms with one employee to large, mega-firms with thousands of employees, have been successful in selling products and services to government agencies at the federal, state, city, county and municipal levels. Competition in government contracting has heightened as more companies try to break into, be competitive in, and stay successful in this market.

Furthermore, fewer people are employed by the government to handle an increasing number of outreach and acquisitions, creating an acquisition workforce that is pressed for time.

To be competitive in this market, contractors must know how to distill the information that is most important to a particular decision-maker, state it in a clear, concise manner, and reinforce its importance to the prospect, even more so than in the past.

A Capability Statement is a tool that will help you do just that! Five years ago, no one knew what a Capability Statement was, and now, it is a critical tool to help you be as successful as possible, no matter what size company you represent.

Capability Statement: Definition and Uses

In its simplest form, a capability statement is a promotional or marketing statement about your business and its capabilities and skills that advertises who you are and what you do. However, Capability Statements must be tailored to your audience: the government buyer or prime contractor.

Successful firms use their Capability Statement for a number of purposes:

- Required in many government registration processes
- A door-opener to new agencies
- Proof of qualification
- Proof of past performance
- It will set you apart from your competitors

Capability Statement Format

A Capability Statement should be very brief (only 1 or 2 pages) and to the point. It is important that the document be visually interesting and have similar graphic elements to your company's brand and logo. Therefore, we recommend that Capability Statements are created in Word or Publisher using a template that reflects a firm's brand with its own logo, colors and graphic identity.

It is important to fit all critical information on one side of one page. The second side, if absolutely necessary, may contain additional supporting data important to the targeted agency such as case studies of past successful projects.

Tip: *It is best to call the document a Capability Statement. This should be stated at the top of the document. This is a term known by government contracting decision-makers and indicates that you have knowledge of the contracting process.*

A Capability Statement should also show a firm's logo and other branding elements for recognition and be free of long paragraphs, instead, using short sentences and bulleted lists for quick visual scanning.

A Capability Statement is preferably only one page, one side. Go to two sides only if absolutely necessary.

Save and distribute as a PDF, not a Word, PowerPoint or other format. Save the document with your company's name in the file name. Many federal agencies block Word and Publisher documents because they may harbor viruses, however, a PDF file is much safer, usually smaller and stays visually consistent when mailed.

Capability Statement Contents

The five key areas included in a successful Capability Statement are:

1. Core competencies / capabilities
2. Differentiators / including facilities and equipment
3. Past performance
4. Corporate data including industry codes
5. Contact information

When composing a Capability Statement, use the following section labels: Core Competencies, Past Performance, and Differentiators. These are the key elements that government buyers are looking for so that they can make a speedy decision.

1. Core Competencies

These are short introduction statements relating the company's core competencies to the agency's specific needs followed by key-word heavy bullet points. This is NOT everything a firm is able to do, but the core expertise of a firm, specifically related to the agency this Capability Statement is written for, its mission and identified opportunities.

2. Differentiators

Doing business with the government is highly competitive. Contractors have the burden of dealing with this competitive market and rising above the other contractors. Many companies who are trying to increase sales to the government market do not have a clear value statement detailing what makes them different from their competitors. A succinct, clear statement that relates to the specific needs of the agency is what will help the procurement and purchasing staff, the program managers and end users understand why they should pick your firm over other competitors.

Sample Differentiator Questions:

How is your company best suited for the needs of this agency? What is it about your services that make you stand out from the rest? What is it about your people that give you the advantage over your competitors? Why are your products better solutions than the others that are available?

If these benefits cannot be clearly communicated, it is impossible for a decision-maker to make a clear recommendation for your company over one of your competitors. Many companies fail to take this critical step. And they wonder why they are missing out on contracts.

3. Past Performance

Begin by listing past customers for whom your business has done similar work. Prioritize starting with related agency, to all federal to other government, to commercial contracts. If the past projects do not relate to the targeted agency's needs, do not list it.

Tip: Ideally, include specific contact information for immediate references. Include name, title, email and phone. Use this information when meeting with decision-makers. Leave this information off the Capability Statement when you are sending the PDF as an initial outreach effort or leaving as a handout at conferences.

4. Company Data

Include one or two short sentences with a company description detailing pertinent history. Include the size of your firm, your revenue, the number of employees you have, and the typical geographic area you serve.

Tip: Readers will visit your web site for additional information. Make sure your web site is constantly updated and government-focused.

List Specific Pertinent Codes

- DUNS
- Socio-economic certifications: 8(a), HUB Zone, SDVOB, etc.

- NAICS (all) Do not include code descriptions, just use the numbers
- CAGE Code
- Accept Credit and Purchase Cards
- GSA Schedule Contract Number(s)
- Other federal contract vehicles
- BPAs and other federal contract numbers
- State Contract Numbers
- Name (a specific person)
- Address
- Phone (main and cell)
- Email (a personal email, not info@)

5. Contact Information

Show contact information, including web site and a specific person's name, email and phone number, on each side or page of the document.

If your firm has won any awards, received accolades or has notable accomplishments relating to that agency, list them only if you have space.

Using this information will help in creating a Powerful Capability Statement and open doors to contracting opportunities in the federal government. This document is the key to building relationship with important decision-makers in government contracting, providing them with a concise description of the goods and services your business can provide, and a consistent reminder of your firm. When properly written, a Capability Statement is the tool that sets your company head and shoulders above your competition.

The following page contains an example of a Capability Statement. This statement has been created based on a fictitious company. Details bearing any resemblance to any actual company is purely coincidental.

Note: This document is provided as a tool to assist you to develop a Capability Statement. While the information contained herein should benefit you in your efforts to design a Capability Statement, following this advice will not guarantee you a contract award. The SAP&DC PTAC assumes no liability for use of this document.

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Company Data

3PL Vets is a SDVOSB Third Party Logistics provider with over \$4.3 million in annual revenue and nearly 100 employees worldwide.

DUNS: 054893485

CAGE: 7BAY5

NAICS Codes:

488190 - Other Support Activities for Air Transportation

488210 - Support Activities for Rail Transportation

488390 - Other Support Activities for Water Transportation

488490 - Other Support Activities for Road Transportation

488510 - Freight Transportation Arrangement

488991 - Packing and Crating

488999 - All Other Support Activities for Transportation

493110 - General Warehousing and Storage

541614 - Process, Physical Distribution, and Logistics Consulting Services

**A Service Disabled
Veteran Owned
Certified
Small
Business**



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CAPABILITY STATEMENT

Capabilities

Experts in:

- Supply chain management, order management, logistics management, optimization and visibility
- Creative, global 3PL solutions that address needs ranging from single transactions to some of the largest and most complex supply chain challenges
- Open and scalable technology that is readily integrated into existing operations, and extended as needs evolve
- Lean logistics focusing on reducing waste and inventory, standardized work and mistake proofing

Differentiators

Leading the way...

- Utilizing our services has resulted in an average savings of 22% per customer
- Three year average of 99.78% on-time delivery rate with no lost shipments and no accidents
- **Our Green Initiatives are setting a new industry standard!** 3PL Vets has been a SmartWay partner since 2007, committed to reducing carbon footprint by focusing on energy conservation, waste reduction, recycling and procurement
- 3PL Vets was named a Top 100 3PL Provider by *Inbound Logistics*



Past Performance

Rated "Outstanding" by our customers!

- US Department of Defense Surface Deployment and Distribution (SDDC) approved supplier
- USTRANSCOM preferred vendor for transportation services
- GSA Schedule contract holder (GS48F2824B) and preferred vendor for travel and relocation services