DANEL Capture and Proposal Process

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DANEL runs each pursuit through eight stages, from the bid decision to the debrief. Experience leads every stage. In stages 2 through 6, AI also builds a stronger first artifact for the team to work from. In stages 1, 7, and 8, AI plays a supporting role to manual, experience-led work.

How AI raises the baseline

Every stage of a pursuit starts from a baseline artifact: a requirements list, a customer profile, a win-theme draft, a first-pass section. The quality of that starting point sets the ceiling for everything built on it.

In a conventional pursuit, a small team produces each baseline by hand under deadline. The first compliance matrix covers the obvious requirements. The first competitor assessment reflects what two people remember. Review cycles then go to fixing gaps.

DANEL uses AI to make each baseline complete and traceable before people touch it. The team then works on the questions that decide a win: what the customer values, where the client's solution is stronger, how an evaluator will score the response, and what price the customer expects.

Four uses carry through the process:

- **Requirements and compliance.** AI reads the full solicitation and its attachments, lists every instruction and evaluation factor, and links each to its source paragraph.
- **Customer and competitor research.** AI organizes agency priorities, incumbent history, and competitor positions from public sources and client knowledge into one capture baseline.
- **Win themes and solution framing.** AI tests each claimed discriminator against the evaluation criteria and drafts features as strengths an evaluator can score.
- **Extra review cycles.** AI reviews drafts against the evaluation criteria between the human color teams, so each color team opens a stronger draft.

AI use is heaviest in stages 2 through 6. Qualification, final submission checks, and post-submission work run mainly on Tov's experience and manual methods, with AI in support. At every stage, an experienced person makes the call.

The eight stages at a glance

Stage	Baseline artifact	What AI adds to the baseline	Decision the team makes
1. Qualify	Opportunity assessment	Supporting role: public records on the customer and incumbent gathered for an experience-led assessment	Bid or no-bid
2. Capture plan	Customer and competitor baseline	Agency priorities and competitor positions organized by evaluation factor	Where to compete and with whom
3. Solution and win strategy	Win themes and discriminators	Each claimed strength tested against the evaluation criteria	Which themes carry the proposal
4. Proposal plan	Compliance matrix and annotated outline	Every instruction and evaluation factor listed and traced to its paragraph	Volume owners, schedule, page budgets
5. Write	Section drafts	Features drafted as scoreable strengths, with proof points flagged where evidence is missing	What the client can prove and commit to
6. Color reviews	Pink (50%), Red (80%), and Gold (99%) drafts	An evaluator-style review between each human color team	Which findings to fix and in what order
7. Submit	Final compliance check	Supporting role: a second-pass trace of each requirement after the manual compliance check	Sign-off and submission
8. Post-submission	Questions, revisions, debrief record	Supporting role: debrief comments mapped to proposal sections, behind experience-led responses	Lessons carried to the next pursuit

The stages run in order. A client can also bring DANEL in at any stage, and the same baseline artifacts apply from that point forward.

Stage by stage

1. QUALIFY

The stage ends with a bid or no-bid decision the client's leadership can defend. Qualification runs on experience. Tov assesses the opportunity by hand: the customer's buying history, the incumbent's record, and the client's fit against the stated requirements. AI plays a supporting role by gathering public records and organizing them for that assessment. A weak fit found here costs a day. Found at Red Team, it costs the pursuit.

2. CAPTURE PLAN

The capture plan states where the client will compete and what must be true to win. AI organizes agency priorities and competitor positions by evaluation factor, with a source beside each entry. The team uses that baseline to choose teaming partners, plan customer contact, and set the actions that close gaps before the solicitation drops.

3. SOLUTION AND WIN STRATEGY

Win themes come out of a working session between DANEL and the client's technical leads. AI tests each claimed discriminator against the evaluation criteria and the competitor baseline. It flags claims a competitor can match and claims that lack proof. The team keeps the themes that survive and assigns an owner to each missing proof point.

4. PROPOSAL PLAN

AI reads the full solicitation and builds the compliance matrix, with every instruction and evaluation factor traced to its paragraph. Tov checks the matrix against the source and builds the annotated outline from it. The client's proposal manager and DANEL then assign volume owners, the schedule, and page budgets.

5. WRITE

Subject matter experts supply the substance. AI drafts first-pass sections that state features as strengths an evaluator can score, and it marks each place where evidence is missing. Tov and the client's writers rework the drafts in the client's own voice. Every claim in a section carries a source the client has confirmed.

6. COLOR REVIEWS

Human reviewers run three color teams: Pink at 50 percent complete, Red at 80 percent, and Gold at 99 percent. Between those reviews, AI scores the current draft against the evaluation criteria and lists gaps by requirement. Reviewers therefore open a draft that already answers the mail, and they spend their session on strategy, proof, and risk.

7. SUBMIT

Submission runs on a manual check. Tov and the proposal manager walk the compliance matrix line by line against the final document. AI supports with a second-pass trace that reports any requirement lacking a response. The client's authorized official signs off and submits.

8. POST-SUBMISSION

Post-submission work draws on experience: answering evaluation notices, clarification questions, and requests for final proposal revisions. AI supports by mapping debrief comments back to the proposal sections they address. The client keeps a lessons record tied to specific sections, ready for the next pursuit.

How DANEL engages

The role fits the pursuit and the client's own team. The stage descriptions above assume DANEL in the proposal lead role.

Role	What Tov does	Stages
Proposal lead	Runs the proposal from plan through submission. The most common engagement, often paired with capture support.	4 to 7
Volume lead	Owns one volume: outline, drafts, and review response.	4 to 6
Capture support	Supports the client's capture lead on the baseline, win strategy, and solution framing.	1 to 3
Capture lead	Leads the capture when the client asks for it.	1 to 3
Color team reviewer	Reviews a draft at Pink, Red, or Gold.	6

What the client team contributes

Client roles vary by company and by pursuit. At a minimum, the client makes the decisions and supplies the subject matter experts and the knowledge only the client holds.

A stronger baseline changes how these people spend their hours. Experts react to a structured draft and correct it, which takes less of their time than writing from a blank page. Reviewers judge strategy on a draft that is already compliant.

Guardrails

- **Human final review.** A person verifies facts, compliance, and final language before anything leaves the team. On proposals DANEL leads, Tov performs that review.
- **Source traceability.** Each requirement traces to a solicitation paragraph. Each factual claim traces to a source the client has confirmed. Anything inferred is labeled as an inference or removed.

- **Client data rules.** The client's approved tools and data-handling rules set the boundaries. Controlled or proprietary material stays inside the environments the client authorizes.
- **Scoped start.** A new engagement can begin with an assessment: a review of the current workflow, a pilot on one live pursuit, and a written recommendation.