

Overall Feedback on Non-IT Method of Supply

1. **Lack of Procurement Strategy for Professional Services:** Is there an existing framework, overall procurement strategy within which TSBPS is being developed? Nothing has been provided to demonstrate that one exists.
 - a. Lack of apparent framework (none shared, one is not obvious). A number of independent initiatives are at different stages, with no evident link between the initiatives (e.g., TBSPP, TBIPS, SBIPS, THS, Internal Audit, ...)
 - b. The TBSPP RFI is already working at detail level for an RFSO/SA without any apparent context. This is a risky approach, risky to clients, to industry and to the procurement community itself. That is, the Non-IT Professional Services RFSO/SA methods of supply are being developed in apparent isolation.
2. **Commodity approach to management consulting:** Overall, it may be inappropriate to select consultants in the manner proposed. This is trying to turn the consulting profession into a commodity. There are many other factors (such as credibility, track record, multi-discipline background), which have a greater value in rating a consultant or team proposed for an engagement. These factors need to be reflected in the selection criteria (examples of appropriate criteria are described below).
3. **Need for Solution Approach to Consulting:** Federal Government Procurement persists in their efforts to turn consulting into a body-shop business. The Non-IT Professional Services procurement vehicle (as with the TBIPS, which preceded it) is geared towards acquiring 'bodies' rather than solutions. There may be a need for two systems – one that reflects a need for body shopping, and another reflecting a need for a solution. Actually, for Professional Services consulting, we recommend the method of supply be focused on developing solutions. This is what most professional services consulting require. The Federal Government appears to be constrained by systems, thinking and influence from the IT contractor sector and the Temporary Help sector that operate on a body shop model: creating a body shop model (for contracting resources as/when needed) is quite different than management consulting requirements, in which the experience, skills, credibility and interpersonal capabilities of the individual or team are critical – to identify, scope and provide recommendations to clients who have a problem that needs to be addressed, a process or organization that requires improvement.
4. **Contracting versus Consulting:** The Federal Government does not appear to recognize the difference between contracting and consulting. Procurement requirements for contracting are very different than those needed to obtain consulting skills/resources. Example of the issue: Here is a current situation that reflects the difficulty of the proposed SO/SA model: a consulting firm is in the process of developing a proposal for a change management requirement. Because the RFP is framed as a need for a change management expert, the body shops are

- in the game. Actually, the client needs to have a change management plan and program developed to meet its specific requirements: this is not just matching a consulting category to a requirement; it is finding the right person/team to address the client's needs. An advertisement has appeared on Workopolis for someone meeting the exact description outlined in the RFP. In other words, we have body shops recruiting bodies totally on speculation for the purpose of developing a bid – not firms/resources who truly understand the client's requirements, and have a track record doing similar assignments, in similar environments. Worse, people applying are given the impression there is actually a real job here.
5. **PS Online:** The PS Online method of supply is a good vehicle but it suffers from a number of faults currently.
 - a. First, a lot of departments either don't know about PS Online or don't/won't use it.
 - b. Second, it uses a body shop model. PS online needs to evolve into a true vehicle for procuring management consulting services for smaller-scoped solutions.
 - c. Third, the method of supply restricts the client to very small engagements because of the NAFTA limitation on assignments under PS Online.
 6. **Focus on \$\$ savings and rates – not value.** Priority seems to be given to saving money, get reduced rates, rather than need to ensure client gets best value for services provided – even for the Supply Arrangements, that should be based on having optimal solution delivered.
 - a. SA – market-based rates implication are mention on page 2 – 'lowest cost' is one of the criteria (page 2)
 - b. SA – best financially-rated bid (page 4)
 7. **Likelihood of Success of TSBPS:** Who has determined that this supply arrangement / standing offer process actually works? A lot of time and money is being invested in developing the SA/SO. Will the government get good value? Will this be inexpensive to operate? Will the government clients be happy with the procurement approach, the results provided and the procurement steps/process? Where is the evidence (from elsewhere in Federal Government or from other jurisdictions) that this will result in reduced duplication, improved access etc.?
 8. **Limited Consultation process with Clients:** Who has actually consulted with clients (major users of consulting services)? Have key users participated in the design of this vehicle or are they being presented the proposed TBSPS as a fait accompli? Have their needs and experiences been incorporated? The list of Subject Matter Experts that have been involved in the Non-IT consultation process does not represent key users of consulting services: most consultation appears to have been done with Procurement officials in the client departments.
 9. **Impact on the Consulting Industry:** This process will perpetuate the Federal "consulting" industry that has sprouted up where independents or others who do not hold standing offers are directed through holders, many of which simply take

a percentage of the rate. Many situations are actually multi-level. This prevents the government from getting the best rate/value and it encourages a reduction in the overall quality of consultants since significantly better rates are available in other industries or cities. There is a lot of evidence that this has already occurred within the NCR.

10. **Client Comfort with Consulting Resources:** Getting to understand a client's environment and needs takes time and experience. The fact is that a client will often want a specific consultant largely due to familiarity with their business, track record, relationship, trust and/or selection based on their own research or via referrals. The proposed system seems to give no value to these criteria, which in other industries is arguably 90% of the selection criteria. The focus on specific criteria per resource/consultant will allow clients to specify needs based on the resume of a specific consultant. Playing with the criteria – and the focus on individuals (bodies) will lead to abuse of the system. This, quite frankly, wastes everyone's time and money.
11. **Criteria that should be included:** Other criteria for selecting a consultant or team best suited to meet a client's requirement could include:
 1. **Familiarity, Ability to Deliver:** Track record with the client or a similar client (either from past career experience or past assignments) should be assessed as these are good predictors of value and success in a consulting assignment. Does the consultant have a track record of being able to deliver for the client?
 2. **Multi-discipline background:** What about points for general knowledge across a wide variety of disciplines or industries relevant for the specific assignment?
 3. **Creativity:** What about consultants and teams who are more creative in nature? Criteria could be based on personal and corporate attributes in addition to specific skills.
 4. **Consultant's ability to fit within the culture:** Does the consultant "fit" within the culture of the organization? Do they have the style that is best suited to the work at hand?
 5. **Consultant's ability to work at the appropriate level:** Does the consultant have the ability to work with the desired level(s) within our organization - staff, management, executive management?
 6. **What type of consulting is desired/needed?** Examples: Technical, Advisory, Troubleshooting, Results Based, Creative, Strategic, Tactical, Process based. What types of consulting are performed by the consultant/team?
 7. **Does the consultant/team possess basic consulting skills?** Listening, interviewing, writing, diagnosing, recommending, meeting leading, presentation, project management, communication, etc. Would like to see some evaluation criteria based on consulting skills such as CMC's Competency Profile of the Certified Management Consultant

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8. **Ethics and Conduct:** Does the consultant adhere to a recognized code of ethics and code of conduct (e.g. CMC, PMI, Professional Engineers etc.).