

## GUIDE GSC

# Past Performance Narrative Template

*A fill-in-the-blank framework for writing high-scoring past performance narratives*

## How to use this template

Complete one narrative per relevant past performance reference. Federal evaluators score on three dimensions: (1) Relevance — how closely the work mirrors the solicitation in size, scope, and complexity; (2) Recency — typically performed within the last three to five years; (3) Quality — performance ratings, problem resolution, and customer satisfaction. Use this template to make those three dimensions impossible to miss.

Yellow fields are for your input. Italicized prompts beneath each field tell you exactly what evaluators want to see. Green tip boxes share scoring guidance.

## 1. Reference Identification

*Lead with administrative facts. Evaluators check this first to confirm relevance and recency before reading further.*

|                                  |                                                                       |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Project / Contract Title</b>  | <i>[ Official contract or project name ]</i>                          |
| <b>Customer / Agency</b>         | <i>[ Department, agency, bureau, or commercial customer ]</i>         |
| <b>Contract Number</b>           | <i>[ e.g., GS-00F-XXXXX, W912DY-XX-D-XXXX ]</i>                       |
| <b>Contract Type</b>             | <i>[ FFP, T&amp;M, CPFF, IDIQ, BPA, etc. ]</i>                        |
| <b>Contract Value</b>            | <i>[ Total value; for IDIQ, list ceiling and obligated to date ]</i>  |
| <b>Period of Performance</b>     | <i>[ Start date – End date (or “ongoing”) ]</i>                       |
| <b>Place of Performance</b>      | <i>[ City, State; CONUS / OCONUS; on-site / remote ]</i>              |
| <b>Role on Contract</b>          | <i>[ Prime, Subcontractor (% of work), Joint Venture ]</i>            |
| <b>Customer Point of Contact</b> | <i>[ Name, title, phone, email — verify still current ]</i>           |
| <b>Most Recent CPARS Rating</b>  | <i>[ Overall rating: Exceptional, Very Good, Satisfactory, etc. ]</i> |

### TIP — Verify your POC before submission

POCs change jobs. A bad phone number or stale email tells the evaluator you didn't bother to check — and they may downgrade or skip the reference entirely. Call or email the POC two weeks before submission to confirm contact info and that they're still willing to serve as a reference.

## 2. Relevance to This Solicitation

*This is the highest-leverage section. Spell out the parallels between this past contract and the work you're proposing. Don't make the evaluator do the math.*

**Scope alignment**

*Describe the technical scope of the past contract and map it line-by-line to the PWS/SOW tasks of the current solicitation. Use the same terminology the customer uses.*

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**Size/magnitude alignment**

*Compare contract value, headcount, number of users supported, transaction volume, geographic reach, or whatever scale metric the solicitation uses. State the numbers explicitly.*

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**Complexity alignment**

*Identify the technical, regulatory, or operational complexity factors (e.g., multi-site, classified environment, 24/7 ops, multi-stakeholder coordination, ATO required) that match the new opportunity.*

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**Customer / mission alignment**

*If the past customer is the same agency, same program office, or a similar mission (e.g., DoD logistics → DLA logistics), state it. Mission familiarity is a discriminator.*

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**TIP — Use a Relevance Matrix when allowed**

If the solicitation permits, include a small two-column table mapping each PWS task to evidence from this past performance. Evaluators love this — it does their scoring work for them.

### 3. Project Narrative

*Tell the story using a Challenge → Approach → Result structure. Quantify outcomes whenever possible.*

#### 3.1 Customer Challenge / Mission Need

##### What problem did the customer face?

*Set the scene. What was at stake? What was failing, missing, or at risk before you arrived? Include any constraints (budget, timeline, regulatory, technical).*

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#### 3.2 Our Approach / Solution

##### What did your team do — and how?

*Describe your technical and management approach. Highlight methodologies (Agile, ITIL, PMBOK, Lean Six Sigma), tools, frameworks, and any innovations. Connect approach choices to the customer's challenge.*

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#### 3.3 Key Personnel & Staffing

##### Who delivered the work?

*List labor categories, headcount, clearance levels, and certifications relevant to this solicitation. Note any staff who would be proposed for the new contract.*

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#### 3.4 Quantified Results & Outcomes

##### What measurable outcomes did you deliver?

*Use numbers: % cost savings, hours reduced, uptime achieved, SLAs met/exceeded, audit findings closed, deliverables completed early, etc. If award fees or incentive fees were earned, name them.*

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**TIP — Numbers beat adjectives**

“Reduced ticket backlog by 47% in six months” scores higher than “significantly improved support performance.” Pull quantitative data from CPARS, monthly status reports, or customer letters of appreciation.

## 4. Performance Quality & Customer Satisfaction

*Demonstrate that you didn't just do the work — you did it well, and the customer knows it.*

### 4.1 CPARS / Performance Ratings

**Most recent CPARS ratings by category**

*Quality, Schedule, Cost Control, Management, Small Business Subcontracting (if prime), Regulatory Compliance. Provide ratings for each evaluated period if multiple exist.*

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### 4.2 Awards, Incentives & Recognition

**Award fees, option exercises, customer commendations**

*Award fee percentages earned, every option exercised on schedule, letters of appreciation, contractor of the year recognition, or any other formal acknowledgment.*

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### 4.3 Problem Resolution

**Any challenges encountered — and how you resolved them**

*Don't pretend nothing went wrong. Evaluators look for problem-resolution maturity. Briefly describe a non-trivial issue, your corrective action, and the outcome. Show ownership and process discipline.*

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**TIP — Address weaknesses head-on**

If a CPARS shows a Satisfactory or below rating in any category, address it. Explain what happened, what you did, and what changed. Silence reads as concealment; transparent ownership reads as maturity.

## 5. Discriminators & Win Theme Connections

*Tie this past performance back to the proposal's win themes. Make the evaluator see the through-line.*

**Discriminators are demonstrated on this contract.**

*What did your team do uniquely well? (e.g., DevSecOps maturity, integrated PM/engineering teams, surge capacity, accelerated transition, reach-back to corporate SMEs.) Connect each discriminator to a specific moment from this contract.*

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**Win themes this past performance supports.**

*List 2–4 win themes from your proposal and write one sentence per theme explaining how this past performance proves you can deliver on it.*

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## 6. Subcontractor & Teaming Performance

*Required if you were prime managing subs, or if the solicitation evaluates teaming. Optional otherwise.*

**Subcontractor management approach**

*How did you onboard, manage, and integrate subs? Communication cadence, joint reviews, and performance metrics applied to subs.*

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Small business subcontracting performance (if prime)

Plan goals vs. actual achievement, mentor-protégé activity, and any awards or recognition for small-business achievement.

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7. Customer Voice (Optional but Powerful)

If you have permission to use a direct quote from a customer letter of appreciation, CPARS narrative, or other documented source, drop it here. Always cite the source.

Direct customer quote

"[ Quote from customer ]" — Name, Title, Date, Source (e.g., CPARS narrative, letter of appreciation dated MM/DD/YYYY)

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TIP — Get permission in writing

Even quotes pulled from CPARS narratives are best used with a heads-up to the POC. A surprised POC may decline to confirm the reference, which kills your score.

8. Relevance Summary (Closing Box)

End with a tight, scannable summary. Many evaluators read this first; make it work as a standalone.

|                                    |                                                                  |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Why this reference matters         | [ One sentence connecting this contract to the new opportunity ] |
| Top 3 quantified outcomes          | [ Bullet 1 / Bullet 2 / Bullet 3 with numbers ]                  |
| The top discriminator demonstrated | [ One sentence ]                                                 |
| Most recent overall CPARS          | [ Rating + period ]                                              |

9. Pre-Submission QA Checklist

Run through every item before this narrative leaves your hands. Color team reviewers will check the same things.

| ✓                        | QA Item                                                                            |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Page count complies with solicitation limit (and per-reference limit if specified) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Customer name, contract number, value, and dates verified against source documents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | POC contacted within the last 30 days; contact info confirmed current and willing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Recency requirement met (typically within 3–5 years per Section L)                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Relevance explicitly mapped to current solicitation scope, size, and complexity.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | All quantified outcomes are sourced and defensible if challenged.                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | CPARS ratings cited match the official record exactly                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | No FOUO, CUI, or proprietary customer information disclosed without authorization  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Win themes from the Executive Summary are visibly threaded through the narrative.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Acronyms defined on first use; no internal jargon unfamiliar to the evaluator      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Active voice, customer-focused language, no marketing fluff                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Final read-through by someone who did not write the narrative                      |

## Guide GSC — Government Contract Services

*Pair this template with the Federal Proposal Writing Checklist for end-to-end submission discipline.*