

READING SPECIFICATIONS by Steven Taylor, H. V. Carter Co, Inc. Oakland

There are two different types of specifications that I must deal with. There is a specification for purchasing a piece of equipment, this is called BID SPECIFICATIONS. The other type of specification is called the MANUFACTURE SPECIFICATIONS, this is the information that the manufacture puts out to sell their products. It is the manufacture specifications that purchasing agents use to compare to write bid specification for the items that a company or governmental agency require.

When reading a set of manufactures specifications the first thing that I observe is the product and the name of the manufacture. From this point on I see that there is a general section and a specific section. The general section of the specification sheet usually covers the advantages the piece of equipment has to offer. It also is where most of the pictures are and the descriptions for them. You will also see in the general specification section the formation pertaining to the manufacture information: name, address and (sometimes) telephone number.

From the general information you will get into the detailed specifications for the product. This information tells the requirements that the manufacture feels are important to sell his product. This part of the information can be so specific that only advanced engineers can decipher them or simple enough for the general worker.

Normally the more complicated the piece of equipment, the more complicated the specification. If I am selling straight pins there will not be to many specifications. If I am selling a 747 jet airliner, there is a small library of books for specification that go along with the plane.

Moving to the other side of the specifications, we come to those written by the purchaser of the equipment. At first look I see that I have a request to bid on an item from a certain customer. The general information that is presented is the date, time and place of the bid opening, whom to contact for more information, terms and condition, where to send the bid and other general information as required by the bidding organization.

Following the general specifications I might find another section about specific back ground requirements that are required for the piece of equipment. This section might be certain requirements the specific item must meet prior to the consideration for bidding. This information might be specific tests that a piece of equipment must go through, or it might be certain regulations the item must meet. This section may or may not be a part of the specifications, depending on whether it is required for the item to be bid.

These specifications can be very complicated or they can be very simple. It will depend on the item that is going out to bid, as to the requirements. It might be that a very complicated piece of equipment might have simple specifications, because there is only one bidder or the manufacture worked closely in development of the item.