

Fundamentals of Proposal Development and Grant Writing

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WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- To identify and discuss “good grant writing” practices and principles
- To integrate the basic principles of successful grantsmanship into proposal development
- To avoid pitfalls (“fatal flaws”) and meet the challenges of persuasive writing
- To appreciate shifting paradigms and understand funding and policy priorities
- To submit “smarter” applications



*In Language,
clarity is everything.*

-Confucius

PART ONE

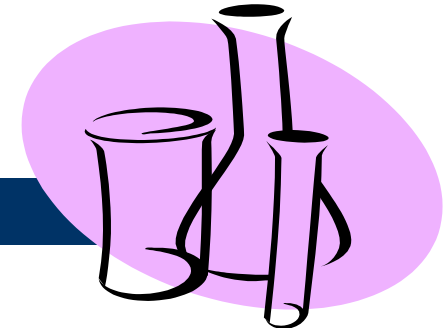
“Getting Started”

**FUNDAMENTALS OF
PROPOSAL
DEVELOPMENT AND
GRANT WRITING**



Why Write Proposals

- To contribute to the pool of knowledge
- To develop, implement and support new programs and services
- To acquire funds for projects, programs, activities and personnel
- To establish a scientific reputation in your field

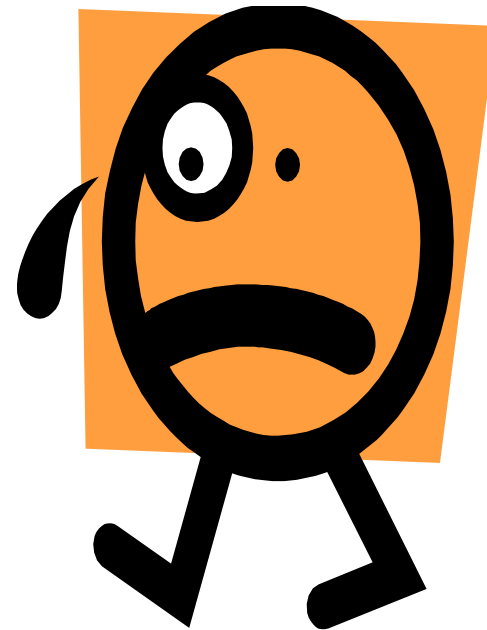


Successful Grant Writing is a Mixture of:

- **Good Conceptual Approach**
- **Good Communication**
- **Good Marketing**

Grant Writing Process

- Begins with a good idea
- Review the components of a successful grant
- Apply the “Developing the Idea” model
- Literature review
- Analysis of current research/activity in the field
- Develop a proposal writing team
- Evaluate and discuss the proposal and include an evaluation plan



GRANT LANGUAGE (or an alphabet soup)

- RFPs =
- RFAs =
- LOIs =
- NOFA=
- NGA =
- Grants vs. Contracts
- “My” Award, grant, supplement

Proposal Development and Grant Seeking: An Overview

- Plan the Proposal
- Identify Potential Funders
- Write the Proposal
- Design an Evaluation
- Develop a Budget
- Submit the Proposal
- Follow-Up Steps



Characteristics of a Good Proposal

- A document that is neat, well organized and easy to read.
- Responsiveness to the program announcement, with specific references showing how the proposed project will achieve program goals.

Characteristics of a Good Proposal

- Offers fresh insight into an important problem.
- Writing that communicates enthusiasm and commitment of the researcher.
- Evidence that the project director/principal investigator (PI) knows the field.

Characteristics of a Good Proposal

- Provides convincing preliminary data.
- A feasible work plan that is supported by an appropriate budget.

“Reading a good proposal is also a learning experience.” The core of good proposal writing is a theme of clear, persuasive writing.

Write first



Funding Second

Twelve Basic Principles*

1. Match your ideas to the potential funding source and thoroughly understand the goals of the grant program as described in the formal solicitation.
 - The proposal/application must meet the grant program's needs.
 - Read all solicitation materials and **FOLLOW ALL DIRECTIONS!!!**

*Source: USDHHS/PHS/SAMHSA. Snapshot: Overview of Grant Funding Opportunities. Rockville, MD. March 2001.

Basic Principles

2. Use the designated resources listed in the solicitation for technical assistance and advice.
- Consult with the Program Contact prior to submission of the proposal since the staff cannot comment after you have submitted your proposal. These staff members are generally under-utilized.
 - Participate in any technical workshops offered by the funding source.

Basic Principles

3. Begin the proposal before the published notice or funding opportunity.
 - Some organizations/associations highlight their funding priorities before the official notice.
 - Develop a network of contacts that may provide support to the project.
 - Develop a team of key participants who will assist with developing the proposal.

Basic Principles

4. Establish a timetable and organize the needed personnel as soon as funding availability is announced.
 - Identify the person responsible for writing the proposal or application.
 - Identify the person (s) to critique the drafts and who will point out questions or gaps in your proposal.
 - Identify the person who will organize and obtain letters of support (not boilerplate) that are specific to the proposal and to the nature of the support that's going to be provided.

Basic Principles

5. Follow the instructions and the prescribed format in the RFA.
 - “This is not the time or place to be creative.”
 - “Even if you believe your format is better, don’t use it.”

Basic Principles

6. Lay out a master plan
 - This plan is your vision for the project. Therefore, it should answer the key questions of who, what, where, when and why.
 - The proposal includes goal (s), specific objectives, project description, target population, resources, time frames and a method to evaluate accomplishments. If you have additional funding sources, then explain how they will be used.

Basic Principles

7. Be reasonable and realistic.
 - Successful applications find a balance between too much and too little detail.
 - Justify your goals and objectives with a convincing description. Any unexplained item leaves questions about your credibility and ability.

Basic Principles

8. Provide information on all of the review criteria.
 - Be thorough, concise and to the point.
 - If the application identifies specific criteria, make sure you explain how you will achieve this.

Basic Principles

9. Explain any omissions, rather than “hope that no one will notice.”
 - It is important to understand that what is not said in an application can hurt more than what is said.
 - If it is not written in the application, it does not exist for the purpose of the review.

Basic Principles

10. Make a reasonable funding request and match the budget to the scope of work.
 - The budget request must relate to the narrative and the proposed scope of work. The justification must match the amount requested.
 - Be specific and justify each item.
 - Explain and justify the use of consultants (based on need) rather than internal staff.

Basic Principles

11. Address items regarding human subjects: participant selection, confidentiality, etc.
 - This relates to the Institutional Review Board and HIPAA regulations, if applicable.
 - Address parental consent/permission if necessary, assent for children, recruitment strategy, etc.

Basic Principles

12. **KISS:** Keep the application simple, reasonable, business-like and professional.
 - The proposal/application should be error free, “presentation-ready,” with the correct forms included, as indicated.
 - Finally, have someone check each page of all of your copies to make sure that each packet is complete.

Common Problems in Applications

- **Failure to follow directions**
 - Lack of new or original ideas
 - Diffuse, superficial, or unfocused research plan
 - Lack of knowledge of published relevant work
 - Lack of experience in the essential methodology
 - Uncertainty concerning the future directions

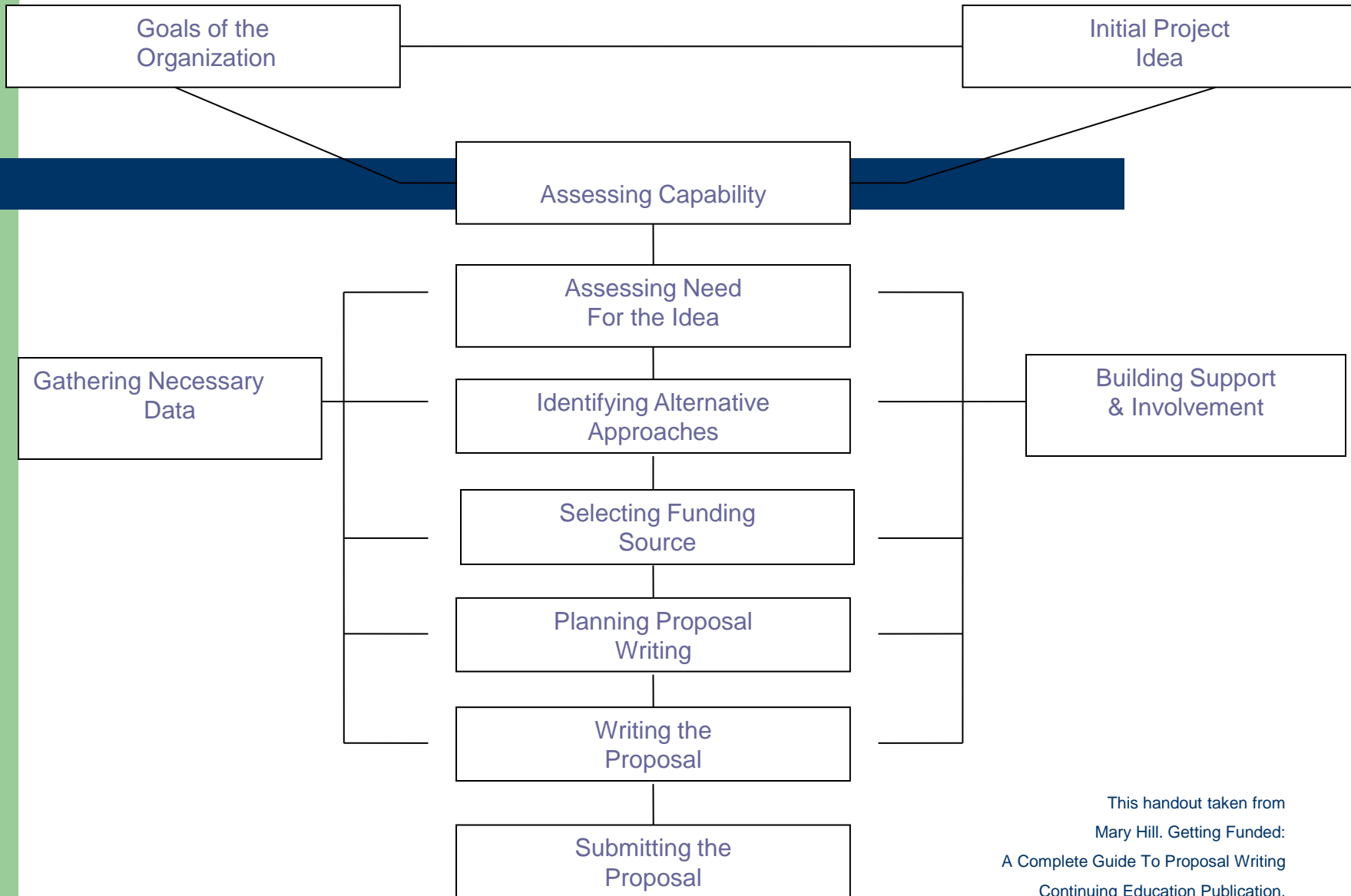
More Common Problems

- Questionable reasoning
- Absence of an acceptable scientific rationale, conceptual framework
- Unrealistically large amount of work
- Lack of sufficient detail
- Uncritical approach

Assessment: Getting Started

- What is the history of your organization?
- Can you describe your proposed project?
- What are your Goals?
- Can you state **SMART** Objectives?
- Do you have a network of supportive organizations, collaborators, volunteers?
- What results do you expect?
- How will you provide evidence of Impact?

DEVELOPING THE IDEA MODEL FOR PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT



Developing Your Idea(s)

- Needs Assessment
- Capability Assessment
- Organizational Assessment
- In-kind, Shared or Matching Costs



Grantsmanship Terms

- Letter of Intent (LOI)
- Concept Paper
- Abstract or Project Description
- Project Summary

Know the difference and when to use these items.

Grant Writing





How do you get other
people's money?

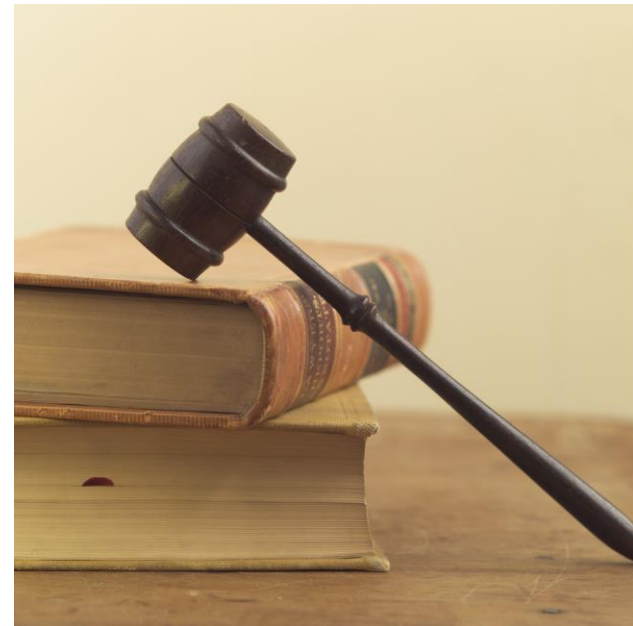
&

How do you keep it?



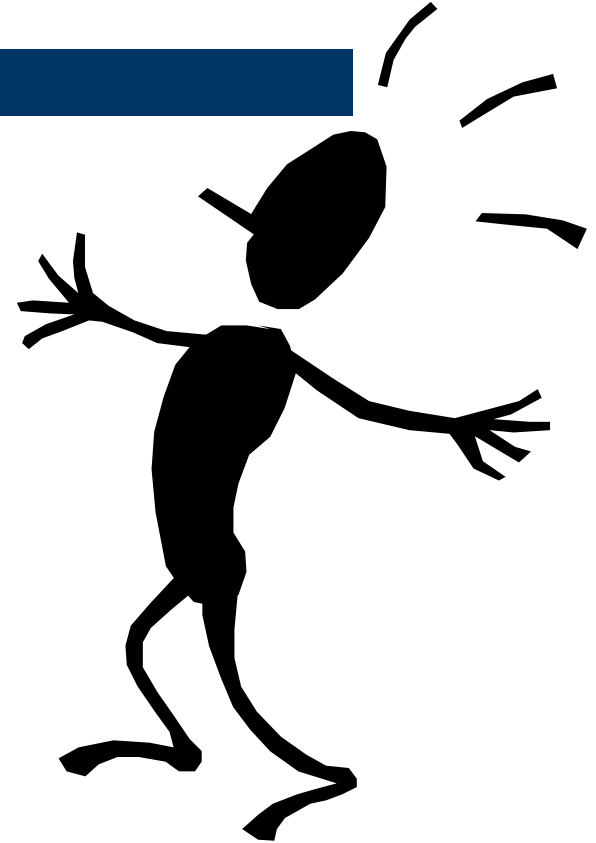
The Three Essential Laws of Successful Grant Writing

- Do your homework
- Follow Instructions
- Use Common Sense



Scientific and Technical Writing

- Communication Skills
- Organizational Ability
- Research Methodology
- Conceptualization
- Sponsorship - Mentors
- Persistence



Before you write a word:

- Conduct a personal assessment of your readiness, capability, and eligibility to respond to a NOFA, a RFP or a RFA.
- Assess, update and determine if your background information, literature review and your ideas are comprehensive, contemporary, and timely.
- Assemble your team
- Develop a project time line.

Traits of a Successful Grant Getter

- Research skills
- Salesmanship skills
- Communication skills
- Ingenuity and flexibility
- Administrative skills
- Human relations
- Persistence, dedication, patience
- Ability to work hard
- Political awareness and action
- Integrity

SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

- Direct, concise, compelling, convincing, capable and resourceful
- Addresses a significant/important problem
- Explicit goals, measurable objectives
- Comprehensive but succinct background review
- Methodology fits the problem
- Appropriate funding mechanism

Homework for PART TWO:

- Review a submitted proposal, successful and one not funded for background, approach, and critique
- Write your best ideas for development into a proposal in one to two paragraphs.
- What is the goal (s)?
- Identify two or three objectives.

Questions? Answers??

Thank You