

Grant Writing II: Writing Effective Proposals

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Common Mistakes

A well-written proposal for a poorly designed project



Common Mistakes

The proposed project may be a great idea, but it doesn't match the purpose of the grant program



Common Mistakes
Emotional appeals





Common Mistakes
Pleading poverty





Common Mistakes
"Let's develop a new program! Then let's go market it to people who will use it!"



Common Mistakes

The shopping list



It's All About You, Isn't It?

Presenting it in terms of what you want to provide, instead of what your clients or audience need



Common Mistakes

Ferraris and Jalopies



Common Mistakes

Lack of specifics on equipment purchases:

- Photo
- Manufacturer Specs
- Vendor Quote
- Useful Life & Maintenance Plan
- Why not rent?





Common Mistakes

The \$50 hotel room



Common Mistakes

"Trinkets and Trash"



Common Mistakes

Putting all the grantmaker's buzz words in the first paragraph...and nowhere else



Common Mistakes

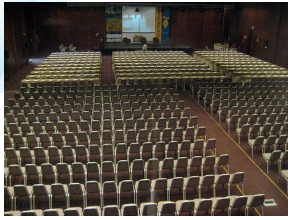
Alphabet Soup: "The OFSWCD has worked closely for eight years with ODNR-DSWC, -DOW and -DNAP, using the NAAEE guidelines, to present WET, WILD, and PLT..."



Common Mistakes

Jargon: "This project features hands-on, minds-on activities that draw upon the multiple intelligences of learners, evaluated through authentic and diverse assessment..."





Common Mistakes

If we offer it, they will come



Common Mistakes

“Drive-by workshops” with no follow-up



Common Mistakes

The Edge to Edge Pizza Proposal
(words cover the page from edge to edge)



Common Mistakes

Lost-without-a-roadmap





Common Mistakes

Don't promise the moon and stars...

Common Mistakes

"I'll have my school principal/state legislator/mother write a letter of support about what a great idea this is!"



Common Mistakes



“Wet Ink Specials”

Not finishing a draft proposal early enough for your grant writing buddy or the grant maker to provide you comments and suggestions



Circular Reasoning

Avoid presenting the absence of your solution as the actual problem

Example:

“The problem is that we have no pool in our community. Building a pool would solve the problem.”



Parts of a Proposal

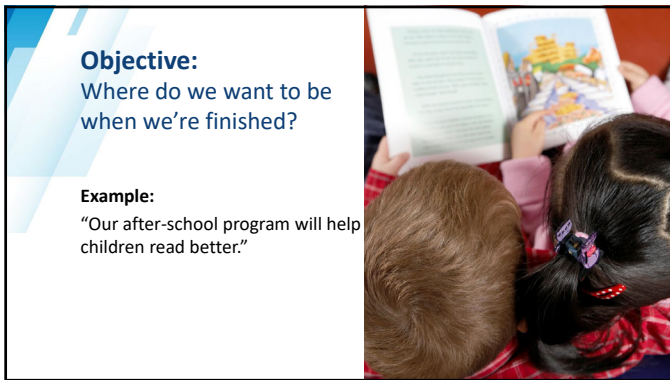
- Need or Problem Statement
- Goal/Objectives
- Activities
- Outcome Measurements
- Timetable
- Personnel or Organization Qualifications
- Continuation Plan
- Budget Spreadsheet and Narrative





Example of a Need Statement

"In a 2010 survey of Ohio dry cleaners, 65% admitted having difficulty

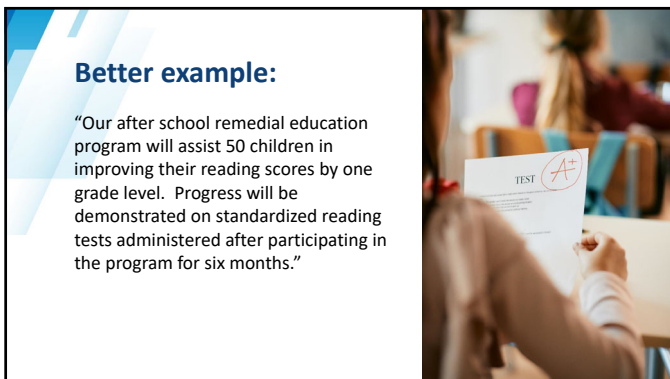


Objective:

Where do we want to be when we're finished?

Example:

"Our after-school program will help children read better."



Better example:

"Our after school remedial education program will assist 50 children in improving their reading scores by one grade level. Progress will be demonstrated on standardized reading tests administered after participating in the program for six months."

Objectives

S
M
A
R
T

Specific
Measurable
Appropriate
Realistic
Time-bound

Federal Grants: Logic Models

WK Kellogg Foundation's *Logic Model Development Guide* free download www.wkkf.org

Federal Grants

Outputs:

- # school buses retrofitted
- # & type of pollution control equipment installed
- Estimated pounds of pollution reduced (DEQ tool)
- Cost effectiveness (\$ per pound of PM 2.5 reduced)

Medium term Outcomes:

- Widespread adoption of retrofit technology by Ohio school districts
- documented reductions in emissions of fine particulates and other pollutants


Long-term Outcomes:

- Improved air quality in four urban nonattainment counties
- Continued progress toward MCDI regional goal of affecting 5 million diesel engines through voluntary actions


Additional notes or details for the grant project.

Objectives vs. Activities

ACTIVITIES are the specific steps that will achieve the objectives. How do we get there (the objective) from here (the current problem or need)





OBJECTIVES explain what the project will achieve (where we want to be when we're finished.)



Activities: How do we get there from here?

- Who, What, Where, When, and How
- Provide a detailed description for the duration of the project
- Explain the sequence and timing
- Specific activities make it possible to develop the project budget





Sample Objective

What would be the activities?

The students will create and maintain an environmental home page in our computer lab

- Activity One:
- Activity Two:

Better Sample

If the *Objective* is to improve 150 students' computer and analytical skills...



- Activity one: Analyze the content of a Web page
- Activity two: Compare two Web pages on the same environmental topic
- Activity three: Create a home page about this class's environmental projects

Personnel/Organization Qualifications

- Why are you the one for the job?
- Brief biographical sketches (or job description if not hired yet)
- Evidence of accomplishments
- Endorsements from others
- Stick to what's relevant for the project



Project Evaluation: Things to Think About

- Correlation is not causation: There may be multiple explanations for your good results
- Cost of evaluation relative to overall project
- Must be designed in early
- Include both quantitative and qualitative indicators



Project Evaluation: Things to think about...

- Lessons learned from UNsuccessful projects
- Purpose of your evaluation



“Summative Evaluation” (e.g., for reports to the grantmaker)

- Did the program work?
- Did it attain its goals?
- Were the desired outcomes for participants achieved, and were they worth the cost?
- Should the program be continued?



“Formative Evaluation” (to make an ongoing program better)

- What are the program’s strengths and weaknesses?
- Which participants do better than others and why?
- Can we operate the program
- m more efficiently without compromising quality?



Program Evaluation Resources



WK Kellogg Foundation's *Evaluation Handbook*
<http://wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2010/w-k-kellogg-foundation-evaluation-handbook>



Centers for Disease Control's *Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health*,
<http://www.cdc.gov/eval/framework/index.htm>



Detailing a Budget (Itemize, Itemize, Itemize...)

- Personnel
- Non-Personnel
- Contractual



Personnel

- Salary/wages: number of hours times hourly rate for each position, or % of time @ what salary
- Benefits and how calculated
- Rule of thumb: benefits roughly 1/3 of salary
- Job description if not hired yet



Non-personnel

- Supplies (consumables): itemized, unit price, totaled
- Equipment: itemized, unit price, totaled
- Printing: number of copies times unit price, totaled
- Travel: miles at specified reimbursement rate, or per diem per traveler
- Allow for breakage
- Remember the Buick!



Contractual

- Describe the service being provided
- Name or organization or individual providing the service (or copy of RFP)
- Number of hours times hourly rate
- Grant makers scrutinize closely for contractors' padded indirect costs



Meeting the Match

- Grant application should tell you how much cash or in-kind match is required
- Always offer at least the estimated value of your organization's staff time and supplies that are not being covered with grant funds
- Include volunteer hours in your match.
http://independentsector.org/volunteer_time includes current estimated rates (\$24.69/hour)



Quick Tip...

Dew knot trussed yore
spell chequer two fined
awl yore mist aches.



Final Checklist...

- Re-read the RFP or grant guidelines after you've finished the draft
- Understand who will be reviewing the proposal, and tailor your jargon level to their understanding
- Be sure your proposal can pass the Spouse Test



Before you hit the "Submit" button...



- Check your math on the budget
- Check your timeline against the funder's calendar
- Check to be sure you have completed all sections
- Round up needed signatures and collaboration letters

