



A Synopsis of Grant Proposal Writing

Dr. Tom Lifvendahl

tlifven@wi.rr.com

www.drtomlifvendahl.com

[Note to the Reader]

- This is a synopsis of a presentation given by Dr. Lynn Miner at Cardinal Stritch University in 2006
- It is for the use of my students
- Further information can be found at:
www.minerandassociates.com

[Grant Funding Sources]

- Federal Agencies
- State Agencies
- Foundations
 - National
 - Family
 - Community
 - Corporate
 - Special Purpose
- Others

[Funding Support]

- Consulting Services
- Conferences
- Curriculum Development
- Program Development and Evaluation
- Research

[Process]

- Target a Given Organization
- Pre-proposal Contact
 - Does proposal fit their mission?
 - Do we want to work with them?
- Define:
 - Application forms and guidelines
 - Past grant winners
 - Grant reviewers

[Key Questions]

- Position – Past Grant Winner
 - Did you contact sponsor before writing proposal?
 - Which staff member was most helpful?
 - How close was proposed budget to awarded amount?

Questions cont'd

- Rationale – Past Grant Winner
 - Did sponsor help you solve problems?
 - What major hurdles did you have to cross that were surprises?
- Expectation
 - Any “hidden agenda”?
 - What would you do differently?

Questions cont'd

- Priorities – Past Grant Winner
 - Why did the sponsor agree on your approach?
 - What benefits did they see in your approach?
 - How will your approach solve existing problems?

Questions cont'd

- Position – Grant Reviewer
 - What evaluation system did you use to review proposal?
 - How much time did you have to review proposals?
 - Get copy of evaluation form, write to the evaluation form more than the grant outline.

Questions cont'd

■ Rationale – Reviewer

- What did you look for?
- How often did you notice problems in the proposal content?
- What do you believe hinders people from achieving objectives?

■ Expectation

- What were the most common mistakes?

Questions cont'd

- Position – Program Officer
 - How much money is available for new awards?
 - What is the application/award ratio?
 - How are proposals reviewed?
 - Need evaluation form

[Question cont'd]

- Rationale – Program
 - What problems do you commonly solve?
- Expectation
 - What hidden agendas emerge?
 - What advice do you most commonly give to applicants?

[Priority Questions]

- Why did the sponsor want to solve the problem you identified?
- What is the “gap” between present problem and anticipated solution?
- You want to move from a “bad” perception (in-cell suicide) to a “good” perception (reduced chance of suicide)

[Typical Components]

- Cover Letter
- Title Page
- Summary
- Introduction – statement of need and problem
- Outcome/Objective
- Methods
- Evaluation Standards
- Dissemination
- Budget
- Future Funding
- Attachments

[Letter Proposal]

- Summary – an invitation to invest in a solution to an important problem
- Sponsor Appeal – encouragement of participation in a commitment to a given outcome that benefits the community

[Proposal cont'd]

- Statement of Problem – a clear gap statement that emphasizes the negative current situation and the anticipated solution funded by the sponsor
- Statement of Solution – a clearly defined narrative of the outcome achievement and gap closing

[Proposal cont'd]

- Credentials – a justification of the organization, staff and specialist participants who will ensure successful program/activity completion
- Budget – a precise statement of the funds required to sustain a program/activity for a defined period of time

[Proposal cont'd]

- Action Step – a positive summary of the benefits of sponsor participation
- PS – a short invitation to communicate with the letter writer/organizational contact (reinforces benefits of “fast response”)