

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



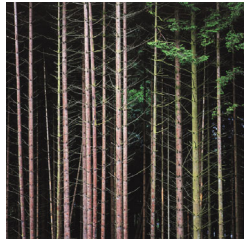
Common Mistakes

- Pleading poverty



Common Mistakes

- Describing the tree



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”




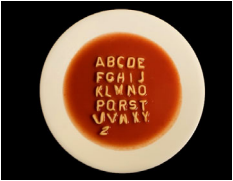
Common Mistakes

- 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



...for only \$25,000!



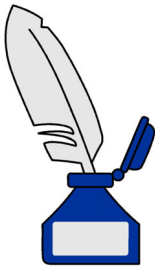
Common Mistakes



- “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



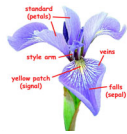
Circular Reasoning

- 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.”



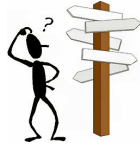
Parts of a Proposal

- 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 understanding which new disposal regulations apply to them. 50% said they would not be comfortable calling a regulatory agency to ask that question."



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.”

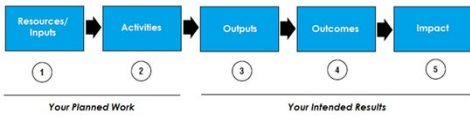


Objectives

- 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



Objectives vs. Activities

- **OBJECTIVES** explain what the project will achieve (where we want to be when we're finished.)
- **ACTIVITIES** are the specific steps that will achieve the objectives. How do we get there (the objective) from here (the current problem or need)



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: 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?

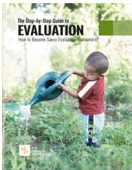


“Formative Evaluation” (to make an ongoing program better)

- What are the program’s strengths and weaknesses?
- Which participants do better than others and why?
- Can we operate the program 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)



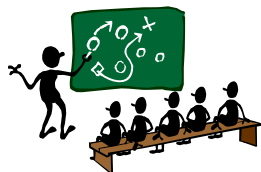
Letters of Support

- "This is a much-needed project, and this organization is terrific."
- That's nice.



Letters of Collaboration

- If someone's participation/permission is crucial to make the project happen, have them write *specifically* what they will do or provide
- **Coach them**, or they will write a generic support letter
- Allow time to assemble these letters



A word about innovation...

- Innovative, creative projects make funders' eyes light up
- Administrators (your boss?) want tried-and-true, sound methodologies with a track record of success under similar conditions
- What's a grant applicant to do?



Quick Tips...

- 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



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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



Happy Hunting!



		Example of Ambiguous Budget Detail					
						OEEF FUNDING	
		A. PERSONNEL:					
		1. Salary/ Wages				\$0.00	
		2. Benefits				\$0.00	
		3. Stipends					
		11 teachers				\$550.00	
		Soil and Water Conservation				\$50.00	
		Project Director				\$500.00	
		Substitute teachers				\$0.00	
					Sub Total	\$1,100.00	
		B. NON PERSONNEL:					
		1. Supplies					
		slides				\$2,336.95	
		micro viewer slides				\$512.40	
		journals				\$92.28	
		test kits				\$255.85	
		2. Equipment					
		micro viewers				\$176.40	
		cases for micro slide viewing				\$154.50	
		stereomicroscopes				\$1,434.00	
		microscopes				\$834.00	
		3. Printing					
		bookmarks				\$1,500.00	
		4. Other					
		Second grade trips				\$373.50	
		Third grade trips				\$1,075.00	
		Paper				\$155.12	
					Sub Total	\$8,900.00	
		C. CONTRACTUAL					
					Sub Total	\$0.00	
		TOTAL OEEF FUNDING:				\$10,000.00	

Example of Proper Budget Detail					OEEF FUNDING
A. PERSONNEL:					
1. Salary/ Wages	Project Director, 20 hours @ \$25.00/hour				\$500.00
2. Benefits					\$0.00
3. Stipends	11 teachers, 1 day at \$50.00/day				\$550.00
	Soil and Water Conservation educator, 1 day @\$50.00/day				\$50.00
	Substitute teachers				\$0.00
	Sub Total				\$1,100.00
B. NON PERSONNEL:					
1. Supplies					
	prepared slides series of 8 on macroinvertebrate taxonomy, identification				
slides	11 sets @ \$9.60				\$105.60
	11 sets @ \$22.75				\$250.25
	11 sets @ \$33.60				\$369.60
	11 sets @ \$30.00				\$330.00
	11 sets @ \$32.00				\$352.00
	11 sets @ \$31.00				\$341.00
	11 sets @ \$18.50				\$203.50
	11 sets @ \$35.00				\$385.00
micro viewer slides	11 sets of 10 @ \$46.58				\$512.38
journals	2 pkg of 48 @ 46.14 ea.				\$92.28
test kits	3 bacteria @ \$48.30				\$144.90
	1 oxygen @ \$33.60				\$33.60
	5 pollution @ \$24.95				\$124.75
Paper	11 reams @ \$29.09				\$319.99
2. Equipment	microslide viewers 24 @ \$7.35				\$176.40
	cases for microslide viewers 3 @ \$51.50				\$154.50
	stereomicroscopes 12 @ 119.50				\$1,434.00
	microscopes 12 @ \$69.50				\$834.00
3. Printing	bookmarks 3,000 @ .50				\$1,500.00
4. Other					
Second grade trips	Water sample trips				
	Bus Drivers 3 @ \$41.25				\$123.75
	Mileage (112.5 miles @ \$0.40 per mile)				\$45.00
	Water works				
	Bus drivers 1 @ \$41.25				\$41.25
	Mileage (25 miles @ \$0.40 per mile)				\$10.00
	Sewage Treatment Plant				
	Bus drivers 1@ \$41.25				\$41.25
	Mileage (25 miles @ \$0.40 per mile)				\$10.00
Third grade trips	Dillion State Park				
	Bus drivers 2 @ \$41.25				\$82.50
	Mileage 40 miles @ \$0.40 per mile)				\$36.00
	The Wilds				
	Bus drivers 2 @ \$41.25				\$82.50
	Mileage (35 miles at \$0.40 per mile)				\$14.00
	Admissions 150 @ \$5.00				\$750.00
	Sub Total				\$8,900.00
C. CONTRACTUAL					
					\$0.00
	Sub Total				\$0.00
TOTAL OEEF FUNDING:					\$10,000.00

Practice Exercise: Sorting Out Need, Objectives, and Activities

“The Greenways Initiative will provide residents, streamside landowners and local government officials in the Alum Creek, Blacklick Creek, and Big Walnut Creek watersheds with models, strategies, and information that will empower them to participate in environmental and land use planning and decision making in their communities. Our audience needs educational tools that provide factual and consistent information. The project goal is to increase residents’ understanding of the relationship between improper land use practices and deteriorating water quality in 3 local watersheds, and the influence individuals can have on both. The first objective is to conduct a public awareness campaign on strategies to address flooding, erosion, land use and dumping. The campaign will include toolkits for 100 streamside property owners, three neighborhood forums with a total of 150 participants, and a 15-minute video showcasing local water quality problems and successful examples of pollution prevention. The video will be provided to 23 public libraries and 11 local agencies and organizations, who have committed to show it at least 75 times at meetings and events during the first year, to a potential audience of 15,000 county residents. A second objective is to encourage interaction between 2000 local residents and their streams through activities such as canoe floats, kick-seining, and stream cleanups.”

NEED: _____

Objective	Activity