EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

ORD Handbook For Proposal Writers and Project Directors

by

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2013 edition

Foreword

In addition to enjoying a national reputation for excellence in undergraduate teaching and learning, Eastern Michigan University faculty and staff also do a considerable amount of sponsored research and provide valuable training and consulting services to clients throughout the world.

As more and more EMU faculty and staff have become involved in externally funded research, training, and creative projects, the need has become increasingly apparent for a handy, step-by-step guide to the proposal-writing process.

And that is exactly what Alethea Helbig, Emeritus Professor of English, has produced here. We're grateful to her for being willing to share her extensive knowledge of the grant-application process and reducing it to this readable handbook format.

If you're new to the world of external funding, or returning to it after an absence, you'll find exactly what you need to know here, without jargon or useless verbiage. Some readers will enjoy reading it straight through.

In the world of grants, there are many tricks and secrets to success, many of which are revealed in this handbook. But one basic principle never changes: the best way to get a grant is to write a proposal.

By all means, learn as much as you can about the process from this useful handbook. But after you've learned what you need to know, take the plunge and write a proposal.

If you fail, resubmit. If you persist, you will eventually be successful.

Good luck, and welcome to the exciting world of grants!

EMU Office of Research Development

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So You Want to Write a Grant Proposal?

Welcome aboard!

This handbook, published by the Eastern Michigan University Office of Research Development (EMU/ORD), can be your flight plan for a satisfying and stimulating journey into the world of sponsored research.

It is intended to help project directors (also known as principal investigators) develop ideas into research proposals for submission to external funding agencies for support; make suggestions for managing grants; and provide information about related University policies and procedures.

The handbook contains several sections. The first part gives a brief overview of the entire process. Later sections amplify each aspect of the process with explanatory information. Appendices include checklists, a flow chart, and more details.

How does ORD fit into the business of developing proposals for outside funding? Simply stated, it is the mission of ORD to assist faculty and staff at every step of the process, from identifying sources and writing the proposal and preparing the budget through watching over the project director's and the University's best interests all the way to the successful conclusion of the project.

Implementing sponsored research is an exciting, collaborative process. It is a special way for different areas of the University and outside interests to team up to advance the public good.

Read on - join the journey.

Commonly Asked Questions about Grant Getting

Here are some questions that are commonly asked by faculty and staff when they approach the matter of obtaining outside funding.

What comes first?

An idea, some problem that needs to be solved, for example:

- Too many Smithtown young people are on the streets getting into trouble and creating violence; Smithtown needs a youth center.

- Teachers need help in learning about multicultural materials and in integrating them into the curriculum.

To whom do I take my idea?

The department head, dean, or unit head. These administrators need to know that you wish to seek outside funding for a project, because they are responsible for staffing and allocating space and equipment. Consulting them at early stages can prevent problems from developing later.

What comes next?

Discuss the idea with your unit project officer at ORD, who will help you develop the idea into a plan of action and assist in locating possible funding agencies.

What are the major components of a proposal?

Briefly, a proposal:

- is a plan that states a problem,
- offers strategies for solving the problem,
- asks for resources to do the work,
- justifies the request for funds by demonstrating the probabilities for success, and
- explains how the effectiveness of the plan will be measured.

Your ORD officer will suggest that you review the substantive sections of this handbook, especially the portions on writing a proposal and preparing the budget. For a quick overview of all that material, you might want to look at the checklists in the appendix to this handbook.

How do I find out what my target agency wants in a proposal?

After you and your ORD officer have identified a likely source for funding your proposal, your ORD officer will help you secure the guidelines for applying. Your ORD officer may also suggest you contact the program officer at the agency. Contacting the agency early and keeping in touch with the program officer can be helpful in producing a successful proposal.

The budget is a big worry. How do I get that ready?

The budget is the project plan expressed in terms of dollars. The Grants Accounting unit in the University Accounting Office and ORD have guidelines for drawing up the request for financial assistance in implementing the project and are prepared to help you at every step of the way as you write up the budget part of your proposal. Organize your time so that you have the budget completed well in advance of the deadline for submitting your proposal.

What else needs to be done to finalize the proposal?

Administrative officers, like deans, department heads, and the provost, need to sign certain external documents and also an internal one called a **transmittal** form. This document simply ensures that all the essential people are aware of what you are doing. The ORD director or associate director must also sign. You should gather these signatures well in advance of the deadline for submission. Arrange with ORD at least three days prior to the deadline for completing all the required forms, for making the requested number of copies of the proposal, and for mailing them to the sponsor. You must be sure to keep the deadline in mind. Missing the deadline will automatically result in rejection. The flow chart in the appendix of this handbook summarizes the steps in preparing a proposal.

Who decides whether or not I have been funded, and how do I find out?

After reviewing and evaluating the proposal, often through an outside review process, the funding agency may notify ORD, who will inform you, or the agency may contact you directly, or may notify both you and ORD simultaneously. Procedures vary, but you will receive information about the outcome of your request within a reasonable length of time.

Good news! I got the grant! Now what do I do?

First, rejoice and celebrate with your friends. Next, remember that Grants Accounting and ORD are ready to advise you on such matters as hiring student assistants, purchasing equipment, getting released time, arranging travel - all those nitty-gritty things that are important for moving the project to a successful conclusion, even to advising about the evaluation and about preparing the final report.

Bad news! I was turned down. What do I do now?

What's so bad about being turned down? It's quite common for first requests, and even sometimes later ones, to be refused. Ask the funding agency for an appraisal of your proposal, rectify your plan accordingly, and submit again. Your chances for success are much greater the second time around. That's good news!

Getting Started in Grant Writing: Whys and Wherefores

Why is it important for faculty and staff to engage in sponsored research? Simply stated, because sponsored research plays an increasingly large and important role in advancing the University's mission.

Historically, Eastern Michigan University has been committed to preparing people to become productive and effective citizens. Providing an exceptional learning environment has always been central to this goal. As an integral part of its educational charge, the University has steadily encouraged efforts to promote scholarly investigation and develop new technology. To help faculty and staff gain outside support for research, the University created the Office of Research Development (ORD).

What does ORD do?

ORD assists faculty and staff in obtaining external funding for research and special projects that will expand the body of knowledge and also enhance the teaching and learning climate on the EMU campus. ORD stimulates proposal development through notifying faculty and staff about funding opportunities in two main ways:

- Through the vast amount of information about various resources available for downloading on ORD's Web site (www.emich.edu/ord), and
- By Program Announcements, forwarded by ORD via email to individuals, departments, colleges, divisions, and other offices.

ORD also helps to locate funding sources in response to individual requests from faculty and staff and assists in forming interdisciplinary partnerships both internally and externally.

ORD facilitates proposal development through a variety of other pre-award and post-award services, including workshops conducted by ORD staff on different aspects of grant writing. ORD staff help to draft proposals, prepare budgets, and give support and advice during the life of the project.

ORD officers and Grants Accounting (a unit of EMU Accounting) are in a special position to ensure that project directors are aware of particular state and federal mandates for grants and research, as well as with internal EMU policies for facilitating investigation with funder money. They provide training and advice that enable projects to proceed smoothly from start to finish - invaluable assistance for the protection and satisfaction of everyone involved.

What are the benefits of sponsored research?

The importance of externally funded research for the University community cannot be overemphasized. First, expanding the body of knowledge is inherent in the mission of Eastern Michigan. In this way, EMU is like other major universities. Eastern's faculty, like those elsewhere, should be thinking thoughts that produce new knowledge, and then devising ways of getting these new ideas out to the world where they can do some good.

Second, research enhances the atmosphere for learning for both faculty and students. For the teacher, research is career development at its most basic, local level. Such inquiry adds variety to daily work, and those faculty who engage in investigation are very often the better teachers. They not only bring new knowledge to their instruction, they also pass along to their students the enthusiasm that comes from making their discoveries. Such love of learning is contagious. It spreads from faculty to students, and then back again. Thus, faculty researchers serve as role models for learning through inquiry and investigation. The student also gets the immediate benefit of the new information acquired and, in addition, often has the valuable experience of engaging in the discovery process itself.

For the researcher, beyond the sheer joy of learning and of making important, new discoveries, comes the sense of doing a job well and of having benefited the public good. It feels good to do good. Sponsored research also gives one a chance to realize long-held dreams. ("Something I've always wanted to do is....") Another special satisfaction comes from knowing that people in the larger community value one's ideas, and, because they recognize their significance, have given money to implement them.

Sponsored research fosters opportunities for new professional friendships on and off campus while the project is proceeding and afterward as well. A job well done leads to greater recognition of one's expertise and ability both on campus and beyond. Such investigation promotes collaborative working relationships between faculty and staff locally, especially when the project involves more than one campus unit, as it often does. In addition, it links the investigator with people who have similar interests in the larger professional community and lays the foundation for generating offshoot proposals within the wider network. Sponsored research also gives faculty and staff greater autonomy, in particular through the released time that the project supports.

Grant-getting enhances the reputation of Eastern Michigan University, as well as that of the grantee. It attracts talented faculty and students to the institution and brings money into the University that will foster more research and in turn increase the possibilities for more grants. And so it goes. One grant leads to another. Success brings more success.

For example, equipment purchased from grant money for specific research usually becomes the property of the University when the grant is finished. This equipment not only makes it possible for the investigator to complete the project already underway but can also be used in teaching and for more research. For a variety of reasons then, externally funded research is highly rewarding both for the researcher and for the Eastern Michigan University community.

Are you a first-time applicant? Here are some tips.

There's money out there – some $600 billion annually - for the getting.

You can tap into it. Keep in mind that:

- Competition is fierce, so you need a vision, a good idea to investigate.
- You need to know the rules of the game. They're in this handbook.
- Social benefit is a primary funding consideration. Organizations want their money to advance the public good.
- The most critical element needed for success is a well-written proposal. You can have the greatest idea in the world, but if you don't write it up effectively, it will likely fall by the wayside.
- Last - be patient and persistent. You, too, can be successful. Go for it!

Finding Funding: Sources to Tap for Grant Money

You have a good idea for a project. Your department head agrees, and so does your dean or unit head.

Where can you go for money to implement it? Where does the money come from? Funds come from various individuals and agencies, who annually make some $600 billion or so available to support projects. Obviously, there's a lot of money out there to claim, and some of it can be yours if you go after it.

Various electronic and printed avenues exist for matching your interests with those of possible funding agencies. infoEd's GENUIS, SMARTS and SPIN are services available through ORD to EMU faculty and staff. Customized to your particular interests and needs, they bring the latest funding opportunities directly to your e-mail box. These are timely, completely automatic, user-controlled deliveries of programs of the sort that you indicate you wish to receive information about. Sign up by following the instructions given on ORD's homepage (www.emich.edu/ord) or call ORD for directions on how to take advantage of these state-of-the-art subscription resources.

ORD also maintains a small library of printed references that list funding agencies. Titles of major ones are in the appendix under Grant References and Resources....

Major Funding Sources

Several sources for funding exist. The federal government provides the most through a variety of avenues. In addition, some $8 billion come from corporations and foundations and about $54 billion from individuals. The staff at ORD can help you decide which of these areas is the best one for you to approach:

- Federal, state, and local governments
- Foundations
- Corporations
- Professional associations
- Civic organizations

Regardless of the funding agency to which you apply, keep certain matters firmly in mind:

- Know your sponsoring agency’s objectives.
- Determine the sponsoring program’s focus.
- Determine whether or not geographic limitations exist.
- Identify the funding limits.
- Find out when the deadline is and meet it; be aware of the length of time for the review and the date when the awards will be announced.
- Determine whether or not there are any other award policies that might have a bearing on your project.

Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies

Government agency guidelines are specific, and their deadlines are exact and nonnegotiable. Lead times vary in length, and the agencies may request concept papers, preliminary proposals, or full proposals. It may be helpful for you to contact in advance the staff of the particular government agency for advice about guidelines and about the relevance of your proposed idea to the sponsor's interests.

Foundations

Foundations are of five types:

- National
- Corporate
- Community
- Family
- Special Interest

You should inform yourself about the kind of project (general support, challenge, or seed money, for example) that the foundation you are interested in typically funds and about whether or not it favors a particular geographic area. The foundation may also prefer to support certain endeavors, like education, poverty, or at-risk youth. The type of project you are proposing dictates the foundation you approach.

In general, the major foundations look for innovative projects that address pressing national or regional problems, are capable of serving as a model or stimulus for further or related work in their general area, can be continued after the end of the funding period without the foundation's help, and are ineligible for support from governments or the investigator's own institution.

Since sources of information about foundations usually list the organization's funding interests in broad terms, it may be hard to tell whether your project falls within its range for support. You might be able to determine your proposal's possibilities for acceptance by reviewing a list of projects the foundation has previously funded or by examining its annual report. ORD maintains a file of annual reports.

If you know someone personally at the foundation, you might contact that individual about the appropriateness of your idea to their interests. Another avenue is to approach the foundation's Program Officer. In a brief letter, describe your project, stressing what is unique and innovative about it and how you think it advances their objectives.

Since foundations usually respond within a few weeks, you can draw up a list of those you feel are the most likely possibilities and approach them in order without losing much time.

National Foundations

National foundations, like the Mott Foundation, have large assets and well-defined goals for using their money. They seek proposals with regional or national impact and receive many applications annually.

You should inform yourself about the kind of project (general support, challenge, or seed money, for example) that the foundation you are interested in typically funds and about whether or not it favors a particular geographic area. The foundation may also prefer to support certain endeavors, like education, poverty, or at-risk youth. The type of project you are proposing dictates the foundation you approach.

Corporate Foundations

Corporate foundations, of which Dow Corning is an example, sponsor projects in line with their corporate interests and usually also intend their funding to have a public-relations impact. Since corporate foundation assets are smaller than those of the national foundations, more grant limitations may apply.

Community Foundations

Community foundations are really public charities. Typically, community foundation grants are smaller and are limited to efforts serving the local region. An example is the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation, which supports innovative programs and projects of various sorts within the city's service area.

Family Foundations

Family foundations, for example, the Hartwick Foundation, support endeavors that reflect areas of current family interest or the particular founding person's interests. Family foundation assets normally are limited, guidelines are few, fewer grants are awarded annually, and the geographic area is restricted.

Special Interest Foundations

Special interest foundations support single fields. The Thompson Foundation, for instance, serves only the frail elderly. Special interest foundations may specify a geographic limitation, and approach is usually by letter of inquiry.

Corporations

Major corporations, like General Motors and BASF, may support projects through avenues independent of their foundations. These efforts also aim to enhance public relations as well as benefit the public. The funding interests are typically diverse, and guidelines and restrictions are few.

Professional Associations

Professional organizations, like those in the sciences, sometimes sponsor specific projects for which they solicit applications from their members. Notices appear in professional journals and newsletters. Although the awards may be small, there are advantages to this kind of support. The results of the research are disseminated throughout the discipline, gain wide attention, and, as a result, can lay the groundwork for larger investigations through other, more substantial support.

Civic Organizations

Occasionally such civic groups as the Lions offer awards for particular projects. These may be publicized through journals, the media, and letters to people the organization feels might participate or are in positions to locate investigators with the desired expertise. Sometimes letters seeking applicants are sent to agencies like ORD. As these opportunities become available, the ORD office publishes notices about them.

Writing the Proposal: Step by Step

After you have identified your possible funding source and read their guidelines carefully, the next step is to write a proposal. Because competition is stiff, you need to produce a proposal that closely matches the interests of the funding agency and is written in a confident and professional fashion.

Producing a good proposal is really an exercise in effective persuasive writing. No matter how often you may have written successful proposals for support of some kind, whether internal or external, it is always good to review what a proposal is, what goes into it, and what it is expected to accomplish.

- The Proposal Defined
- Proposal Stages
- Anatomy of a Typical Proposal
- Elements of a Typical Proposal
- Sequence for Proposal Development
- Deadlines
- A Final Exam
- A Final Word

The Proposal Defined

A proposal is a statement of purpose that is presented for someone's acceptance. It intends to persuade that person to fund your project**.**

- It states the **problem**, or analyzes the situation.
- It offers a **plan** with clearly stated goals, objectives, and strategies for solving the problem.
- It makes a **plea** for the resources needed to accomplish the plan.
- It demonstrates **probable success**; that is, it shows that you are capable of doing what you say you will.
- It offers a **pledge** that you will show by certain specified measures that you have accomplished what you said you would.

Another way of looking at what goes into a proposal is the five fingers plus one method. Every proposal should somewhere answer "who, what, when, where, why, and how" about the project that is being attempted. You can tick these interrogatives off on your fingers; that's why this is called the five fingers plus one method for effective persuasive writing. Some people refer to it as the 5 W's and an h process. Whatever you call it, use it. It works.

Proposal Stages

A proposal may develop in three main stages, depending upon the sponsor's inclinations. Some prefer concept papers in advance. These are very short, succinct descriptions, which give some idea of where the project is headed. The concept paper may be followed by a preliminary proposal (or "pre-proposal") before the full-blown one is developed and submitted.

In any event, when one considers the process of getting good ideas refined and down on paper, these three stages define every kind of persuasive writing. It is well for you as a potential project director/investigator to set down in brief form what you have in mind to do and how you expect to do it before embarking on the larger enterprise of writing the full proposal. At the early stages, you might want to pass along what you have written to a colleague for review and comments. The full proposal is the one that you send to the sponsor. You might want colleagues to look that one over, too. That's the one that you expect to produce success, and you want it to be as good as you can possibly make it.

Anatomy of a Typical Proposal

After the title or cover page comes the narrative that describes the problem and how you intend to solve it. This narrative makes up the bulk of the proposal. You should also include a statement demonstrating the ability of Eastern Michigan University and your department, college, or division to provide the support that will ensure success once the project is funded. A budget is necessary, and letters of support, vitas, and the like conclude the document. If the proposal consists of many pages, a table of contents may help reviewers find specific sections more easily.

Elements of a Typical Proposal

The sponsor's guidelines always provide detailed information about what should go into the proposal. Adhere to the guidelines religiously. Refer to them often to make sure you are including what the sponsor desires. Typically, however, proposals contain the elements described below. If the proposal is relatively simple, some of the sections may be subsumed under others.

- Title (Cover, Application) Page
- Table of Contents
- Abstract (Summary)
- Introduction
- Problem Statement (Needs Statement)
- Literature Review
- Goals (General Objectives)
- Objectives (Hypotheses)
- Research Design and Procedures (Methodology)
- Evaluation (Assessment)
- Future Funding (Institutionalization, Continuation)
- Dissemination of Results
- The Timeline
- Personnel
- Facilities and Resources
- Budget (Projection of Costs, Itemized Costs)
- Appendices (Attachments)

Sequence for Proposal Development

The section above, *"Elements of a Typical Proposal,"* describes what goes into the usual proposal, taking the aspects as they normally appear in the finished product. Usually, however, project directors compose the elements in a different order, one that more naturally follows the thinking process. Here is the general sequence in which the elements are typically prepared:

- Problem statement

- Goals and objectives
- Research design and procedures (Methodology)
- Evaluation
- Future funding
- Dissemination
- Budget, time table, personnel
- Introduction
- Title (cover) page
- Abstract
- Appendices
- Table of contents

Deadlines

Deadlines are of two types, internal and external. These are of necessity interrelated.

The **internal** deadline requires that proposals be delivered to ORD at least three working days in advance of the external deadline. This allows time for securing signatures of approval, preparing the required forms, final checking, and duplication. Meeting this deadline is very important, because meeting the external deadline hinges on it.

It is vital to meet the **external** deadline, a date that is not negotiable. Be sure to note whether the agency deadline is by postmark or by actual receipt of materials. Budget your time accordingly.

A Final Exam

Here are some questions you can ask yourself after you've finished writing your proposal, a kind of test for determining how effective you've been. It asks you to stand back and look at your project from the perspective of the agency or the reviewers at the agency who will be appraising your proposal. More "checklists" appear in the appendix, and another chapter makes suggestions for writing: *Persuading a Prospective Funder to See Things Your Way.*

- Is the abstract to the point? clear? interesting? Are keywords used? T<u>heir</u> keywords?

- Is it clear how the project is new and important? Are the goals stated early in the proposal? stated clearly? succinctly?
- Is there a good fit between the project and the target funder?
- Is there sufficient and convincing evidence that colleagues support the project? That the program will continue beyond the funding?
- Are the evaluation procedures well thought through? Do the evaluation methods flow naturally from the project goals, objectives, and activities?
- Is the budget accurate? realistic? feasible relative to the size of the grant? consistent with the narrative?
- Is there a contingency plan in case problems crop up?
- Is the plan readable? well-formatted? easy on the eyes?

A Final Word

All this may seem a lot to keep in mind. It is a lot, but don't be discouraged. If others can do it, you can, too. Remember, ORD officers are ready to help with suggestions, practical advice, and, perhaps most important of all, ongoing encouragement, lots of it.

You, too, can be successful. Just give proposal development the best you've got. We all know that with EMU people your best is very good indeed. So, go for it!

Elements of a Typical Proposal

The sponsor's guidelines always provide detailed information about what should go into the proposal. Typically, however, proposals contain the elements described below. If the proposal is relatively simple, some of the sections may be subsumed under others. Refer at all stages to the guidelines; have them in front of you constantly. Contact the program officer or the agency if in doubt about any aspect.

Title (Cover, Application) Page

Some organizations provide special cover-page forms on which to summarize basic information about the project. Others do not, but all indicate the kind of detail they wish to appear at the very beginning of the proposal. In any event, at the head of the proposal should appear such information as the title of the project, the name of the applicant and the applicant's institution, the name of the agency receiving the proposal, the inclusive dates of the project, the total of the funds requested, the date of submission, and the signatures of the local personnel authorized to approve the proposal.

A word about titles is in order. Avoid lengthy ones, like "An Investigation into the Use of Multicultural Literature with Children in the Public School Classrooms in the Detroit Area of Southeastern Michigan that Involves Instructing Selected Teachers about Current Multicultural Literature, Its Use, and Benefits" or "Studies on What Happens When Numerous Otherwise Unengaged Youth Gather and Perpetrate Violence on the Streets of Smithtown on Evenings and Weekends Verifying the Need for a Youth Center with Midnight Basketball." Get substantial right away. "Using Multicultural Literature in the Public Schools" and "Establishing a Youth Center in Smithtown" or "Addressing the Problem of Youth Violence in Smithtown" are shorter and more exact.

Table of Contents

If the proposal consists of many pages with different kinds of materials, a table of contents will make it more convenient for reviewers to find what they are looking for. The table of contents normally comes after the title page. In short proposals it is unnecessary.

Abstract (Summary)

Since the abstract is the reader's first view of the proposal and will be used later by the agency for public-relations purposes, you should prepare it carefully. It summarizes in 250-500 words all the points mentioned above under "What Is a Proposal?" On agency-provided cover pages, the abstract often appears in a small box that sets it off from the other components on the first page.

The abstract should identify the applicant clearly and include at least one sentence each on the applicant's credibility, the problem to be solved, and the methods of doing it. It should stress the end product: what will be accomplished, how the results will benefit others, and how information about what has been done and learned will be disseminated.

Although the abstract goes at the beginning of the proposal, it is usually written last, after you as a prospective project director/investigator have had a chance to think through the whole plan and can look at it as an entity. At that point you should be able to identify what is most important for the funding agency to know immediately about your project.

Keep in mind also that agencies often use abstracts when they compile information about successful projects to disseminate for in-house or public-relations purposes. The abstract may be reprinted over and over again in reports, government documents, press releases, and the like. Make sure that it accurately and succinctly describes what you are doing and uses language that is comprehensible to those who are not as familiar with the subject as you are.

Introduction

The introduction gives background information about the project. It starts with a brief statement of what is being proposed and introduces the subject as non-technically as possible. You need to give enough background to enable reviewers to place your particular problem in the context of common knowledge and should show how the solution will advance the field or be important for some other work.

Demonstrate with selective detail that you are qualified to direct the enterprise, and describe the capabilities of Eastern Michigan University and your department or division as supporting institutions, emphasizing strengths and highlighting particularly pertinent aspects, for example, some critical need met, a technical innovation produced, well-qualified and award-winning staff, special facilities in the library or laboratory, or ongoing programs. Provide evidence of your prior accomplishments to support your claims, and offer statistics and brief statements of endorsement to verify your own credibility and capability and those of the University and your department.

Such matters judiciously selected and expressed with modest self-confidence underscore the importance of your work and your capacity to do it. They lead naturally to the problem statement and to the body of your proposal in which you elaborate on these various aspects.

Problem Statement (Needs Statement)

State simply and precisely what the problem is and why it is important to solve it. Describe the characteristics of the problem, the innovativeness of the methods you have chosen to solve it, and particularly the benefits of the solution both for your clients and the public, not just for your institution, your department, or yourself. Sponsors want the use of their money to reflect well on them and to have some broader, more universal benefit they can point out to their particular constituencies and the world.

Describing the extent of the problem is valuable, but you need always to keep in mind that what you are intending to accomplish must be of reasonable proportions for the time span of the project. Avoid making it seem that in the six months or year or two of your proposal the course of the universe will be altered. Your project may indeed eventually have great impact, but making it sound that way at the outset may give the funding agency the idea that as the prospective director you suffer from overconfidence. You must sound enthusiastic and committed, but don't fall into the overblown language of public-relations hyperbole.

For example, the information you gather in finding a way to keep those rowdy kids off the Smithtown streets may help other Smithtowns to address similar vexing problems, but your efforts will hardly solve theirs directly and may not even result in a youth center for your own Smithtown in the immediate future. You don't want to underplay the importance of what you're setting out to do, but don't overplay it either.

Literature Review

If yours is a research proposal, at this point it is appropriate to cite references to previous research, earlier published works, or other research in progress on the same or similar topics. The survey of pertinent literature should be selective, critical, and modest in length. Such a survey supports your credibility by indicating that you know your field. It also substantiates the statements you make that tell how your work is different, advances the body of knowledge, fills a significant need, and serves the public good. It is important to establish what is unique about your proposal, but if the list of works covers the waterfront, those who will review your proposal may feel that you could not possibly have studied them all and are trying to obfuscate or overly impress.

If, however, you think it is beneficial to include an extensive bibliography, then that list would more appropriately be placed at the end of the proposal, just before or among the appendices.

Goals (General Objectives)

A goal statement describes in qualitative terms what is to be accomplished, for example, "The teachers of Greenville will implement a project to develop the Multiple Intelligence of their students." This simply states what you intend to accomplish; in itself it is not verifiable. Verification, or accountability, comes through the objectives that you set forth in order to accomplish the goal or goals.

You must be sure your goals are challenging, something worthwhile to accomplish, but realistic. The students of Greenville, most likely, will not become so extremely creative that they set new standards for art appreciation. In addition to being realistic, goals must be doable within the time frame you specify. Your goal statements should also indicate, of course, who will do what: The teachers of Greenville will....

Technical language is expected in this part of the proposal and henceforth, because now you are addressing people who are knowledgeable in your discipline.

Objectives (Hypotheses)

The objectives, also called hypotheses, state in positive and provable terms what the project will accomplish, for example, "The teachers of Greenville will become knowledgeable about Multiple Intelligence theory." This objective, or expected outcome, flows naturally from the overall need, problem, or goal. How the teachers will learn the theory refers to the strategies or activities by which the objective of making them knowledgeable is implemented; these are measurable or quantifiable.

The teachers, for example, will attend in-services through which they will be trained to identify the various kinds of Intelligences, Spatial, Bodily Kinesthetic, and so on, that their students display. Whether or not the teachers can identify them and whether or not the students display greater creativity, perspicacity, or ability according to certain specified measures as a result of their teachers' efforts are verifiable behaviors.

You must indicate clearly the time-frame for accomplishing each objective as well as who will be responsible for implementing each one.

The language you use in specifying goals and objectives or in stating hypotheses is that which you would use with colleagues and people acquainted with your area of expertise. It is good to remember, however, that even though professional language is employed, pretentious jargon and excess verbiage are always to be avoided.

Research Design and Procedures (Methodology)

This section is your blueprint for success. It describes what you will do to accomplish the objectives. It spells out the methods or strategies through which the problem will be solved. It may start with a description of the overall approach and then take up details about people involved in implementation, constituency served, assumptions, variables, gathering of data, and the like. It always lays out the pattern for proceeding from beginning to end and includes ways of verifying conclusions. It diagrams clearly, in language of the field, what will be done, step by step.

Since you're writing ahead of the fact and laying out procedures in the form of an action plan, you can't foresee all eventualities. But you can probably see places where having an alternative method of attack might be helpful. Including a brief description of a fallback position or a contingency plan can strengthen your proposal. At the very least, it shows that you are a good planner, a careful strategist.

Evaluation (Assessment)

The funding agency will want to know how you will know whether or not you have been successful. Your say-so is not enough. The Greenville teachers are attempting to develop the creative talents of their students. The proposal needs to specify how you will measure at project's end that the students demonstrate greater creativity and innovativeness in their writing, art, play, etc., that is, use their various Intelligences, the behaviors you said earlier that you and the teachers are striving to identify and nurture.

Integral in showing where you have arrived at the end of your project is demonstrating where you were at the beginning. To do this, you need to collect what is called baseline data, in the Greenville case, for example, information that will show how creative the children are at the beginning in order to prove how much more creative they are at the end. This information provides a basis for comparison to show that positive change has indeed occurred. You need to specify with what instruments you will gather the baseline data and who exactly is going to do it.

In the same way, you must indicate the instruments of assessment that you will employ at the end of the project. You must spell out the type of information you want, the procedures for collecting the data, the people who will be conducting the evaluation and the process for selecting them, the methods of analysis, their utilization, the verification of data, and the dissemination of results. You must specify the evaluative criteria for every objective you list under your overall goal or goals.

Even though the evaluation takes place at the end of the project, plan it early, so that it is consistent with the goals, objectives, and activities. Writing objectives that are clear makes it easier to identify proper evaluation procedures. Addressing the question "What do I want to accomplish?" along with "How will I know I've been successful?" makes it easier to answer the question "What activities will help me achieve my goal?" If you have clearly in mind what you are aiming for, you are more likely to be successful and to be able to prove it accordingly.

Funding agencies want to get their money's worth; they have become very cost conscious. As a result, evaluation (assessment) procedures have assumed great importance in determining whether or not grant proposals are funded. Briefly summarized, the evaluation section of your proposal specifies how you will determine the exact outcomes of your project and their degree of success in both qualitative and quantitative terms.

A separate chapter of this handbook is devoted to helping you refine your evaluation procedures. See *Fine-Tuning the Evaluation Section of the Grant Proposal.* See also the checklist section in the Appendix.

Future Funding (Institutionalization, Continuation)

After the Greenville grant money runs out, you and they plan to request funds from the Parent-Teacher Organization, local merchants, the Band Boosters, and similar groups in order to continue to provide enrichment opportunities for the students and more teacher in-services on developing student talent and empowering them to use their Intelligences. A proposal should specify such plans for acquiring funds to continue the project, or some aspect of it, if the program is indeed to go on. In the same way, if some special equipment has been purchased for the project, the proposal might indicate how that equipment will continue to be used and funds secured for maintaining and operating it.

Dissemination of Results

You know that your project is going to be successful, so you need to think in advance about how you will get out the good word about the benefits of your work to those who should know about them and can profit from them. Write into your proposal a summary of how you will share the results of your project and the discoveries you have made. Will you publish journal articles? Give papers for professional conferences? Conduct demonstrations or workshops within the community or on TV? Create a Website?

Describe the reports you will provide to the funding agency that will demonstrate to them that others have gained and will continue to gain from your work and, of course, from the agency's money.

The Timeline

The timeline lays out a plan telling when you will do what you intend to do in order to carry out your proposal. It is the chronological arrangement of your project, the plan spelled out in terms of dates and spans of time. For example, on October 30, Professor Winsome from Tarrytown University will address the Greenville teachers on a certain aspect of Multiple Intelligences theory or application. On June 8, the students will begin a series of open houses, concluding on June 18, to show the community what they have done during the year that demonstrates their greater application of the Intelligences.

The timeline can be in narrative form, or it can be a simple chart or calendar of activities, indicating when the activities will begin, how long they will take, and when they will end. One possible such scheme for showing the stages of the project chronologically, the Gantt chart, appears in the Sample timelines section in the appendix.

Personnel

The "people part" of the proposal specifies who will be responsible for doing what in carrying the project to its successful conclusion. This section lists the names of the people who will work on the project, their functions, backgrounds, and credentials, with vitas for key personnel. It tells what new staff will be required, how many and for what purposes, and how they will be selected. Consultants should be named, and the justification for employing them should be made clear.

The narrative should explain exactly how many people will be engaged, for how long and at what percentage of time, what they will be doing, where they come from, and whether they are from inside or outside the University; such matters need to be made clear.

Facilities and Resources

This is the "tool and space" part of the proposal. Here you describe the facilities and equipment that are needed and how they will be acquired. It is important to specify the capacity of Eastern Michigan University to support the project by indicating unique features available locally, for instance, specialized laboratory equipment, field opportunities, or library resources.

Budget (Projection of Costs, Itemized Costs)

The budget specifies the total cost of the project divided into such categories as personnel (salaries and benefits), supplies and materials, travel, consultants, equipment, and indirect costs.

You must be careful to make sure that every section of the budget is consistent with the corresponding narrative portion of the proposal. It is also important to make sure that the format of the budget is easy to follow and understand. ORD officers, who are experienced in proposal budgeting, can help prospective project directors complete the necessary paper work. See also *"The Money Game: Preparing the Budget and Financial Report"* in this handbook.

Appendices (Attachments)

After the proposal comes such pertinent information too lengthy to be included in the proposal narrative as letters of support, vitas, graphs, charts, bibliographies, maps, sample evaluation instruments, and the like. Use discretion in determining what to attach so that agency reviewers do not feel intimidated or overwhelmed by the sheer bulk of your proposal. You also do not want your proposal to appear pretentious. Be sure to check whether or not the prospective funding agency has set a page limit for proposals. If so, you must honor that requirement, and attachments may be fewer accordingly.

Fine-Tuning the Evaluation Section of the Grant Proposal

Evaluation, or assessment, is the process by which you determine the degree to which your goals and objectives are being achieved. Most funding agencies require an evaluation; many give it major importance. The evaluation leads naturally to the report that you prepare at the end of the project to submit to the supporting agency.

The evaluation section is an integral part of a grant proposal. It contains the plan that spells out in advance how you will know that you have accomplished what you have said you would. It describes how you will prove to the funding agency that they have received their money's worth from the award and that you have used their money to benefit the common good.

On the practical side, your plan for evaluation serves you as a ready guide for monitoring what is actually happening as a result of the activities you are engaging in.

The evaluation section of your proposal describes clearly and specifically how evaluative data will be collected at every stage of the project. It spells out how you will determine where things are prior to putting your project into action, that is, the means for gathering baseline data, so that you have a way of proving success by comparison. It spells out how you will gather information along the way and also at the end of the project. The evaluation plan tells who will be doing the appraisals, how they will be selected, and with what instruments and procedures they will be conducting their appraisals. It describes clearly and specifically how evaluative data will be collected at every stage of data gathering. It also specifies how you will analyze the data, how it will be used for improvement, and how the results will be disseminated.

Your evaluation plan should also indicate the kind of report you will be submitting to the funding agency at the end of your project. The report will, of course, summarize activities (strategies) and indicate their degree of success in view of the goals and objectives and why this is so. If you have deviated from your initial project, as often happens, you should explain clearly and explicitly your reasons for doing so.

At all points, be sure to stress the positive aspects of your work. While, for example, having to depart from your plan was not foreseen, things worked out well anyway. You observed certain behaviors that resulted in your gaining valuable information. The digressions proved to be significant in your work for reasons that you specify.

Why Is Devoting so Much Attention to the Evaluation Portion of the Proposal so Important?

There are a number of reasons for thinking through carefully and then outlining in detail your assessment methods, in addition to the obvious one that well-written evaluation procedures increase your chances of being successful.

- Thinking through carefully and then writing down assessment procedures in a clear, comprehensible fashion force you to sharpen your goals and objectives. Are they clear? Are they indeed measurable? Can they be achieved? Can they be achieved within the time-frame you have set for yourself? Finally, and most important of all, are they worth achieving?
- Planning for the evaluation makes you more cost-conscious. You must always be aware of the money aspect, because the funding agency will be. Spelling out assessment methods can help you make economies in your program by forcing you to examine costs and benefits.
- The evaluation section serves as a blueprint throughout the project. It keeps you focused and redirects your efforts toward the desired outcomes.
- Your evaluation provides data for future projects you or someone else might carry out.

- A sound, carefully implemented evaluation with activities that are well reported increases your chances for future funding.
- A carefully devised, well-reported evaluation can be a valuable public-relations tool, both for the agency and for the University.
- Your evaluation procedures and report can provide colleagues in your discipline with useful touchstones for writing, evaluating, and reporting on proposals and can help them anticipate problems in their own research.

As an additional practical matter, if you have solid assessment procedures built into your proposal, the funding agency is less likely to conduct its own evaluation, which may occur in ways for which you are unprepared and with which you might not totally agree.

Formative and Summative Evaluations

A well-prepared evaluation plan gives procedures for measuring both the methods (formative assessment) of carrying out the project and the outcomes (summative assessment) of the project. The two of necessity work together. Evaluative documentation gathered during the project makes it easier to determine whether or not the intended project destination has been reached.

The formative (also called process) evaluation:

- Examines the **methods** of the program to determine whether or not they are consistent with the plan and effective in achieving the program goals.
- Is conducted **during the period** of the proposal.
- Is done **continuously**, is ongoing.

The summative (also called outcomes, product, or impact) evaluation:

- Examines the **results** of the program to determine whether or not it has achieved the stated goals and objectives and whether or not these achievements can be attributed to the program.
- Is conducted **at the end** of the proposal.
- Is done only **once**.

Inside and Outside Evaluations

The evaluation portion of the proposal should specify who will be conducting the assessment. The appraisal may be carried out by someone involved in the implementation of the plan or by someone brought in from the profession at large. There are advantages and disadvantages to both avenues of evaluation.

On the one hand, the inside evaluator:

- Has greater knowledge of the project.
- Probably costs less.
- Is probably better able to conduct the formative portion of the evaluation.

Certain questions, however, immediately come to mind with respect to inside evaluation.

- How much will it cost?
- Is anyone on the staff competent to carry out an evaluation, particularly the summative one?
- Would an inside evaluator (someone already on the project staff) have the time to do the job well?
- Can the inside evaluator proceed without prejudice? Might this person be more greatly influenced by the effect that a positive evaluation will have on staff morale, the project reputation, and the possibilities of future funding for the director, for EMU, and for the evaluator?
- Will other members of the staff feel threatened if one or two are singled out for this task? Will they give honest answers to questions of evaluation?

The outside evaluator, on the other hand:

- Can probably be more objective, since the project's outcomes elicit no, or at least less, conflict of interest.
- Can add to the credibility of the proposal, because he or she has no immediate connection to it.
- Can probably conduct, in particular, the summative evaluation more effectively.

Certain questions, however, immediately come to mind with respect to outside evaluation:

- How much more will it cost than using an inside evaluator?
- Will the evaluator agree to waive a fee if the project is not funded?
- Will the evaluator assist in designing the project?
- Does the evaluator have a reputation that will add credibility to the proposal?
- Can the evaluator remain objective?
- Will this person proceed without prejudice and not try to please you as the project director in hope of obtaining future contracts?

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

- Because you are so focused on achieving the goal and designing the methods by which you will achieve that goal, and thus solve the problem, it is easy to treat the evaluation section offhandedly or fail to give it the careful attention it deserves.
- Be exact. Don't employ vague statements about assessment, like "The evaluation will take place at weekly team conferences," or "Clear, comprehensive records and documentation will be maintained."
- Beware of falling into the "let Mary do it" syndrome: "Professor Haswoneveryawardintheworld will design appropriate measures."
- Don't be absurdly evasive: "The evaluation consists of an ongoing review of data derived from the survey obtained at the initial interview so that both client and program needs may be determined and addressed." Wow! All those words, and they say absolutely nothing that will encourage a funding agency to entrust their money to you.

Always Remember

Evaluation design flows logically from the program goals and objectives. Your project intends to produce change. Show how things were before you began your project. Indicate to what extent change took place. You do this through the procedures in your well-designed plan of evaluation.

What's Next?

Since the evaluation leads naturally into the project report, that, too, should be considered in conjunction with preparing the evaluation plan. You may now want to turn to the section of this handbook on *“Reporting Your Success: Tell the World How Good You Are.”*

The Money Game: Preparing the Budget and Financial Report

The budget is the proposal expressed in terms of the dollars that you require to bring your project to a successful conclusion. It indicates the total expenses of the project as you have carefully anticipated them.

The financial report, on the other hand, tells where the money went. It is the proposal expressed in terms of the dollars that you spent to implement your project successfully. The budget looks forward to where you're going. The financial report looks back to where you've been. They are two sides of the same coin.

Since preparing the budget can be complicated, you are encouraged to work with your ORD officer in drawing it up, especially if you are relatively new at seeking outside funding. If you decide to prepare the budget on your own, be sure to check the latest rate sheet, it is available on ORD's server - for figuring salaries, benefits, tuition rates, and indirect costs.

The Budget

Some sponsors specify the format of the budget, while others do not. Whatever system you are working with, your budget should be as specific, detailed, and complete as you can reasonably make it. It should adhere to the agency's guidelines, or to guidelines for usual budgeting provided to you by ORD. This way of working is honest, and it also builds credibility for your proposal and for you as the project director.

Ordinarily, a budget is divided into two broad categories: direct costs and indirect costs. **Direct costs** are those that can be identified with your specific proposal and include such matters as personnel (salaries and benefits), equipment, services, supplies, travel (domestic and foreign), and consultants. **Indirect costs** are pooled expenses impossible to attach specifically to any particular proposal. The term refers to such items as office and lab space, utilities, use of University equipment, administrative services, and custodial costs - "overhead" expenses that are simply taken for granted. These indirect costs are usually expressed as a percentage of wages and benefits.

It is vital for you as the proposal writer to remember that all aspects of the budget must be directly linked to the project and must be consistent with the costs as they are delineated in the narrative part of the project plan. Furthermore, all charges must be incurred within the grant period. The budget needs also to be clear about how the totals for each category have been reached. Lay the numbers out for all to see.

This chart shows a simple arrangement for ordinary budget categories:

A **Personnel**
B **Salaries and Wages**
C **Fringe Benefits**
D **Travel**
   1. **Local**
   2. **Interstate**
   3. **Foreign**
E **Consultants and Contracts**
F **Services, Supplies, and Materials**
   1. **Office Supplies**
   2. **Postage**
   3. **Telephone**
   4. **Training Materials**
   5. **Printing and Duplicating**
   6. **Other (itemize)**
G **Equipment**
H **Other**
   1. **Room Rental**
   2. **Equipment Lease**
I **Total Direct Costs**
J **Total Indirect Costs**
Total Project Costs

Financial Report

The financial report is prepared after the project has been completed. It shows in money terms what you have accomplished, based upon your plan. It lays out what you have done with the sponsoring agency's money in order to implement the project that they have funded. Grants Accounting, a unit of University Accounting, normally completes the financial report. Occasionally sponsors also require interim financial reports.

You might find it helpful to refer to *"Post-Award Procedures: Hurrah! I've Got the Money! Now What Do I Do?,"* the chapter in this handbook that offers suggestions on purchasing, keeping track of money matters, in-kind contributions, and the like, and the section in the appendix entitled, *"Summary of EMU Spending Policies and Procedures Concerning Personnel, Purchasing, and Travel."*

Persuading a Prospective Funder to See Things Your Way: Writing Tips

"I just don't know where to start!" "I've drawn a blank!" "I've blocked!" "How do I begin writing this stupid proposal anyway?" "I know what I want to say, but I just can't think of how to say it!"

Lives there a writer who, faced with putting words on that massive blank sheet of paper lying on the desk in front of her/him, has not at some time uttered such plaintive words of woe? Probably not. Most likely everybody who has ever done any extended writing can readily identify with this predicament. We all blank. We all feel inadequate at times, particularly at the beginning of a big writing job. Writing can be a scary business.

Don't despair. There is help. That there is a long line of writers in general, and successful proposal writers in particular, proves that the job can be done. Take heart.

You can do it. You will do it.

Be encouraged, first of all, from knowing that a lot of people have told you they think your idea for a proposal is great, your colleagues in and outside the University, your department head, the officers at ORD. They aren't just "Whistling Dixie" giving you positive feedback because they like you (though of course they do like you).

If all these people think your idea has merit, and if the ORD officers have identified a couple of possible funding targets, get on with the next step. Write the idea up into a plan of action. That's all a proposal really is, a plan of action by which you persuade an agency with money to give some of it to you so you can use your great idea to solve a problem and thus benefit the funder and serve the public.

But, ah, there's the rub, isn't it? You have no trouble telling people about your idea. You can do that with great fluency. Words tumble out. Orally, you're absolutely eloquent. But when faced with that blank page, you clutch, you block, you simply can't hack it. Oh where, oh where has your eloquence gone?

So, what do you (and most people in the same fix) do? You make excuses for not getting started. You think things like this:

- **The job is too big/too hard.** (So, what job isn't, if you don't start to do it?)
- **I don't have time for this.** (What do you mean? Are you saying, "I don't have time to fail?" Think about it. If every prospective innovator had offered fear of failure as a reason for not embarking on a project, we would all still be living in caves. Or, do you mean this excuse more literally? If so, last heard, there were still 24 hours in every day, except on those days we enter daylight savings time. What's the deal? There's always enough time to do the important things, if we set our minds to them. But, whichever way you intend this excuse, forget it. Get on with the job.)
- **The rewards are inadequate; the University doesn't provide enough support.** (What's sufficient? What's enough? By whose standards? The rewards will never be sufficient; there will never be enough support. Make do with what you have; make what you have be enough.)
- **Writing was never my strong point.** (Every writer says that. You know the English language, probably grew up with it. Use it.)
- **I don't have any good ideas for beginning,** or, I had one but it slipped away, or, My plan seemed like good one, but now I'm not so sure. (Rehearse in your head what you said when you took your idea to the department head, or to ORD. It was great then; give it another playback. Maybe talk it into your tape recorder. Anyway, run it past yourself again. Look for its virtues. Elaborate on those.)
- **I can never think of a good first sentence**. (There is no great rule posted in the sky or embedded in concrete that says you have to start writing at the beginning. Start anywhere you're comfortable, anywhere that interests you. Leave the beginning until later. It'll wait.)

So much for the excuses. The real reasons for not writing are:

- **Perfectionism** (But nothing on earth is ever perfect.)
- **Fear of failure** (Is there a person who has not at some time not lived up the standards s/he set? Why should you be different? Come on now, just do your best. Have confidence in yourself.)
- **Fear of rejection** (Don't make mounds into mountains. "The boy who tries is better than the boy who...." You most likely will be rejected, the first time. Look forward to that eventuality as a learning opportunity. Think positive. Make the most of rejection, if it comes.)

Such notions, such excuses, are all in your head. Admit that, and understand that others have felt the same fears. Recognize that you're only human, too, and that you're procrastinating, and then - get going.

So you sit down, pen in hand, paper in front of you, and you think thoughts like:

- I just can't handle this today. Maybe tomorrow I'll feel more like doing it.
- I have to walk the dogs.
- I have to clean the refrigerator.
- I have to change the blade on the lawnmower.
- I can't work at home - too many distractions, or, I can't work in the office - too many distractions.
- There's something I need to check first.
- I write best under pressure.
- Two sentences done - okay, time for a break!

Excuses, excuses. Recognize them as such; face them as such. Then you can deal with them. Once you're writing - **STAY ON TRACK!**

- **Be alert to avoidance strategies** like sharpening pencils, getting a yellow pad instead of white one, finding just the right yellow pad, adjusting the light, deciding the car needs washing.
- **Find yourself a comfortable spot to write in**, where everything you need for writing is handy, and where there are no major distractions, like TV, radio, newspapers and magazines, that set of bluebooks, the dog, and that book you've been eager to read. Don't worry about that detail that needs checking; that's the kind of things you can take care of tomorrow.

- **Set yourself a challenging yet reasonable writing schedule.** Establish a time for working - every Tuesday and Thursday morning, or every Wednesday afternoon - and stick to it. Then establish a set number of words or paragraphs or pages for each session. Be reasonable about this. Try to make each session's work a unit in itself. You need to remember, too, that writing generates more writing. So what you have already written will affect what you will write next, and what you write next will affect what you have already written. You will probably have to adjust your writing schedule accordingly. However things go, you need to use common sense in planning.
- **If that blank page seems too big and intimidating**, make it smaller, quite literally. Fold the page in half, or in quarters, and start putting words down. It's easier to fill a quarter page than a whole one. At first, if you're really unsure of yourself, don't even bother with sentences. Phrases will do. After you've got something down on paper, then go to the computer. Some people can compose at the keyboard; others need paper first. But if you've really blocked, paper is probably your best bet.
- **Keep track of, or log, what you have completed**, or feel at the time has been completed. That means you need to have a kind of outline of the sections of the whole, the pieces of which you can check off or cross out as you go along. Keep track, too, maybe with big red-ink stars, of those you haven't yet thought through sufficiently, or that you know have details that need to be checked (or the other way around - red-ink stars for completed portions - if that feels better to you).
- **Reward yourself** at the end of a writing session and when you've completed a unit. Do something nice for number one. Read a chapter in that book you've longed for. Throw the ball for the dog. Kiss somebody you love. Make it up to the kids for having grumped at them. If you absolutely have to have food as your reward, then let your reward be food, maybe nonfat yogurt, maybe even those French fries you've got in the freezer. However you do it, pat yourself on the back. You deserve it. You'll be more eager to begin the next writing stint, and the next and the next. In other words, dangle carrots in front of yourself.
- **When you can't think of a word**, use ______ or ****** as a placeholder. Very often as you continue to write, the word you wanted comes to you as a matter of course. If you can't think of a transitional phrase, do the same thing. Jot down ideas in the margin or even in the text. The important thing, obviously, is to keep the words flowing. You can always fix the piece later.

- **Stop writing only when you've completed a unit** and have in mind what you are going to say next. Jot down keywords so that you can more easily pick up where you left off.
- **If you do block** and can't figure out what to say next or even what angle to tackle next, get away from the yellow pad or computer and talk the ideas through to yourself or to your tape recorder. You'll probably have a lot of excess words, but that doesn't matter at this point. What you want is to get the language flowing. If that doesn't work, try running your problem past a trusted colleague or friend. Above all, don't panic. Maybe all you need to do to solve that particular problem is to start tackling another section of your proposal. As you're thinking about the next one, the first one may pull you back. That's letting your subconscious work for you.
- **Maintain a sense of audience**. As you write, imagine, perhaps, that you are writing for the agency review board or a certain professional group. If you keep a particular audience in mind, it is easier to choose the language that can persuade them to your point of view. That's the plus side. On the negative side, it is easier to fall into jargon and use "in language" when you think you are addressing an audience of peers. You need to remember that, while the reviewers will indeed most likely be your peers, they may not all be in your specialty.

ONCE YOU HAVE A ROUGH DRAFT –

First, congratulate yourself. Celebrate! It may not seem like it, but the hardest part of your task of writing is finished. Once you have words on paper, you can play with them, work them over, move them around, delete them, add to them, find synonyms for them - refine and refine until they say what you want them to say. Once you have a rough draft, you have climbed the mountain and are beginning to descend the other side. Journey's end is in sight.

Some suggestions may help you at this point.

- **Let the draft cool.** Stand away from it for a while. You'll come back with fresh ideas, and the next writing you do will be the better for your having been away. During this down time, you might want to share the draft with a colleague or run it past the ORD officer. If you do ask some people to read the draft at this stage, be sure you ask them beforehand if they are willing and have the time. First drafts are usually hard to read, simply because they are first drafts and thus inchoate and highly unrefined. So respect your readers' time and energy accordingly.

- **Take the readers' suggestions seriously.** That may be harder to do than you think. You have invested a lot of time and emotional and intellectual energy in your writing. You think your ideas are splendid and beautifully expressed. They may not be so enthusiastic. You owe it to them, and to yourself, to swallow your pride and think carefully about what they say.
- **Rethink your outline**. Reorganize it, if that seems advisable. Compare it to the draft. Do the parts fit? Are they where they should be? Have you kept to your topics and subtopics? Have you kept them in order? Is the draft complete in substance? Have you neglected portions? Have some sections received more emphasis than they need? Is there balance? Are they arranged for effectiveness?
- **Good writing comes from rewriting**. This means that you must read over what you have written, review the ideas, revise, and rewrite, incorporating those revisions. Theoretically, rewriting can go on forever, because as you write, new ideas come to you. So there is a point at which you must fish or cut bait, as it were. But edit and rewrite you must. Produce draft after draft in whole or in part until you know that the writing says what you want it to say in the way you want it said.

Writing is really thinking and learning, and then putting the new knowledge thus gained down on paper in order to communicate it effectively to others. When we say that we know what we want to say but just can't think of how to say it, if we're really honest with ourselves, we realize that we simply haven't thought the idea through. Thus we don't really know what we think and can't formulate the appropriate words. When we've thought the ideas through, and know what we think, the words will come. They will probably come with great fluency. We may even have to cut some away, there are so many of them, all vying for attention and clamoring for their niche in the spotlight.

- As you go along, **read what you've written out loud to yourself.** Problems with wording, continuity, coherence, and logic may pop right out when the material is verbalized. You may suddenly see that a certain paragraph is out of place because the ideas do not flow naturally out of the previous one. A word you've been struggling for may simply come to your pen, unbidden, with seemingly no effort on your part. When you've done the very best you can, and you feel the proposal is finished, put it aside for a time, then pull it out, and read it aloud one more time. You may be surprised at how many rough spots you find even at this stage but can now deal with quite easily.

- **Good writing is really leading the reader**, drawing the reader from one thought to another and from one conclusion to another. Don't assume your readers' minds will make leaps and get what you want them to get. It is your responsibility as the writer to make sure that your readers take from the reading what you want them to. Put your message across.
- **Don't shoot yourself in the foot**. Think things through, and then go back and think them through again. Don't let your enthusiasm and familiarity with what you're doing lead you into making dumb mistakes. You may be surprised what the heat of professional passion will impel you to say. One applicant "shot away" his whole proposal (fortunately, not his foot!), when, as justification for funds for a proposed book, he asserted that the book was needed because, whenever he took up that topic in his teaching, he had to set aside 15 or 20 minutes to explain the things he intended to put in the book. A quarter of an hour of lecture time is hardly sufficient to justify an entire book.
- In a similar vein, **avoid such phrases** as " I hope to..." or "I expect to...." Be firm and self-assured. Say, " I intend to..." or " I shall..." or "The project will...." If it turns out later that you must alter your methodology, it will be circumstances that force you to change your plans, not your lack of foresight and planning.
- **Pretend you're reading your proposal to an agency board of reviewers.** As you read your draft aloud, imagine their faces. Visualize their reactions to particular sections Sometimes, when you imagine an audience of peers in this way, you instinctively sense where your writing is strong and where it's weak, where you need to flesh out with more detail or another example, where you've belabored your points, where you've jumped ideas and left your logic flawed, where you've left assumptions unsupported, or where your tone rings false. Read with your pencil in hand, and put little checks in the margins where you feel there may be problems. Don't stop reading to fix the passages; do that later. Later, you may have to do a little oral rereading in order to recapture the idea that came to you at the time, but, never fear, it will come back into your head, and your manuscript will be the better for it.

- **Don't underestimate the importance of diction, grammar, and mechanics** with respect to influencing reviewers. Avoid fancy and overblown language and big words. Employ the active voice instead of the passive. Eliminate adjectives and adverbs in favor of nouns and verbs, because they're more forceful. Keep your sentences short and declarative, but still try to vary length and constructions. Avoid jargon and buzzwords, and always be positive. Check the grammar. Run your manuscript through the spell checker. Make it right!
- When you've got everything perfect, **ask your toughest critic to read your manuscript.** And pay attention to the response. What is said may hurt at first (we all get emotionally involved in projects and in writing about them), but this may be the most valuable feedback you've received. Take every suggestion seriously, and (after you've licked your wounds) incorporate their ideas into your proposal.

SUPPOSE TWO OR MORE ARE WRITING A PROPOSAL

Often two or more people get together to collaborate on proposals. Two minds are better than one, right? Sometimes collaborative proposals can indeed be effective at persuading agencies to underwrite projects. But big ideas, good ideas, many ideas are not all that is necessary for winning awards. Some cautions are in order if you are contemplating collective writing, whether as a duo, threesome, or in committee.

Two people may come up with a forcefully written proposal. It depends upon how well they know each other and whether they have worked compatibly before and have been able to write well together even on small matters, like reports or memos.

Committee writing, that is, when three or more people write together, seldom results in a good product. That's because the narrative voice is usually fractured. No single point of view governs the writing. The tone varies, because tone reflects a writer's attitude. Then, too, in committee writing, personality frictions can develop, people may start riding hobby horses or grinding axes, and a lot of time can be wasted in frivolous talk.

In both situations, it may be better to talk through the proposal carefully and at some length to decide clearly on what is to be accomplished and how best to do it. Then assign the task of writing to one person, or divide up the task of writing by assigning sections to individuals, the result later to be incorporated into a whole by one person. The draft can then be reviewed by a partner or by the whole committee, and the resulting suggestions added.

The process of writing, critiquing, and sharing should go on until everyone is satisfied (within reason, of course). In any event, the person doing the writing, or combining the writing, needs a thick skin, and colleagues need always to remember to respect and affirm his/her intellectual and emotional contribution. No proposal is worth making enemies over.

HANDLING REJECTION

Woe is you. You've been turned down. Now what? Here are some suggestions, practical and otherwise, for proceeding, for soothing your wounds.

- **Rejection is more common than acceptance.** It happens a lot, simply because more proposals are submitted than can possibly be funded. Expect rejection. Being turned down doesn't mean your proposal is no good, and it certainly doesn't mean that you yourself are lacking in some way. It's simply that the odds are that you will be rejected. All is not lost, however.
- **Keep a thick skin.** Don't expect happy-face stickers. Funding agencies, like publishers, are not in the business of building self-esteem. Friends are. If you get turned down, find a friend who will commiserate with you. Once you've vented your disappointment, put it aside. Make the best of the situation. Life goes on.
- **Insist on critical feedback.** Think of it as free consulting service. Ask the agency for the reviewers' comments. Examine them carefully. Think about them seriously. Incorporate the suggestions and resubmit the proposal. In your cover letter, point out what you have changed. Your chances of being funded are much higher the second time around. The work of preparing a second submission is far less in proportion to the effort that you put into the first one. In fact, you may be able to whip it out in almost no time.

- **It's important to submit your work for public scrutiny**. That's adding to the body of knowledge, and it's what faculties and those associated with universities are supposed to do. When you submit a proposal, you are on the way to contributing to the universal knowledge base. Keep that in mind as an additional, more idealistic reason for resubmitting.
- **Above all, keep writing.** Writing improves with experience. The more you use the written word, the better it will behave for you. In fact, you may well discover that words will enjoy doing your bidding, as they do for Humpty Dumpty in Lewis Carroll's Through the Looking-Glass. Humpty says they "come round... [every] Saturday night... for to get their wages, you know." Words will be as eager to work for you as they are for him.

PUBLISHING YOUR WRITING

Once your project is finished and you've submitted the final report, you need to get the results out to the professional community. Quite simply, just reorganize the information you've gained into an article or monograph, and select a likely home for it. Examine your target publication to get ideas on how to submit your material. Familiarize yourself with different articles published in that journal at various times, and format yours accordingly. If you get turned down, try another journal, using the same process. Be patient. Be persistent.

If you didn't get funded and you still feel uncomfortable about the writing process or about exposing your ideas to the world, try gaining experience in other ways. In Hints for Publishing Scholarly Writing in the appendix to this handbook, Robert Lucas of the Institute for Scholarly Productivity provides hints for getting your ideas out and into print. You will discover that you will become more sure of your writing the more that you do it, and once people see that you have good ideas, the more likely your work will continue to be accepted. The old saw still applies: Perseverance pays.

The Proposal Review: Hey, Look Me Over!

After you have completed the proposal to the best of your ability, consulted with colleagues and ORD officers, collected all the signatures and supporting materials, after you've reread your proposal once again, have run it through the spell checker, and have prevailed upon a colleague to give it another reading, - when you're positive it's perfect, you give it to ORD, who will give it another read. Then - you send it off! You've done all this, and you've met the deadline. You experience a profound sense of pride and relief.

Now comes the review, a step in the search for funding that is out of your hands, once you've finished writing the proposal. The term "review" refers to the process by which the funding agency determines whether or not they wish to support your proposal. Before you begin writing a plan for a project, it's helpful to have some idea of how the review process works, and also to consider some factors that may expedite the process and produce a more favorable evaluation of your proposal.

Review procedures vary. Some agencies complete the process quite quickly, while others may take up to a year. Some funders choose to review in-house, some use outside reviewers, and others employ some combination of these. Some agencies mail the completed proposals to selected individual reviewers with instructions about what to look for. Others have on-site peer-review teams, and some employ elaborate systems by which points are assigned to the various elements of a proposal. If your target agency has a point system, it is only sensible for you to focus your energy on those aspects in your proposal that will garner you the most points. Do your proposal planning accordingly.

Although reviewing methods vary, certain procedures commonly take place. One person screens the proposal, looking for such obvious matters as whether or not the proposal fits the purposes of the agency's program and adheres to the stated guidelines. Obviously, then, you must be sure that you are pitching your proposal to the agency that is the most likely catcher, and you must keep to that agency's playing rules while you are writing your proposal.

After the initial screening, the proposal is examined by a staff team or review board, in the case of foundations, or by peer reviewers, for government proposals. If a project is especially large, there may be a site visit. Agencies also do fiscal, legal, and administrative reviews.

Corporations, which do not normally fund basic research, appraise proposals at the executive level. The process is noncompetitive, since secrecy is important, and turnaround time is fast. Networking is essential, because corporations do not usually issue requests for proposals.

Foundations have program officers, who do the initial screening, and boards or panels, who do the final selection. Turn-around time may be 3-4 weeks. Competition is keen, with only about one in ten being funded, and networking can contribute to success.

Government systems vary with the agency. Individual peers or teams of peers do the reviewing, decisions and reporting may take the better part of a year, and competition is very sharp. The process is usually fair, although politics may enter in, but networking is not a major factor in achieving success. Those proposals that the reviewers have rated as worthy of funding are ranked, and awards continue until the money runs out. You may suggest reviewers, and you may also suggest the opposite, that certain people not serve as reviewers. You may also request copies of the review form, evaluation criteria, point systems, and successful proposals, all of which are in the public domain under the Freedom of Information Act.

The National Science Foundation provides an example of how one governmental agency's peer-review process works. The reviewers are under severe time pressure, and serving as a reviewer can be fatiguing. Sequestered for 3 or 4 days, each person may read as many as 40 proposals of some 50 pages each. The readers work in panels of 6 by disciplines with a range of subspecialities, which are also divided into subpanels of 3 people.

The reviewers cull out perhaps 10 proposals, which are then read by the other subpanel. Each person ranks each proposal as excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor. Certain grading limitations apply. For example, the reviewers may be empowered to assign a rating of excellent to only 10% of the submissions and be able to rank only 15% of them as very good. In practice, almost no proposals receive a rating of poor. Reviewers must provide constructive comments on unsuccessful proposals.

Reviewing can be an exhausting, pressure-filled experience. You as a proposal writer need to keep that in mind. You need to remember that reviewers are real people who want to do the best they can for everyone concerned within the limited span of time that they are given to do their work.

Give the reviewers a break through your writing. Make life as easy as you can for them. For example, you might call the program officer of the agency to ask for names of possible reviewers and their level of expertise so that you can adjust the amount and level of technical detail you include in your proposal accordingly. If you are writing for a panel of reviewers, you might also take varying preferences into account. Eighty-five percent of successful proposal writers have had contact with the agency program officer before submitting. It pays to prepare.

Make your proposal easy to read. Formatting is important. Divide your material up with appropriate and easy-to-find headings for the various sections. Include brief statements of evaluation criteria so that reviewers can check items off their lists as they read. Make it easy to skim and skip sections by using subheadings, italics, boldface, underlining, color highlights, whatever devices your technology affords. One in 3 reviewers is visually oriented. Be judicious with this sort of thing, however; you don't want your proposal to end up looking like a comic book or a hodge-podge of titles, subtitles, indentations, subindentations, bullets, and asterisks.

Double space if allowed (it's easier to read), use wide margins, and highlight passages the reviewer can use in a summary. Rely whenever possible on reader shorthand, like lists, maps, and charts.

All this sort of thing can help you. It's important to remember, however, that, while graphic devices can highlight information and thus provide ready support for what you say, effective persuasion demands narrative for justification. Narrative excels in linking cause and effect, in delineating a problem and demonstrating results. You need always to keep in mind a basic writing tenet: *lead your reader through the thought process*. Narrative does that best.

Rely on the active voice. For example, say, "Use active verbs..," instead of "The passive voice should not be used...." Say, "The agency requires reviewers to..," instead of "Reviewers are required by the agency to...." The active voice is less wordy, clearer, and much more forceful.

Always be positive. Avoid, for example, putting down a professional colleague who has worked on a similar project. Emphasize the need for your proposal, what you can do with your particular qualifications, the resources you have at your disposal - the good things you have going for you. Accentuate the positive, as the old song goes, and eliminate the negative. Reviewers will think better of you for it, and by extension, of your proposal.

If you get turned down, call the agency program officer and ask for the reviewers' comments. Federal agencies are required to provide them at your request, but foundations are not so obligated. Having suggestions from the program officer and the reviewers' comments to refer to gives you a considerable amount of consulting service, and it's all free for the asking. Offer your services as a reviewer. That's another good way of finding out how things go in the proposal-reviewing world. ORD officers can help you get started as a reviewer.

Try again! Address the particular reasons your proposal was rejected, rewrite, and resubmit. Show evidence in a cover letter that you have made substantial changes. Your chances of funding are much higher the second time around. It's hard not to take rejection personally, but think of it this way. It was not you who were rejected; it was your proposal, and for reasons that you can remedy. Set about doing so. Tomorrow will be a better day.

For additional help in refining the plan, refer to *"Persuading a Prospective Funder to See Things Your Way: Writing Tips,"* elsewhere in this handbook.

Post-Award Procedures: Hurrah! I've Got the Money!
Now What Do I Do?

After reviewing and evaluating your proposal, your target agency agrees with you that your proposal is worthy of being supported by their money and will benefit the public. You get a letter from them saying so. ORD may also get a letter, or maybe ORD is informed first, or maybe you both get the good news simultaneously. No matter, you get together for hurrahs.

After you've celebrated and your feet are on the ground again, you think about what's next. Now that you've got the money, how do you go about spending it? Are there rules and regulations? Mounds of red tape to wade through? That sort of stuff is to be expected when you're dealing with agencies and institutions, right?

The procedures and paperwork associated with each part of implementing the proposal and the tallying at the end can indeed seem formidable and intimidating, hiring consultants and staff, purchasing equipment and supplies, making travel arrangements. All these matters can seem like just a big hassle when all you really want to do is to get on with your work. Don't despair. Here at EMU we have offices and procedures that make red-tape cutting easier.

Grants Accounting, a unit of EMU Accounting located in Room 230 of the Business and Finance Building, is responsible for the oversight of your grant money. They will walk you through the ropes of the money end of your project. They will establish an account for you, with the authorization of ORD, after the funder has notified ORD that they have accepted your proposal and after the Board of Regents have voted their approval.

The good news has arrived by letter that your proposal has been accepted and that your plan will be funded. You're very eager to begin your project. Not only are you enthusiastic about getting started on this project you've dreamed about for so long, but as a practical matter, you must, in fact, begin. You simply can't wait. Doing so may jeopardize desired outcomes. But the money isn't here yet. What to do?

Actually, through Grants Accounting and ORD, certain "tools" or procedures are available to you that make it possible for you to begin work even while you are waiting for the external (agency) paperwork to come through and for the Regents to vote their formal acceptance. The tools that can help you in such a case are pre-award and hardship accounts.

Pre-Award

Pre-award refers to an account established with funder money before the Regents have accepted the award. The money is here; it simply hasn't been officially accepted, and - the rules are strict - there is no real grant until the Regents have voted their agreement. ORD, however, can authorize an account and make funds available to get you started.

Hardship

Hardship means an account established with EMU funds to underwrite a project for which the funds are forthcoming but are being held up by paperwork. The actual contract is still being completed, but you have been assured that it's on its way. Hardship accounts can only be established in those cases in which there is a firm commitment from the funder (verified by ORD) and a need to begin the project prior to receiving the money.

In any event, Grants Accounting officers, upon the approval of ORD, take care of opening your account. After the account is opened, you receive the appropriate signature card. You may accordingly submit such documents as requisitions, travel vouchers, PAFs for hiring, and the like, in order to draw upon your account.

The Grants Accounting people can tell you where to go on campus for the assistance you need, from personnel to equipment to travel, the whole works. They help you by preparing the financial report at the end of the project, and also in drawing up interim ones if the funder wants them. While ORD is your best friend in doing the work to secure the grant, Grants Accounting is your best adviser in the money-spending arena and in negotiating that particular maze of paperwork.

So, now you are ready to spend the money. Some hints and cautions are in order. First, and perhaps most important of all, you must keep in mind that, in the final analysis, it is your responsibility as project director to make sure that all expenses are appropriate for achieving the project's goals and are allowable under federal, state, and EMU regulations. Grants Accounting and ORD give advice, but you are the director and as such are the one who is ultimately accountable.

All expenditures must correspond to the proposal budget. Beyond that, budget requirements and any adjustments in the budget will have been specified in the notification letter or contract which you received. If there are none, federal regulations and University policy apply, and you proceed according to your plan.

It is important to stick to your budget. Obviously, if you are in the process of writing a proposal, you need to think through your project clearly and carefully plan the resources you will need before you submit your proposal. That means that you must also communicate clearly at all stages with your ORD officer, so that the budget is written to fit the job. If you are reading this in preparation for writing a proposal, you might like to review the chapter in this handbook on *"The Money Game: Preparing the Budget and Financial Report."*

Manage your funds appropriately. Stick to your budget. In the event that you feel you need to modify the budget, get in touch with ORD, who will then contact the sponsor for approval. Work closely with Human Resources, Purchasing, and other offices on campus to make sure you know the correct procedures to do what you need to do, before you do it. Track your money carefully. Retain copies of all expense records, and keep an eye on your budget balance. Sounds just like what you do with your personal checkbook, doesn't it? In essence, it is. Just as at home, you are responsible for spending funds in accord with the approved budget. You have complete "fiduciary responsibility," as they say.

Grants Accounting prepares invoices based on their financial records system, taking the information about the sponsor from the award letter or contract. While they will prepare the various financial reports, they need your assistance since you are the project director. Therefore, it is important that you also understand the funder's requirements. Reporting is an important aspect of the project, because failure to complete reports in a timely, accurate, and appropriate fashion may jeopardize current and future funding. In the final analysis, you are the one who is ultimately responsible for the financial reports. Grants Accounting helps you fill out the forms and get the required signatures for them, but you must see to it that all that "stuff" is done.

You've got the money now, and, like others before you, you too can survive the paperwork jungle. Teamwork and collaboration are the keywords. Ask questions of and communicate with the people whose job it is to know the details. Otherwise, the details may keep you from doing your best work. **They** want you to succeed. **You** want to succeed. By working together, **you will succeed.**

The appendix to this handbook contains more specific information about spending policies under *"Summary of EMU Spending Policies and Procedures Concerning Personnel, Purchasing, and Travel."*

Reporting Your Success: Tell the World How Good You Are!

Evaluation and reporting necessarily go hand in hand. Practically speaking, however, when "cleaning up" the project at the end, you have to separate the second from the first. Evaluation is the process by which you determine the degree of your success, and the report indicates your success expressed in end-of-the-project terms. The report presents you with the opportunity to view your project in the past tense and describe your achievements in summary language. It is your avenue for showing off what you have done and how well you have done it. The report is your brag sheet.

Because these two aspects of the project are so closely related, if you have not reviewed the portion on evaluation in *"Writing the Proposal"* and the chapter on *"Fine-Tuning the Evaluation Section of the Grant Proposal,"* both in this handbook, you may want to read those sections now.

As you are implementing your project, you and your evaluator collect data about how the project is progressing, including information about any deviations from your original scheme in accordance with the evaluation plan you have developed. Such documentation may take many forms, including minutes of meetings, lab books, logs, anecdotes, photographs, press releases, as well as hard factual data, anything that proves what you've been doing and your degree of success in doing it.

At the end, you compile this documentation into a report, which may be hefty in size, that demonstrates your achievement and describes the positive changes your work has brought about.

For example, if your goal was to reduce street crime in Smithtown, you can report that studies show that between January and December violence on the streets committed by youth went down by 7%. Your statistics show that once the teen center was operating, 60 youngsters attended regularly and of the 50 who became consistently involved in midnight basketball only 1% were caught in street crime incidents, a significant improvement over the 85% who can be shown to have been offenders previously.

If your goal was to get teachers to use more multicultural materials in their classrooms, you can also quote before and after figures. You can show that 100% used these materials after attending in-services, as opposed to 10% before; that they used ten different kinds of materials; and that 100% of the children showed increased knowledge of other cultures; that the attitudes of 99% of them were more positive toward other peoples.

Quantitative and Qualitative Reports

Your report organizes such data into two kinds of reports, a quantitative one and a qualitative one. The **quantitative** report answers the question: What did we do during the project? It takes into consideration such matters as the number and kinds of activities that took place and the number of people involved. It responds with data.

The **qualitative** report answers the question: Did the project make a difference? In what way? How do we know? It uses the documentation to describe the knowledge, skills, and attitudes gained by participants, the changes in behavior caused by the acquiring of such skills, the changes in student learning or behavior or community attitudes, the completion of a product like a safety device, for example, and its effects. In short – he qualitative portion of the report delineates the outcome of the project you conducted in terms of how the world has changed for the better because of what your project has accomplished.

The report works through each and every goal, objective, activity (or strategy) outlined in the plan, one by one, in order to show how things were before the project began and how things are now that the project is concluded. It responds with documentation that proves that positive changes occurred and that it was through your efforts that those changes took place.

You must also complete a financial report at the end of the project. You can read about that in *"The Money Game: Preparing the Budget and the Financial Report,"* another chapter in this handbook.

Appendices:

Checklists for the Parts of a Proposal

Proposal Introduction

- ☐ It clearly establishes who is applying for funds.
- ☐ It describes the goals and purposes of EMU (the applicant agency).
- ☐ It describes relevant EMU programs.
- ☐ It describes the constituents or clients.
- ☐ It gives evidence of your accomplishments.
- ☐ It offers statistics to support your credibility and those of EMU and your department.
- ☐ It offers statements of endorsement to support credibility.
- ☐ It supports your credibility in the program area for which funds are being sought.
- ☐ It leads logically to the problem statement.
- ☐ The tone reflects modest self-confidence.

Proposal Abstract (Summary)

- ☐ It appears at the beginning of the proposal.
- ☐ It identifies you, the applicant and prospective project director, clearly.
- ☐ It includes:
    - ☐ at least one sentence on your credibility.
    - ☐ at least one sentence on the problem.
    - ☐ at least one sentence on methodology.
- ☐ It specifies the total cost, funds already obtained, and the amount requested in the proposal.

Capability Statement

- ☐ It provides a quick overview of EMU and your department or unit (the applicant agency), you (the prospective project director), and your constituent or client group, if pertinent, emphasizing strengths.
- ☐ It identifies the project staff.
- ☐ It describes the available facilities and resources.

Problem Statement (Needs Statement)

- ☐ It relates to the purposes and goals of EMU, department or unit, and the client, or constituency, group.
- ☐ It is of reasonable proportions.
- ☐ It is supported by statistical or empirical evidence.
- ☐ It is supported by statements from authorities.
- ☐ It is stated in terms of the common good and of the benefit to clients (constituency) and incorporates their suggestions.

- ☐ It does not make unwarranted assumptions.
- ☐ It avoids jargon and overblown language.
- ☐ It avoids excess words.

Objectives

- ☐ They tell specifically what will be done to achieve the goal(s).
- ☐ They point clearly toward the outcomes of the project.
- ☐ They do not describe the methods; they provide a blueprint of them.
- ☐ They define the population to be served.
- ☐ They are quantifiable and verifiable.
- ☐ They avoid jargon, overblown language, and excess verbiage.
- ☐ They employ phrases like "to increase," "to decrease," "to reduce."
- ☐ They avoid phrases like "to provide," "to establish," which belong in the research design or strategies part of the proposal.

Research Design and Procedures (Methodology)

- ☐ The procedures (activities, strategies, methods) flow naturally from the problem and objectives.
- ☐ The activities or strategies are clearly described and justified.
- ☐ The chronology (timeline) of the activities is clearly delineated.
- ☐ The personnel (staff) are listed in detail and each position is clearly justified.
- ☐ The constituency (clients) are described clearly and justified.
- ☐ The strategies can be accomplished within the time and budget allotted.
- ☐ All aspects of the methodology are internally consistent.

Evaluation Plan

- ☐ It addresses both process and product.
- ☐ It specifies who will conduct the evaluation and how they will be selected.
- ☐ It defines the evaluation criteria.
- ☐ It describes the methods for gathering data and the process for implementing them.
- ☐ It describes and includes among the attachments the test instruments or questionnaires that are used.
- ☐ It shows how the evaluation will be used for improving the program.
- ☐ It describes the format of the evaluation reports and includes samples among the attachments.

Remember - Evaluation Flows from the Objectives

Objectives Measure Data, Data Collection, and Documentation

____

1.

2.

3.

4.

And so on....

Future-Funding Plans

- ☐ If the project is to be ongoing, provide a plan for acquiring funds after the grant period has ended.
- ☐ If the project is for construction or capital improvement, provide a plan for maintaining and operating the facilities.
- ☐ If the project is for equipment, provide a plan to accommodate such related costs as lab assistants, maintenance contracts, safety monitoring, and the like.

Dissemination

- ☐ The plan describes how the project results or outcomes will benefit others.
- ☐ The plan clearly indicates how these benefits will be shared with those who can benefit from them.

Appendices (Attachments)

- ☐ Support letters.
- ☐ Vitas.
- ☐ Evaluation (assessment) tools, for example, survey instruments, data collecting forms.
- ☐ Reporting forms.
- ☐ Bibliographies.
- ☐ Other such pertinent items as maps, graphs, charts.

Compliance Requirements

- ☐ Internal - The project plan must conform to EMU internal polices and procedures for the use of human subjects and animal care.
- ☐ External - The project plan must adhere to the regulations of the funding agency.

Deadlines

- ☐ Internal - Have your plan ready for ORD at least 3 working days in advance of the external deadline, so that signatures can be secured and final checking and similar matters can be accomplished.
- ☐ External - The funding agency's deadline is nonnegotiable. Be sure to check whether it is by date of receipt or by postmark.

Flow Chart for Processing Proposals for Outside Funding at Eastern Michigan University

Stages	**Project Director**	**Project Director and ORD Staff**	ORD Staff
1	Develop an idea. Discuss it with dept. or unit head.		
2		Discuss idea and develop it into a plan of action.	
3			Identify funding sources. Secure guidelines and application forms.
4	Draft the proposal.		
5		Share draft with ORD officer. Prepare the budget.	
6	Finalize the proposal. Get letters of support		Finalize budget. Finish necessary forms.
7	Type proposal. Get signatures on forms. Return signed proposal to ORD.		
8			ORD personnel sign. Duplicate proposal. Mail to sponsor.
Final		Celebrate together!	

Sample Timelines

Here are two possible ways of setting up timelines for grant proposals.

Date / Month	Activity
January	Activity "a" (strategy "a") begins, involving... Activity "b" (strategy "b") is held, involving...
February	Activity "a" continues... Activity "c" begins, involving...
March	Activity "a" is completed... Activity "d" begins, involving...

And so on....

Another way of setting up a chronology of project events is called the Gantt Chart.

Activity / Task	January	February	March …
Activity "a" begins	| - - - - - - -	- |	
Activity "a" is modified		| - - - - - -	-|
Activity "a" is repeated			| - - - - - - - -|
Activity "b"	| - - - -	- - - - - - -	- - -|
Activity "c"	| -	- - - - - - -	- - - - - - -|

GRANT REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

DIRECTORIES

America's New Foundations: The Sourcebook on Recently Created Philanthropies.

Annual Register of Grant Support.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. U.S. Government Printing Office. Washington, D.C.

Corporate 500: Directory of Corporate Philanthropy.

Directory of Grants in the Humanities.

Directory of International Corporate Giving in America and Abroad.

The Foundation Directory.

Foundation Reporter.

The Michigan Foundation Directory.

National Guide to Funding in Higher Education.

PERIODICALS

The Chronicle of Higher Education.

Commerce Business Daily.

Foundation Giving Watch.

Federal Grants and Contracts Weekly.

Federal Register.

Foundation & Corporate Grants Alert.

Health Grants and Contracts Weekly.

OTHER

Applying for Research Funding: Getting Started and Getting Funded

Proposal Writing.

SPIN (Sponsored Projects Information Network).

NOTE: STATE OF MICHIGAN GRANTS

Since the State of Michigan has no central procurement system, there is no reference point to search for funding. Agencies distribute requests for proposals to potential bidders as opportunities arise.

Hints for Publishing Scholarly Writing*

By Robert Lucas, Institute for Scholarly Productivity

Respond to a "Call for Papers" for an annual meeting.

If a session at a national meeting is too intimidating, give a paper at a regional meeting.

If the thought of giving a paper paralyzes you, sign up for a poster session [or a panel].

Follow up on the suggestions of those who attended your session and discussed your ideas.

As soon as you return from the conference, begin to rework your paper for publication.

Try a book review in your field.

Look for opportunities to collaborate with other faculty members in research and writing.

Encourage promising students to follow their research into publication, and offer to co-author when they are hesitant.

Write an article that critically reviews the literature in the field.

Consider a book of readings that gathers together the critical articles on a topic of controversy.

Write an article for a trade journal.

Write a textbook.

Write the best article you can, but don't write forever. The sixth draft will do.

Hire a writer to edit your article before sending it off.

Treat journal editors as people.

Keep your transmittal letter brief. You may even suggest a few reviewers for your article, stating why you think they would be good judges of quality.

Do not submit articles simultaneously to different journals.

Deal positively with rejection.

Be willing to fail, and to try again.

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*Presented as a handout for participants at the "Scholarly and Professional Writing Workshop" sponsored by ORD, Ypsilanti, September, 1994. Reprinted by permission of Robert Lucas.

SMARTS, SPIN and GENIUS at a Glance

All You Really Need to Know

The Office of Research Development (ORD) provides these electronic subscription services, SMARTS, SPIN and GENIUS, for faculty and staff at EMU, searchable listings of national and international government and private funding sources. These are the number one databases of their kind.

Go to: ORD's Web site: www.emich.edu/ord. Click on Proposals & Funding, and then on SMARTS/SPIN/GENIUS.