

Guidelines from proposal preparation to award

Prepared by University of Florida International Center



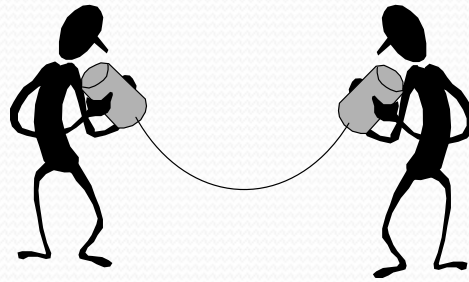


Getting Started:

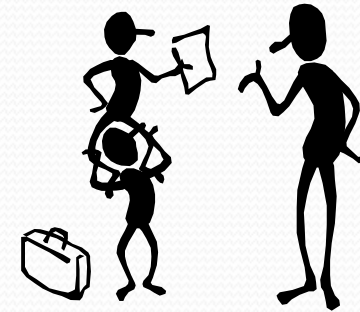
A Cartoon Tale



**Idea/Need/
Concept**



Program Opportunity



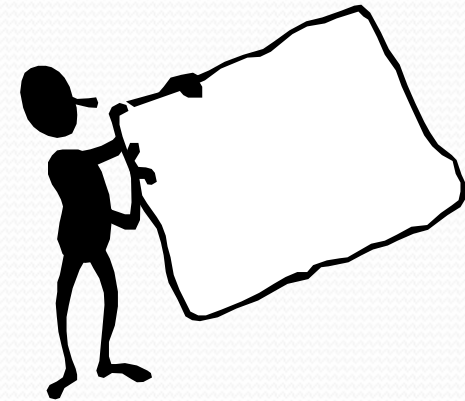
**Interaction between PI
and Sponsor**



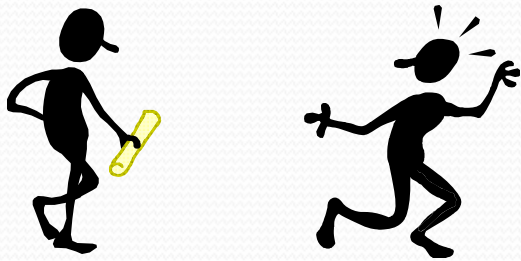
**Developing the
Concept**



**Fitting Your Idea to the
Guidelines**

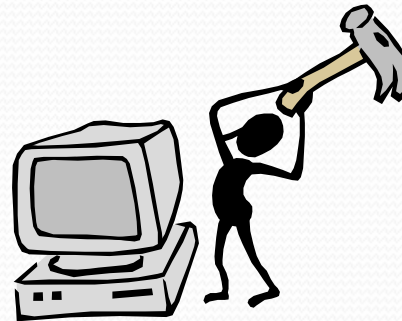


**Developing the
Proposal**

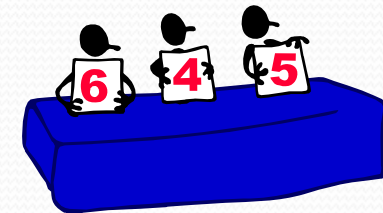


Looking for Assistance

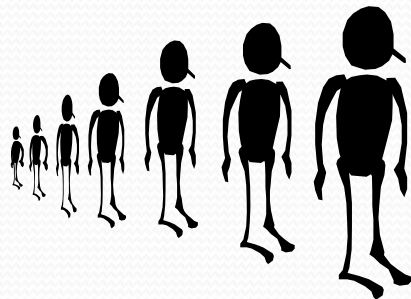
Department Personnel
DSR
College Offices
Colleagues



Submitting the Proposal



Peer Review



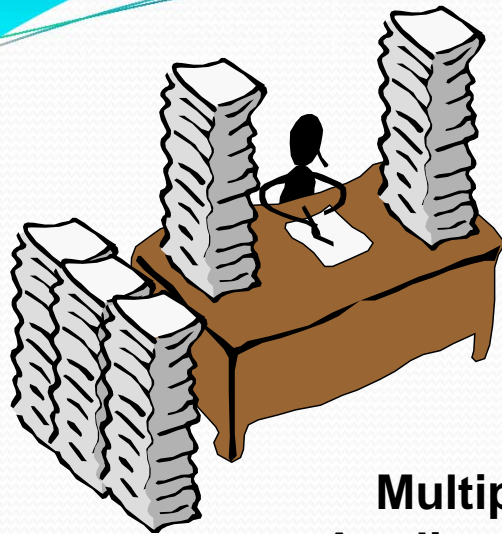
Who is your Competition?



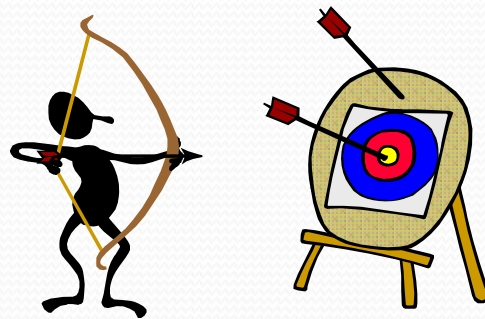
What if You're "Declined?"



Revision and Resubmission



**Multiple
Applications**



**Targeting and
Persistence**



Congratulations!



Demystifying the Grants Process

- Some common terms...
 - **Grants, contracts, cooperative agreements, task orders, procurements,** and other similar mechanisms are the way granting organizations (often called “sponsors”) provide funds to applicants
 - **Sponsors** may be federal agencies, private foundations, corporate entities, state agencies, private individuals, or a mix of these and other sources
 - **Applicants** may be individuals, for-profit organizations, educational institutions, non-profit organizations or groups, states, municipalities, etc.



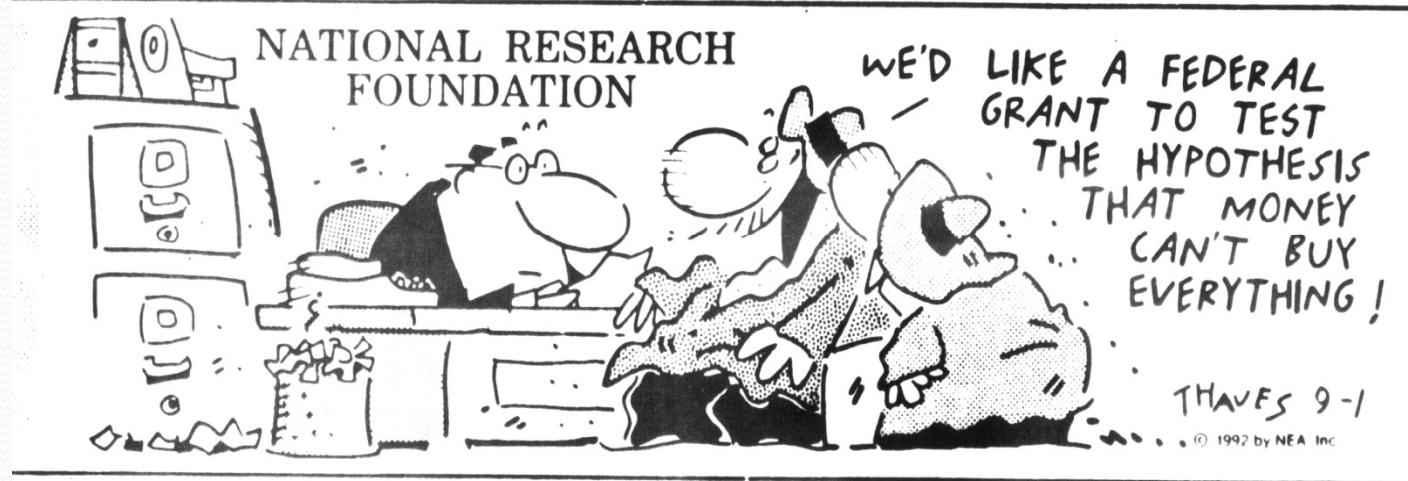
Terminology

- A **proposal** is a document that describes (according to the sponsor's specified format and requirements) what will be done, who will do it, how much it will cost, and other details.
- **White Paper** or **concept paper** - before a proposal is submitted, you should develop the ideas and "float" these by your colleagues and the potential donor.
- **Letter of inquiry** - usually to a foundation, concise but engaging; demonstrates awareness of foundation's goals
- Proposal **formats** vary. Some may be very short, others may provide significant documentation and back-up data. The sponsor dictates the format and required content.
- The **purpose** of the proposal is to persuade the sponsor that the applicant has the knowledge, the capacity/resources, the skill, and the qualified personnel to accomplish the work proposed. Sponsors also use proposals to justify why and how they made awards.

Additional Phrases

- BAA = Broad Agency Announcement
- Quad Chart = DOD-speak for one-page summary chart (viewgraph)
- BAFO = Best and Final Offer - when you've made the cut and are now negotiating the contract
- IQC = Indefinite Quantity Contract
- Program Officer = Individual at the sponsoring agency who discusses program and technical issues with you
- Grants/Procurement Officer = Individual at the sponsoring agency who discusses funding, contract details, negotiates and/or assists in management of funds
- RFP = request for proposal
- RFA = request for application

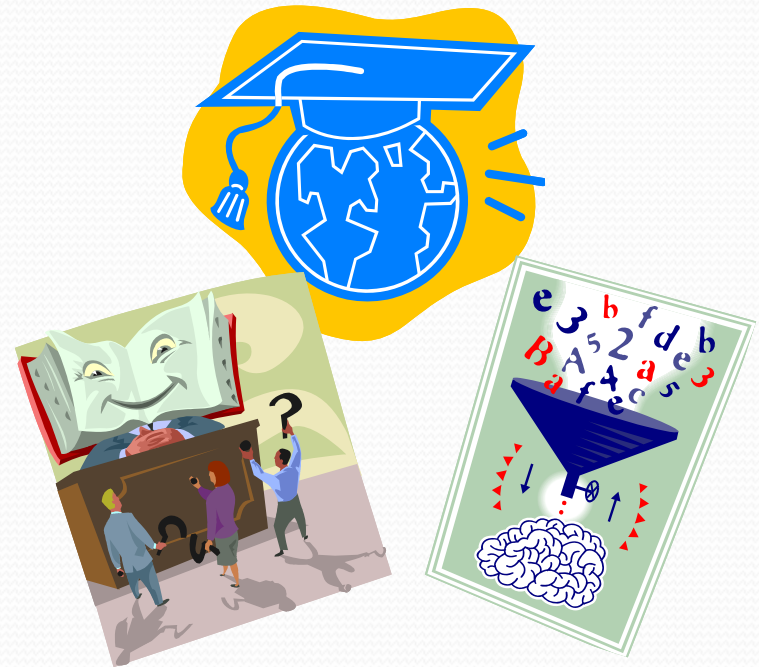
ANK & ERNEST BOB THAVES



- Determine why are you looking for Funding ?
 - To do: Research, Instructional Development, Travel, Student Support, Purchase Equipment or Outreach

What can you offer as a faculty?

- Your expertise:
 - Specialization in an academic discipline
 - Experience in scientific processes and academic program planning
 - Knowledge in a specific field that sponsor needs
 - Connections with others in the field
 - Resources of your institution

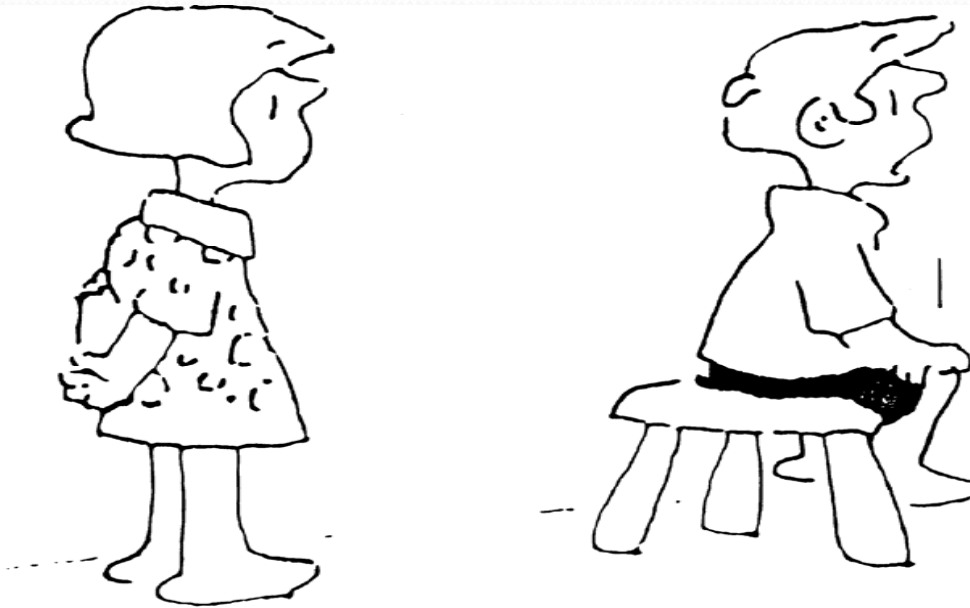


What Sponsors Look For...

- Sponsors make awards according to the mandate and mission of their organization
- They usually look for:
 - Good ideas
 - Evidence of outcome
 - Potential benefit to their constituents
 - Evidence of expertise and resources



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**My problem is I can't tell the rules
from the guidelines.**

- The best way to determine if the program fits your needs is to read the program description and the guidelines ...
- And to contact the Program Officer

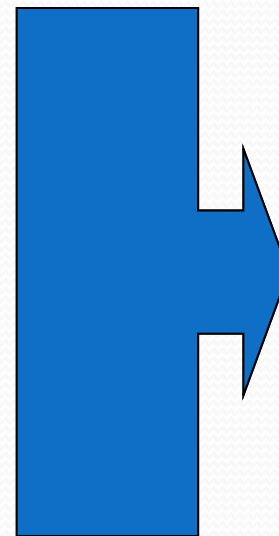


Basic Tips on Getting Started

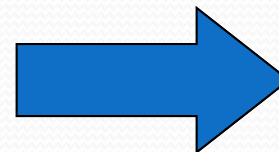
- Read and understand the guidelines (if available)
- Review past awardees: similar to your organization
- Develop a preliminary concept paper
- Identify the demographic and other supporting data you might need
- Establish a timeline for completion of the proposal
- Identify the primary writer and the role of the other collaborators
- Don't be afraid to contact the granting agency and call again for information as needed

The 90% Rule of Grant-writing

- Understanding the guidelines, instructions and requirements
- Contacting the sponsor, whenever appropriate
- Developing a sound project concept, including data
- Identifying and correcting the gaps in required information
- Expanding the concept to match the guidelines
- Identifying costs
- Writing/Submitting the proposal



90%



10%

A pre-proposal by any other name....

- Concept Paper
- Letter of Interest/Inquiry
- White Paper
- Preliminary Proposal
- Quad Chart



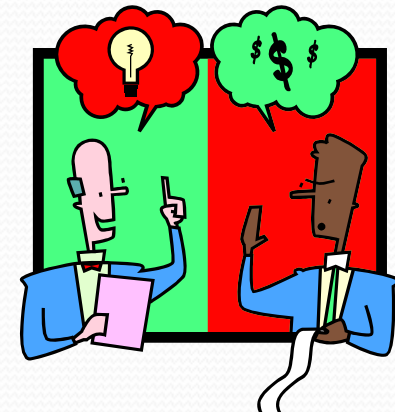


Starting with a Basic Concept Paper

- Brainstorm the project to develop a framework for the final proposal
- Answer basic questions relating to the project
- Identify who will develop each section, what other information is needed, are partners required to fill in the gaps

The Function of a Proposal

- The Function of a Proposal
 - Presents a Compelling Argument for Funding
 - Represents the individual's & the organization's credibility and capacity
 - Describes the project in persuasive terms
 - Provides mechanism for evaluation
 - Tests the ability of the individual to articulate/conceptualize: If you can't state it well, you probably can't do the project!



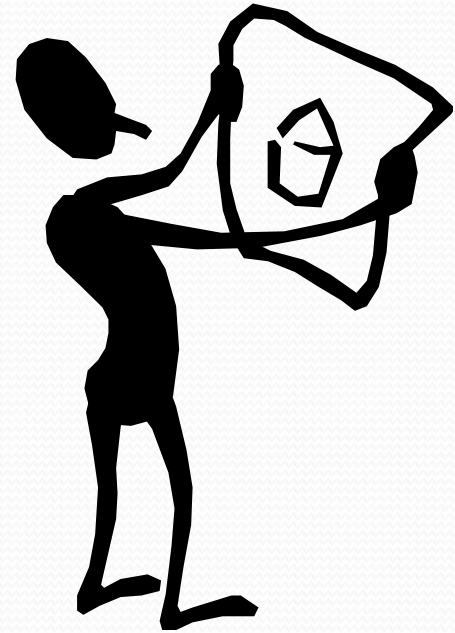
The Essential Components of a Proposal

- Introduction
- Statement of Need/Rationale/Thesis
- Goals/Objectives/Methodology
- Environment & Organizational Support
- Personnel
- Expected Outcomes
- Evaluation
- Budget and Budget Narrative



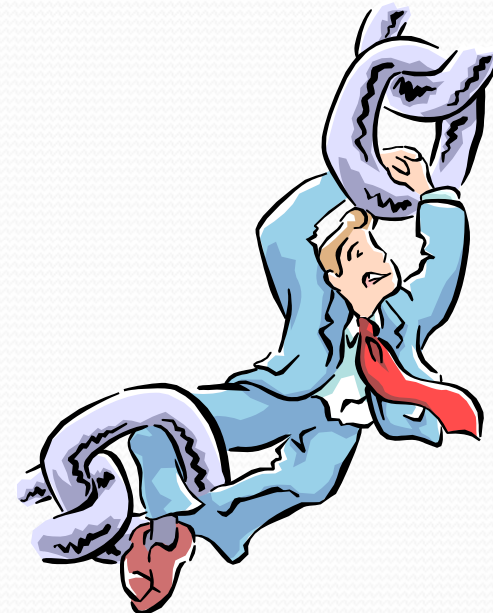
Description of the Approach to Solve the Problem

- Identifies then modifies, corrects, improves, expands, innovates, replicates or otherwise adapts previous efforts; may suggest a novel approach that has not been tried before
- Discusses specific actions, approaches, methods
- Justifies these in terms of the outcomes to be achieved
- Provides information as to how the process and outcome will be measured



Links Between Actions to be Taken and Statement of Problem

- The problem you are addressing is always the essential element
 - Each action should link the proposed solution to the problem
 - Whenever possible, each action should also tie directly to how you will measure your success (Note: sometimes identifying the completion date of an activity can be evidence of success)
 - Budgets evolve from the actions required





Who Will Perform the Work?

- Identify the persons/organization who will perform the proposed work
- Identify collaborators
- State their expertise, roles on the project, and capacity to do the work
- Network early with potential collaborators; you may need documentation from them that they agree to help in the project's activities



When to Partner

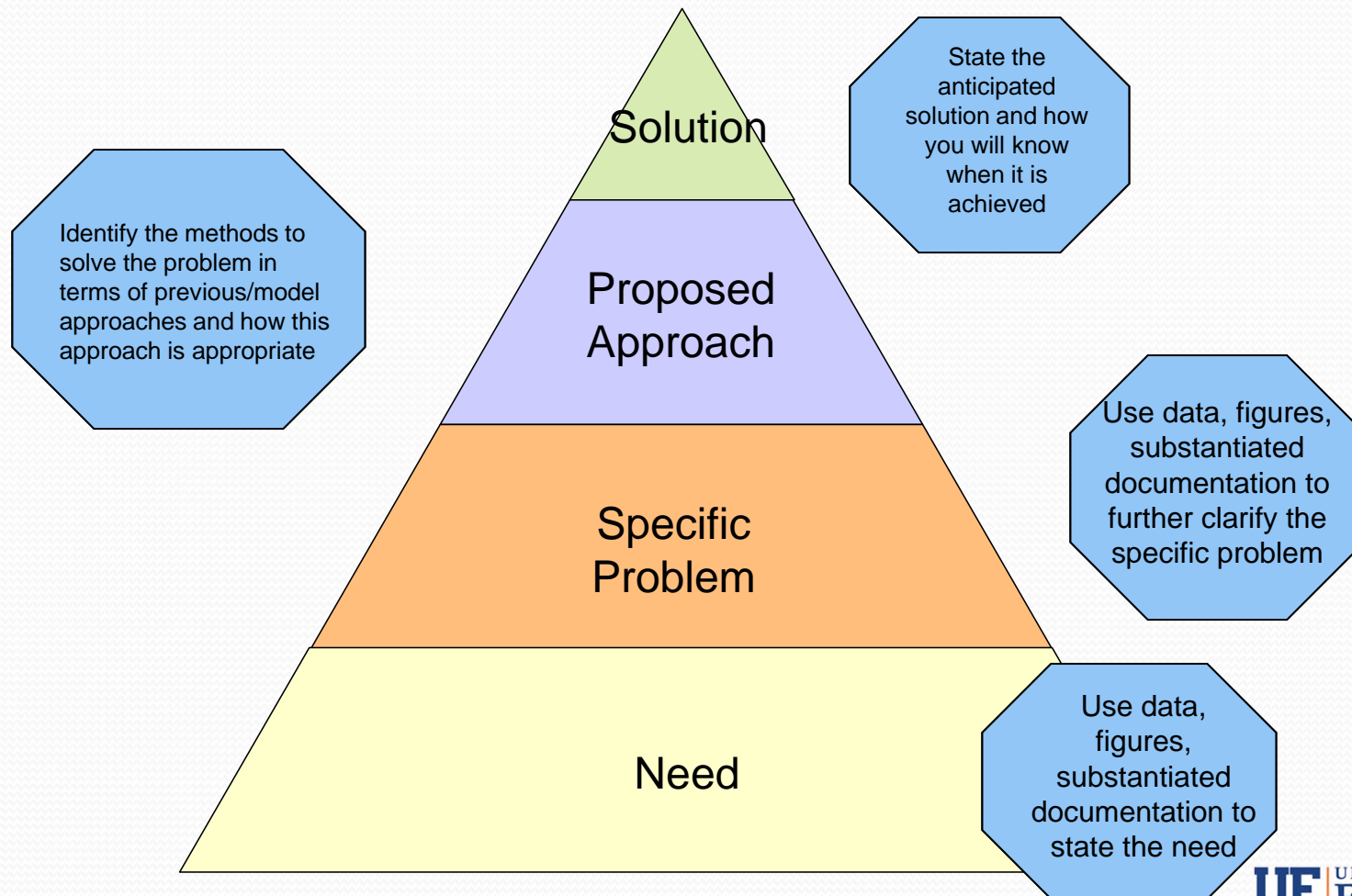
- When the sponsor requires collaboration
- When elements of the work are being done in separate locations
- When facilities or expertise are not adequate to do all the work
- When an external evaluation component is needed
- When specific expertise is needed
- When the project design mandates comparisons

Partnering Pitfalls... some marriages are NOT made in heaven

- Within UF.....
 - How to Connect
 - Databases
 - Functions
 - Cross College Issues
- With External Organizations....
 - Letters
 - IDC
 - Timeliness



Bringing the Elements together...How to Demonstrate Success



Monitoring and Evaluation

- Regularly required reporting
 - Who, How and When
- Two Types
 - Fiscal
 - Programmatic
- Accountability
 - External Evaluator
 - Formative and Summative
 - Self-Correction and Opportunity



Impact and Outcome

- Provides the sponsor with evidence that the project was completed
- Provides documentation of impact
- Identifies areas for future improvement
- Identifies “dead ends” – can be helpful in identifying what doesn’t work
- Describes how the outcome and useful information can be shared with others
 - NOTE: Sponsors are accountable for the investment of their funds; a well-defined evaluation or measurement of outcome is important!

The Review Process, or Writing Backward for Progress

- Identify the reviewer's criteria
- Highlight and define specific elements as priorities when appropriate
- Be redundant if the point is essential....
- Remember, this is a “sales tool”





How Proposals Reviewed

- Proposals are reviewed in a variety of different ways: most federal agencies use the “*peer review*” process – experts from backgrounds similar to the applicants evaluate proposals based on a set criteria.
- Proposals may also be reviewed by the sponsor’s own personnel, and judgment may be made based on *personal interviews or knowledge of the applicant’s strengths*. Certain foundation and corporate grants may be reviewed in this manner.
- At times the review process may not be used at all. **Procurements** issued to a specific entity may be used based on prior work done by the applicant or by the need for a quick turn-around. Usually the sponsor is required to have back-up for their decision to use this type of “sole source” awarding. Some sponsors issue a cooperative agreement or open contract to create a long-term relationship with an organization to facilitate procurement for specific tasks.



General Comments

- You are writing for the reviewers, not for a journal
- Page limits and deadlines are set in stone
- Follow the guidelines even if they don't "flow" as you would like
- Get to know the program officer
- Try to get the guidelines for reviewers



Your ideas

- Must be interesting and understandable to a broadly-trained audience
- Clear communication - don't get lost in the details
- Include one summary diagram or model early to highlight the problem and specific aims



You

- Don't oversell yourself - this can be offensive
- Don't dwell on problems
- Cite recent papers by all competitors
- Minimize conflict and confusion
 - Do not write defensively
 - Do not write when you are depressed
 - Write with a positive attitude
 - Have specific aims and objectives



Your colleagues

- Include colleagues in your proposal when appropriate to your research; acknowledge their contributions.
- Ask colleagues to read your proposal for clarity before you submit it - this includes faculty, post-docs, graduate students and staff.
- Make sure your administrators are on board.

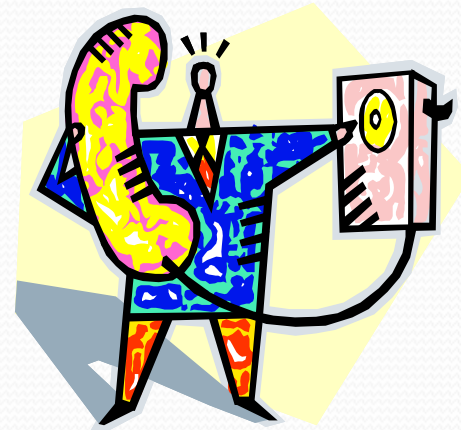


The review

- Clear communication
- Concisely worded
- Easy and interesting to read
- Communicate the importance of your work to science, technology, and education

After submission of proposal

- Keep working on your research
- Participate in national and international meetings
- Discuss your research freely
- Keep looking for future grant opportunities





Some Final Guidance

- It often takes a TEAM
- Seek advice from colleagues, mentors
- Complete all forms and get help from the DSR
- Allow ample time for final review throughout the UF process

When Failure is Not Failure...

- Sometimes sponsors want to get to know you...your initial proposal may be a “gate opener” for discussion.
- Some sponsors have a formal structure for resubmission; they expect it
- Peer Review and Commentary is a significant tool for eventual funding

