Planning Programs & Proposal Writing Checklist

The *Grantsmanship Center News*, included a proposal checklist (1979) as part of a much longer piece entitled "Planning Programs and Proposal Writing." We use this checklist today to evaluate applications. You would be well served to use the following outline and suggestions while constructing your request - whether you're writing one sentence to address each issue or much longer descriptions. For applications that require a specific structure, a good proposal still finds a way to address each of these issues.

I.   Introduction
   a. Establishes who is applying for funding.
   b. Describes the agency's purposes and goals.
   c. Describes the agency's programs and activities.
   d. Provides evidence of the agency's accomplishments.
   e. Offers statistics in support of those accomplishments.
   f. Offers quotes/endorsements in support of those accomplishments.
   g. Supports qualifications in the area for which funds are requested (e.g. research, training).
   h. Leads logically to the problem statement.

II.   Problem Statement
   a. Relates to agency goals.
   b. Is of reasonable dimensions.
   c. Is supported by statistical evidence.
   d. Is supported by statements from authorities.
   e. Is expressed in terms of client (versus agency) needs.
   f. Is developed with client input.
   g. Is not simply the lack of a program unless said program always works.
   h. Makes no unsupported assumptions.
   i. Is free of jargon and acronyms.

III.   Program Objectives
   a. Contains at least one objective for each problem identified.
   b. Objectives are outcomes.
   c. Objectives are not methods.
   d. Describes the population to be served.
   e. Establishes a time line by which objectives will be accomplished.
   f. Objectives are measurable.

IV.   Evaluation
   a. Includes a plan to evaluate the program seeking funding.
   b. Evaluation plan includes opportunities to modify the program in progress.
   c. Describes who will conduct the evaluation.
   d. Establishes criteria for success.
   e. Describes how data will be collected.
   f. Describes any test instruments or questionnaires to be used.
   g. Describes the process of data analysis.
   h. Describes how evaluations will be documented, shared and used.

V.   Future Funding

     a. Includes a plan for securing future funding if the program continues.
     b. Describes how maintenance and future program costs will be secured (important for all capital grant requests).
     c. Describes how other/additional funds will be secured.

VI.   <u>Budget</u>
     a. Identifies costs to be met by the funding source being solicited.
     b. Tells the same story as the narrative.
     c. Projects costs to be incurred when the program launches (versus when the proposal is being written).
     d. Contains no unexplained costs (e.g., miscellaneous or contingency).
     e. Includes all items for which funding is sought.
     f. Includes all items for which other funding has been secured.
     g. Includes the value of volunteers and gifts-in-kind.
     h. Details fringe benefits, separate from salaries.
     i. Includes all projected costs for consultants.
     j. Separately details all non-personnel costs.
     k. Includes indirect costs where appropriate.
     l. Describes costs sufficient to perform the tasks described in the narrative.

VII.   <u>Summary</u>
     a. A summary, that should precede your proposal is an important curtesy to your reader. It is not necessary for GFBF proposals as the requested abstract is, in fact, a summary of your proposal.

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