



# Writing Winning Proposals

LSU

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# Course Goals

- **GOAL 1:** Provide participants with a new understanding of the proposal writing **PROCESS**
- **GOAL 2:** Provide **RESOURCES** to assist experienced and inexperienced proposal writers
- **GOAL 3:** Increase the number of **SUCCESSFUL** proposals submitted by workshop participants

# Summary of Course

- The **Major Components** of a Proposal
- Differences Between **Government** Proposals and **Foundation** Proposals
- Identify Online Funding **Resources**

# STEP 1: Adopt a New Objective

Why do You Write Grant Proposals?  
What is Your Objective?

- Here is a new objective:  
Write to **NOT BE ELIMINATED!!**
- In other words, write your proposal through the eyes of the **REVIEWER!!**

*Try it!  
It really  
works!*



# STEP 2: Eliminate Common Problems

- Follow **Instructions**
- **New Proposal** for Each RFP
- Be **Complete**, Yet **Brief**
- Avoid **Unsupported Statements of Fact**
- Write Like a **Winner**
- When in Doubt, **Seek Clarification**
- Final Product: **Neat, Labeled, & Error Free**

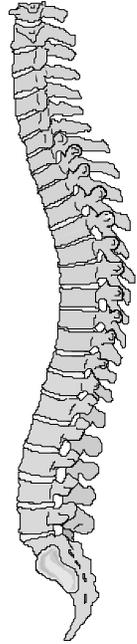


# The Process



# STEP 3: Correctly Identify the Need

NEED



**The NEED is the backbone of your proposal. It must be correctly identified and justified if you want to be funded.**

# The Statement of the Need

You must define and justify the Need in terms that allow the funding agency to understand that a:

- Specific **Need** Can Be Solved
- In a Reasonable Amount of **Time**
- With a Reasonable Amount of **Money!**



# What is Meant by “The Need”?

- The Need is stated in the RFP ... it is discovered by asking the question:  
“**Specifically, what is the funder funding me to do?**”
- The Need – will usually be a situation where something is **lacking or missing**; or something **not working correctly**, or something that can be started that will make life better for the community and of which **you can take advantage**.

# Group Activity

Identify a Need



**Working as a group, and using the workshop mock RFP, identify and record the “NEED” reflected in the mock RFP.**

# We Must Be Careful to Not Confuse the Need with the Result:

**THIS IS THE NEED!**



**Pay Down Small Business Loans**

**THIS IS THE RESULT!**

**Economic Stimulation**



# Possible Need Statement

- EXAMPLE: **NEED** – Develop a small business loan pay down program designed to reduce the number of small business failures.

# Justifying the Need

You must demonstrate to the funding agency that YOU have a need greater than the majority of the other applicants making your proposal more deserving of funding than the other (competing) proposals submitted.

- This means that you must conduct **RESEARCH** that demonstrates and proves you are the most deserving recipient!
- Your research should include **local, area, state, regional** and even **national** data.

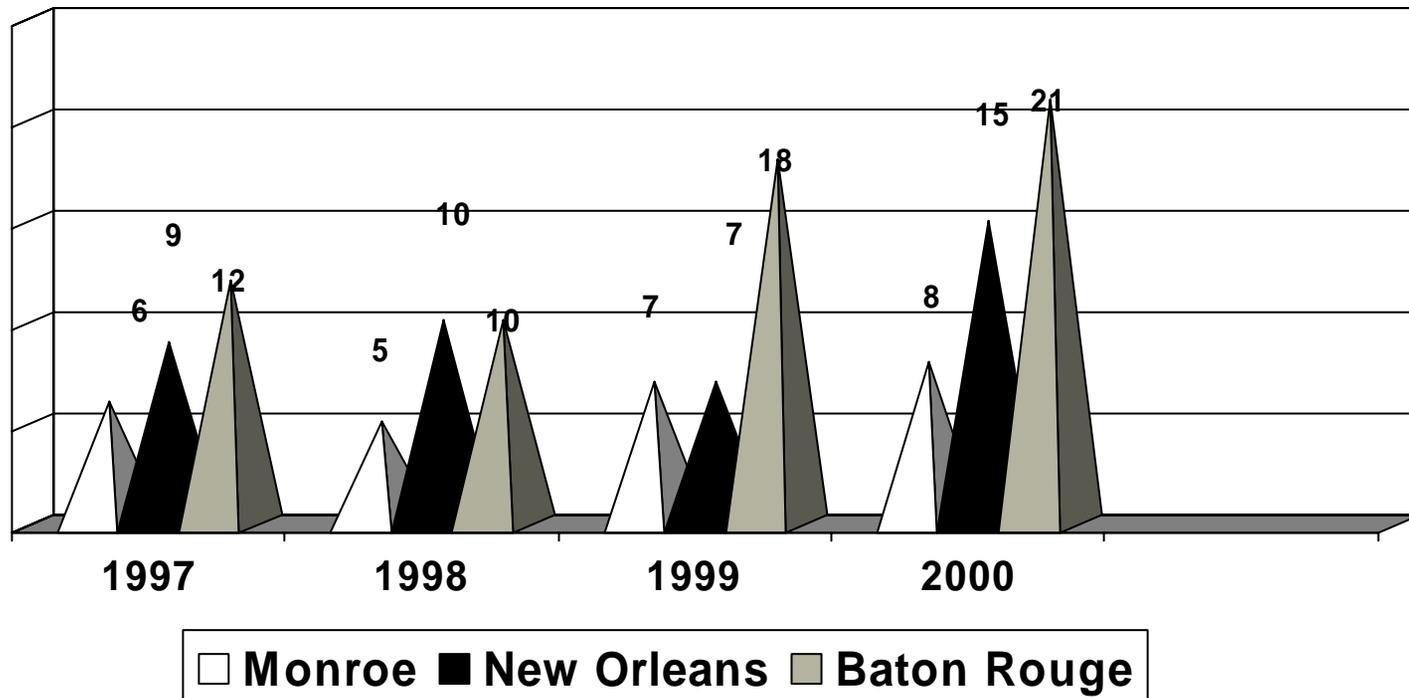
# Illustrate Your Research Using Graphs and/or Charts

Monroe = 33% increase

New Orleans = 66.7% increase

Baton Rouge = 75% increase

Small Business Failures Due to  
Loan Non-Payment



(Source: Small Business Administration Magazine, "Failures," pgs. 54-63)

# Or Illustrate Your Research Using Tables

Small Business Failures Due to Loan Non-Payment				
<b>Monroe = 33% increase</b> <b>New Orleans = 66.7% increase</b> <b>Baton Rouge = 75% increase</b>				
	1997	1998	1999	2000
Baton Rouge	12	10	18	21
Monroe	6	5	7	8
New Orleans	9	10	7	15

(Source: Small Business Administration Magazine, "Failures," pgs. 54-63)

# Cite National & Regional Data When Possible

Small Business Failures Due to Loan Non-Payment				
<b>Cities = 33% increase</b> <b>Baton Rouge = 75% increase</b>				
	1997	1998	1999	2000
Baton Rouge	12	10	18	21
Cities of Equal Size	6	5	7	8

(Source: Small Business Administration Magazine, "Failures," pgs. 54-63)

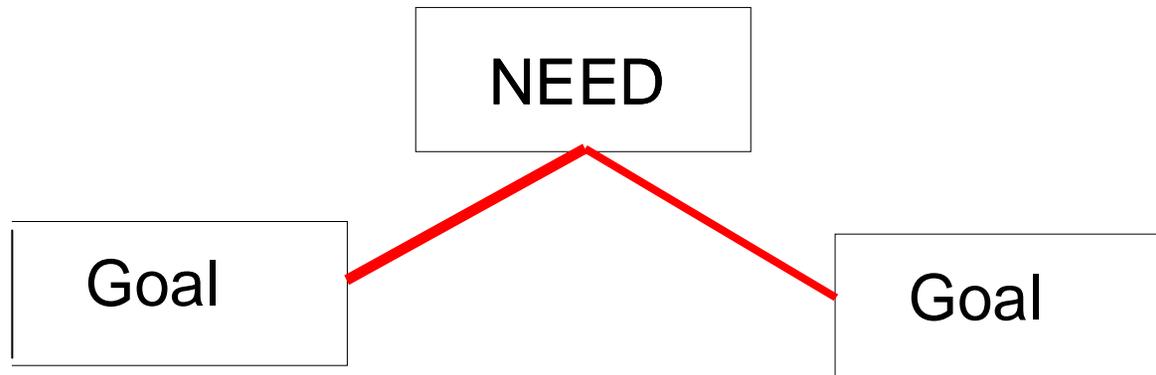
# Key Points



The Most Common Weakness is a Failure to Establish Immediacy of Need.

- Conduct good **research**: local, regional, state, and national
- **Compare/contrast**
- **Evaluate/draw** conclusions
- Get to the **root of the problem**
- **Never use unsubstantiated** information
- Use **information specialists**

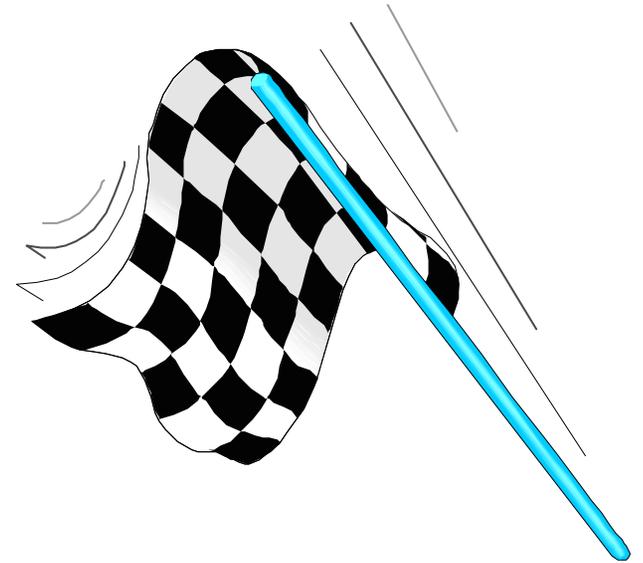
# STEP 4: Generate Goals



**The NEED gives birth to, or generates,  
PRIMARY GOALS.**

**The text of the RFP generates  
SUPPORT GOALS.**

# Goals Are:



- Broad Statements of What You **Intend to Accomplish**.
- Primary Goals are **Based** on the Need You Have Justified.
- **Support** Goals are Outcomes Included in the RFP.



# Key Points

Make sure your goals are:

- **Achievable** - something within the realm of existing or cutting edge knowledge and/or technology
- **Doable** - something you and your partners have the technical ability to accomplish
- **Realistic** - something that can be accomplished in the allotted time frame

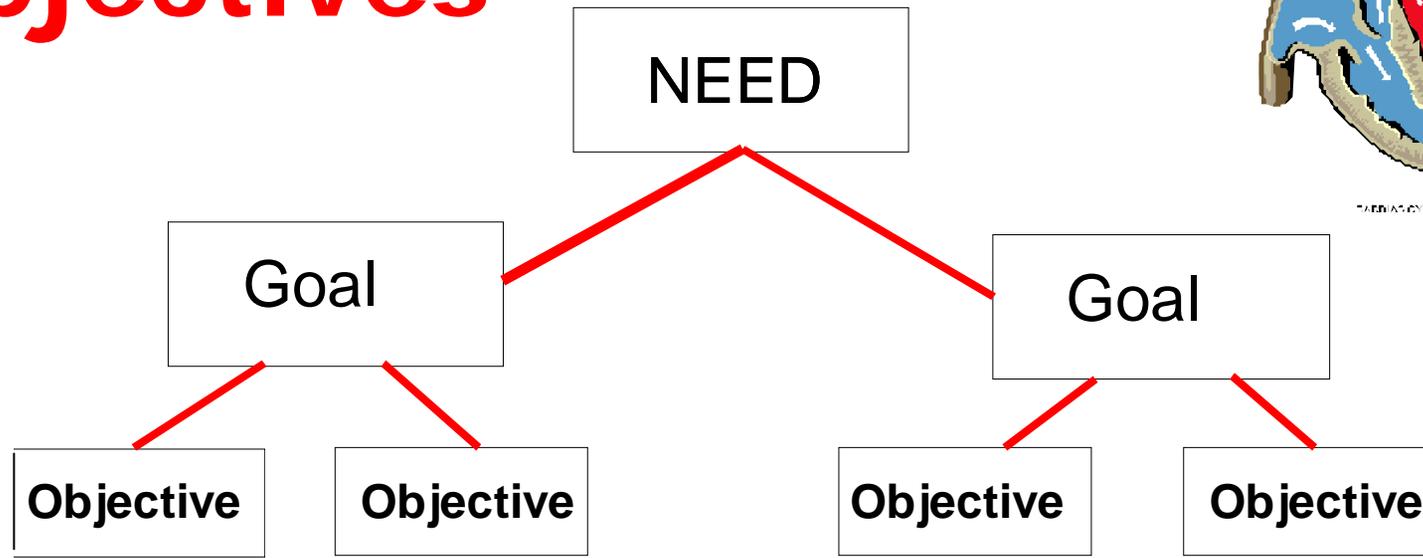
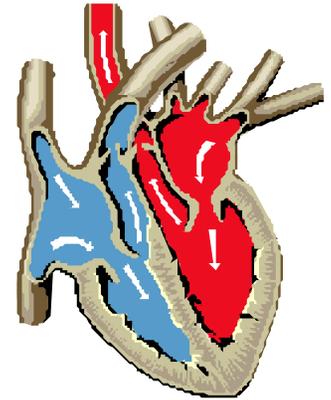


# Group Activity

Using the “Need” you have identified, and the RFP, collaborate as a group and identify two Primary Goals and two Support goals.

- Reduce Monthly Loan Payments. (Primary)
- Reduce Business Failures. (Primary)
- Announce program availability. (Support)
- Identify eligible applicants. (Primary)
- Develop advisory committee. (Support)
- Develop partnership/collaborative. (Support)

# STEP 5: Design Good Objectives



**Both Primary GOALS and Support GOALS generate OBJECTIVES.**

**Objectives are usually activity based items.  
Objectives are the heart and blood of your proposal.**

# Objectives

Objectives Must Be:

- **Specific**

(who or what will be changed)

- **Measurable**

(how much will it change)

- **Time Phased**

(when the change[s] will take place)





# Key Points

Make Sure Your Objectives are Also Achievable, Doable, and Realistic, and:

- Look for models of **success**
- Look for models of **failure**
- Do not **try to do too much** and set yourself up for failure



# Group Activity:

## Write Objectives

**Using the goals you have developed, collaborate as a group and write at least one specific, measurable, time phased objective for each goal.**

- **GOAL: Announce program availability**

**OBJECTIVE: Within 30 days of funding, notification of small business loan pay down program for eligible applicants will be broadcast throughout the metro area via 12 radio PSA's on station WXYZ.**

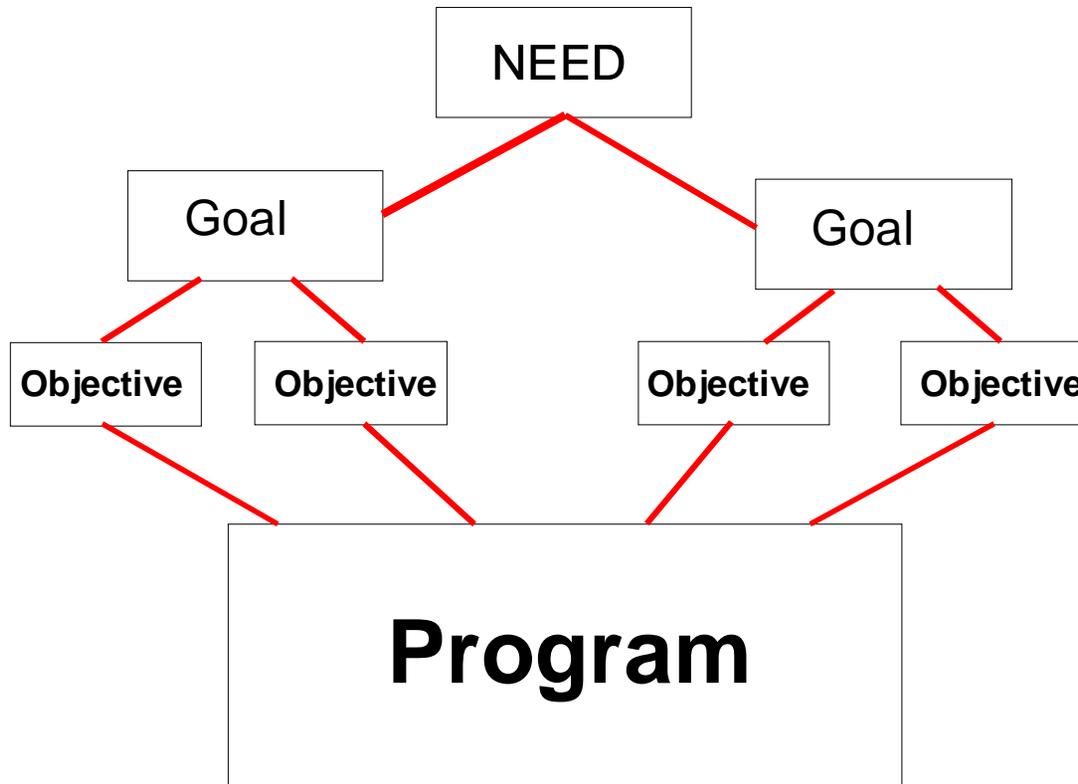
- **GOAL: Identify eligible applicants**

**OBJECTIVE:** Within 45 days of funding, develop a questionnaire that will identify applicants eligible to participate in the small businesses in loan reduction program.

- **GOAL: Reduce small business failures among eligible applicants.**

**OBJECTIVE:** The small business loan pay down program will result in a reduction of business failures by 30% by the end of the two year funding period.

# STEP 6: Select a Program Design or Strategy



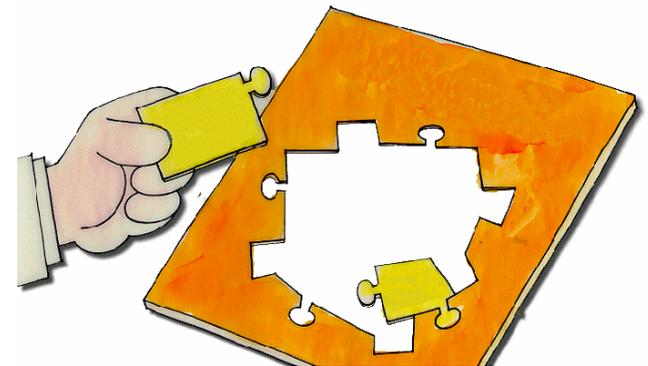
**Your  
PROGRAM  
is  
Driven  
by  
Your  
OBJECTIVES.**

# Program Design

Design Strategies:

- Design by *Activities*
- Design by *Participants* Involved
- Design by *Sequence* of Activities
- Design by Requested *Criteria*

***Don't forget to include information about Dissemination of the Data or Program Results.***



# Key Points

Common program weaknesses



- No **collaboration**
- **Unclear or off focus** - not what the RFP is asking for
- Too **ambitious**
- Requested **information** left out
- Link between funder **goals** and **project** unclear
- Program lacks thought or detail

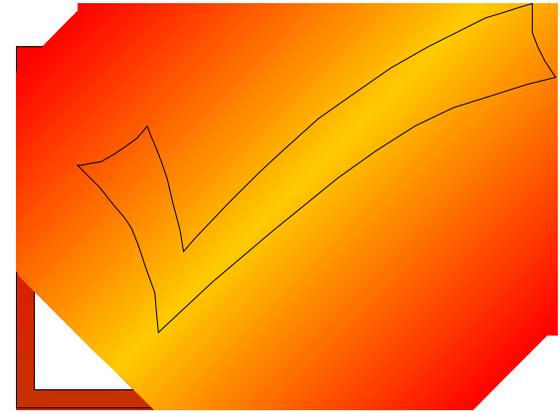
# STEP 7: Develop an Evaluation Plan



**Evaluation  
Is the  
WEAKEST  
Part Of  
Most  
Proposals!!**

# Evaluation

How You Will Know You Did What  
You Said You Would Do.  
Evaluation Should Be:



- **Formative** and **Summative**
- **Qualitative** and **Quantitative**
- **Objective** and **Multifaceted**



# Key Points

- Well written **objectives** generate good evaluation
- Find ways to use several evaluation **instruments**
- Include evaluation **forms** in appendix IF ALLOWED
- If possible, fund an **Independent Program Evaluator**

# Group Activity

## Identify Some Evaluation Instruments



**Working as a group, use the objectives you have designed to identify the types (sign-in sheets) and the categories (qualitative, etc.) of instruments you would use to evaluate how well you met each objective.**

- **OBJECTIVE:** Within 30 days of funding, notification of small business loan pay down program for eligible applicants will be broadcast throughout the metro area via 12 radio PSA's on station WXYZ.
- **EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS:** radio logs, ad copy, scheduling sheet.

# The Process



# STEP 8: Address Program Sustainability

**The Question is: How will the Program or Project be Continued Once the Funding Period Has Come to a Close?? It is Not Unusual for the Funding Agency to Ask You to Address the Issue of **Sustainability**!!**



# Three Suggestions:

- **Sell** the product you have produced or the expertise you have gained in its production
- Involve **Industry** and **Business** in the program from the start
- Identify a **Foundation** with the same focus as the program you seek to continue

No Magic Answer!



# STEP 9: Create the Budget and the Budget Explanation



- Amounts Should be as **Specific** as Possible
- Compute the **Minimum Amount Sufficient** to Support the Program or Project

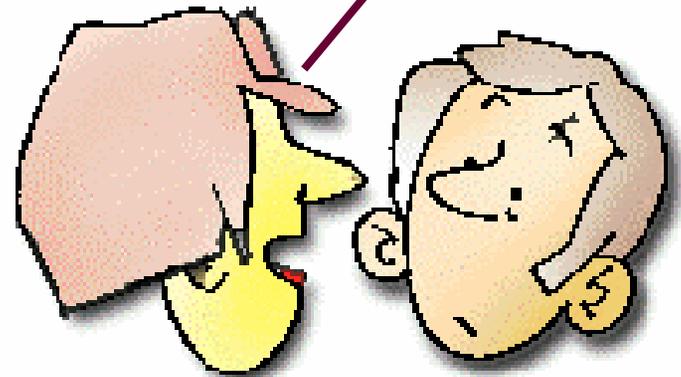


# Key Points

## Common Complaints by Funding Agencies:

- Not **specific** enough on how funds will be spent
- Funds being used for **conferences** or **dialogues** rather than program
- No plan for program **sustainability**

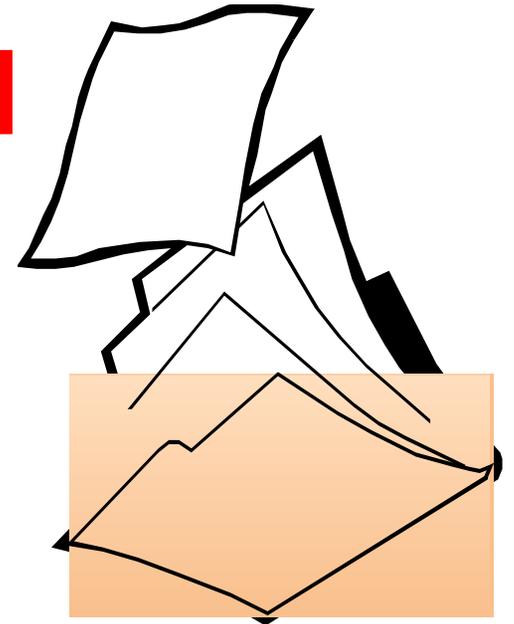
*This just ain't gonna fly!*



# Budget Justification

**See Workbook Page 30**

# STEP 10: Include Other Proposal Ingredients as Allowed or Required



- Attachments
- Event Flow Diagrams
- Work Plans/Milestones
- Time Lines
- Letters of Support and/or Commitment

# Attachments

- Other **research** you feel is important but really has no “place” in the body of the proposal.
- **Quotes, surveys, evaluation forms, résumés, etc.**



# Event Flow Diagrams

**See Workbook Page 31**

# Work Plans with Milestones

**See Workbook Page 31**

# Time Lines

**See Workbook Page 31**

# Letters of Commitment

The LDEQ believes that this project will be of tremendous benefit to True Hope area residents. Please be advised that I have instructed Ombudsman James J. Friloux, and the Office of the Secretary/ Community- Industry Relations Group to continue to assist the project. Specifically, the LDEQ will assist the project in the following manner:

Help the core group to identify sources of air, soil, and water pollution in and around the home,

Provide technical resources people to address issues related to air, soil, and water pollution, Help community members identify pollution prevention strategies,

Evaluate and prepare a final report on the Environmental Justice components of the project, including stakeholder involvement, problem identification, solution development and implementation, behavior modification, self-sufficiency development, and proportionate distribution of funds.

The estimated in-kind services provided by the LDEQ yearly to assist this project will be \$29,081.

# STEP 11: Write an Abstract (if one is requested)

- Brief **Description** of the **Applicant**
- **Definition** of the **Problem** to be Solved
- Summation of the **Objectives** to be Achieved
- **Overview** of the **Program Activities**
- Statement of **Cost** to Funding Source



# Group Activity

Create a brief abstract for your project

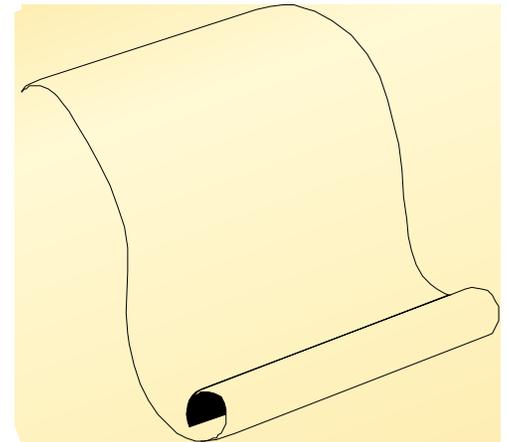


Working as a group, create an abstract or summary, of no more than 250 words, concerning your project.

# STEP 12: Write a Cover Letter (if one is requested)

The Cover Letter, is sometimes referred to as a "Letter of Introduction."

- It is the **Introduction** of your entity to the funding agency
- Very **Brief** - seldom more than **one** page in length





# Key Points

The Cover Letter Will Provide the Funding Agency with the Following Information:

- **Who**
- **What**
- **When**
- **Where**
- **How**
- **Why**
- **How Much**

# Foundations As a Funding Source



# Types of Foundations

- **Community**
- **Corporate**
- **Family**

# Research to Discover Which Foundations:

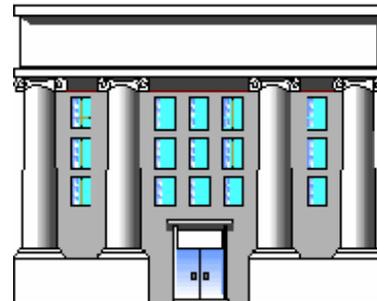


**Geographic Area**

**Type of Project**



**Target Demographic**



**Type of Entity**

# Important Questions



- Can You **Adhere** to the Foundation's Guidelines for Giving?
- Will **Review & Award** Dates Meet Your Schedule?
- Is **Requested Amount** in the General Area of Past Awards?

# Helpful Hints



- Make Contact with the Foundation and Request a **Copy of Their Application Guidelines and Annual Report**
- Develop an **Ongoing Rapport** with a Contact Person
- Never Hesitate to **Call** and **Ask** for Clarification

# Some Words of Wisdom

- You Only Know What Your Chances Are **IF YOU DON'T APPLY!**
- Be Careful What You Ask For, **YOU MAY GET IT!!**
- Be Prepared To Do **EVERYTHING** You Say You Will Do.

Courtesy of Pam Wall



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Presented by Ward S. Huffman  
U.S. Department of Energy/Denver Regional Office

# Subject – Verb Agreement

1. The sequence of events following the initial escapades of the court jesters (**remains, remain**) unclear.

2. The number of jesters in Ye Olde Comedy Club at the time of the incident (**was, were**) 23.

3. The king, as well as the queen and princess, (was, were) offended by jesters' hijinks.

4. The royal pigeon master, along with the wine steward, the lady-in-waiting and the guy in charge of lances, (**is, are**) usually responsible for controlling the jesters.

5. Either their supervisor or the moat minders (**is**, **are**) going to be blamed for this.

## #1

The sequence of events following the initial escapades of the court jesters **remains** unclear.

>> **remains**. The number of the subject ("sequence") is not changed by phrases following the subject ("of events," "initial escapades"). Sequence ...remains.

## #2

The number of jesters in Ye Olde Comedy Club at the time of the incident **was** 23.

>> **was**. "Number" is singular—when preceded by "the."

## #3

The king, as well as the queen and princess, **was** offended by jesters' hijinks.

>> **was**. The number of the subject is not changed by intervening parenthetical phrases beginning with "as well as," "together with," "along with," "in addition to" and "accompanied by."

## #4

The royal pigeon master, along with the wine steward, the lady-in-waiting and the guy in charge of lances, **is** usually responsible for controlling the jesters.

>> **is**. See explanation for No. 3.

## #5

Either their supervisor or the moat minders **are** going to be blamed for this.

>> **are**. When a singular and plural subject are joined by "or" or "nor," the verb agrees with the nearer subject.

