

# Best Practices for Successful Grant Writing

Write clearly, correctly, and succinctly.

Tell your story in a compelling way and use a thesaurus for better adjectives.

Remember the 12-12-12 Scenario:

- The reviewer *might* look at your proposal at 12 midnight.
- She *might* have already had a 12-hour day.
- Your proposal *might* be the 12<sup>th</sup> application of the day.

Don't make the reviewer work too hard to get to the proposal.

- Keep sentences short. Keep the average sentence at 17 words.
- Choose simpler words.
- Break up text
- Use shorter paragraphs.
- Use headings.
- Use lists.
- Avoid repetitive descriptions and overly long sentences.
- Write to *express* not to *impress*.

Identify the need for your project. Be very direct and use supporting data.

Clearly explain how your project will meet the need.

When possible, identify specific, measurable goals for your project.

Discuss the IMPACT your project will have on the community.

Ask someone who knows little about your organization to read and critique your proposal.

Complete your proposal early. Set it aside for a few days; then read it again before the submission deadline.

Submit only what is required. Save your organization's brochures, photos, etc. for the site visit.

Ensure that your budget is reasonable. Triple check figures.

Ensure you do not have a narrative mismatch:

- Narrative mentions item not mentioned in the budget.
- Budget mentions item not mentioned in the narrative.

Ensure you do not have over or under budgeting:

- Budgets that appear too high or low for project will seem questionable.

Ensure you do not under-value in-kind resources:

- Value all resources important to the project.
- Value contributed volunteer time (at fair-market rate for each position necessary for your project).