

Refining Your Plan and Vision

Your grant proposal will be evaluated against hundreds, sometimes thousands, of others. It is imperative you make a clear and compelling argument on why the funder should choose your proposal among the throngs of others submitting to the same program. Make the agency feel they *absolutely* have to fund your project by giving compelling answers to the following questions.

A successful grant seeker is similar to a successful salesperson: they make a good first impression, come well-prepared, present themselves as credible, deliver a clear message, provide supporting documentation and offer something special.

When answering these questions you are writing a proposal that sells your ideas – showing your reviewer (1) you can perform the necessary techniques and/or methods, (2) you are committed to the area of research or project design, (3) your techniques are feasible, and (4) you can stay in order of your specific aims, goals, and outcomes.

WHO

- Who will your proposal target? (introduce yourself and your proposed audience)

WHAT

- What are the sponsor's needs/concerns? (define focus area)

Remember the need is not the research or program you propose to accomplish, but rather the benefits of your research or program and the problems it can be used to solve. You will also need to explain what back-up data you have to support the need using case studies, statistical analyses, surveys, and literature reviews.

- What do you want to accomplish? (develop goals and objectives)
- What assets and strengths do you bring to this project? (establish UNF and your capabilities as strengths)
- What obstacles do you foresee? (identify liabilities and weaknesses)
- What financial resources are available and needed? (design budget)

WHY

- Why do you want to accomplish this? (establish benefits)
- Why should they fund it? (establish intellectual relevance)
- Why should a funder choose you? (describe systematic efforts and resources)

HOW

- How will you accomplish it? (describe methods and activities)
- How will you measure your progress? (design assessment and evaluation strategies)
- How will this project fit in with what you have done before, are doing now, and plan to do in the future? (discuss implementation and dissemination)