

FOCUS

A Herff Jones IMPACT Resource For Advisors September, 2004

September FOCUS GRANT WRITING

In student activity programs all over the nation money is very limited. This is more true today than ever before with school districts cutting activity programs in an attempt to balance their budgets. A way to supplement your activities program is by getting money from grants.

A grant is a monetary award given by a funder. Grants are not just for college tuition. They pay for all kind of things. One must make an effort to receive a grant. A grant application is a written request asking for money from a government agency, foundation, or a corporation. Grants are bestowed upon, awarded to, or just plain given to nonprofit organizations such as schools that has written a winning grant application to a funding source.

The terms **grant application** and **grant proposal** mean more or less the same thing. The application is usually a form which has been created by the funding source. A proposal is a more "free flowing" grant request. It is putting your ideas on paper about your organization and the program that you want to fund. This is when you must sell your idea!

A grant writer finds a specific project needing money and then identifies government agencies, foundations, or corporations to approach. The asking is done in the form of a written request referred to as the grant application or proposal.

Writing a precise grant application or proposal is a specific funding entity asking for money. Sometimes after the grant application/proposal has



been written it could take up to a year before the winners are announced. So plan ahead! Also there may be a lot of research to be done before you actually start writing. The first thing that has to be determined is whether a grant from the government (federal, state, or local), a foundation, or a corporation is the best for your organization. The internet is great place to start to find out the types of grants that are available and how to apply for them. Many times for an activity program, the

foundations and corporations are the best sources of funding. Be sure to check on the ones that are in your area.

Before you start writing determine the writing format required. Call or write to the funding source to get their guidelines for submitting an application/proposal and to ask questions. Remember that incorrect or incomplete applications/proposals are rarely read!

The opening narrative section of the grant/proposal is the first introduction that the reviewer has to your organization. In the first few sentences share some basic information- the who, what, when, where, why, and how. This is where you catch the reviewer's attention! Relate how your organization benefits the community where it is located. Include some demographics of the target population. Use colorful words to paint a picture for the grant reader. Use a little trivia and a lot of facts.

This newsletter is a joint effort of Jackie Burch and Herff Jones, Inc.

The longer you can keep the reader's attention, the better your chances of getting recommended for an award.

In the grant/proposal you must demonstrate the need for funds.

Get the point across in the most effective, attention drawing, memorable way that you can.

The person reading will make a decision to fund or not fund based on the information that you give. When writing use carefully chosen words that show a genuine need. Describe how the funds will help to solve the problem. Next is the plan of action. The first sentence or paragraph tells the reader why you are asking for grant money.

Next include goals, objectives, strategies to meet goals and objectives, and a timeline. Include an impact statement that is a paragraph or two at the end of your action plan that illustrates the impact your program will have on the community. Most grant/proposal applications will include a budget of how the money will be spent.

Before submitting a grant application/proposal check, check, and recheck for errors. After the application/proposal is submitted the waiting begins. Whether you win or lose do not be discouraged. Continue to seek and write grants. Not even the grant writing professionals are successful every time. Every time you write a grant you will improve your skills. Many districts hold grant writing workshops. They are worth the time. The money is out there. Also talk to successful grant

writers in your district for more tips.

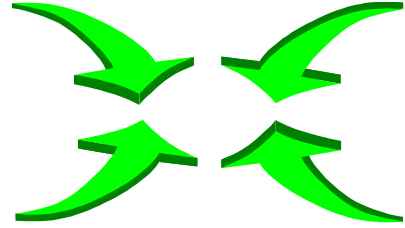
ICEBREAKER

NAME GAME

This icebreaker asks the participants to play so that they will learn each other's names. It should be played at the beginning of the meeting/workshop. It takes 10-15 minutes and is for about 20 people in each group

An object is needed to be the imaginary "duck". Have everyone sit in a circle. Explain that they will receive the "duck" from the person sitting next to them. The facilitator starts by saying, "My name is John and I have the "duck" and I am going to give it to Jim." The next person says, "My name is Jim and I have the "duck" that came from John. I'm going to give the "duck" to Jane." (the person sitting next to him). The process continues as each group member in turn states his name and the names of all group members who had the "duck" before him. The "duck" proceeds around the circle until it reaches the facilitator again who then repeats the name of each group member in the proper order.

Another version after the "duck" has been around once is to throw the "duck" around the circle in a different order with the names still being repeated.



**"CHARACTER CANNOT BE DEVELOPED IN EASE AND QUIET. ONLY THROUGH EXPERIENCE OF TRIAL AND SUFFERING CAN THE SOUL BE STRENGTHENED."
HELEN KELLER**

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