

## **How to Get a Grant? What's Most Important? One of the Writing Grant Proposals Series Transcript**

Barbara F.: Hello. I am Barbara Flourish, the director of the Grantsmanship Center and in this miniwebinar, we'll look at the most important questions that every grant proposal must answer. Why are you seeking a grant?

There are eight sections in a grant proposal and what the Grantsmanship Center calls the problem section or the problem description is most important. It's this section that explains the why. It's the heart of the proposal and it describes why your organization is seeking grant support.

Most of us in the field of grants understand that the terms used are wildly variable from funder to funder. So what the Grantsmanship Center calls the problem description or the problem section, some funders may call the problem statement, the description of need, needs assessment or problem analysis and maybe even some other terms I haven't thought of. But whatever a funder calls it, this section describes your organization's motivation for seeking support. That motivation could be something that is causing harm in your community, threatening harm or is just less than ideal or even an opportunity to be seized.

Documentation is very important in this section, so the section must answer three questions and it must describe and document each of the questions. First, what is the situation in your community or service area that concerns you? Not in the state, not in the world unless that happens to be your service area, but what does the problem situation look like in your own community? Next, why does it matter? What's the significance of this situation? Who or what is affected and how? Finally, why is this happening? What's causing it?

When you begin to think about the concern that motivating your organization to write proposal, always focus on those who are affected by the situation. The why is not about your organization. It's not about what your organization wants to do. What your organization wants to do, the program, the method, where you want to do it, how you want to do it, only matters once your reader understands why the situation is important.

The why of your argument, the problem section, is critical because it drives the rest of the logic in your argument for funding. For example, when you answer that first question, describing and documenting the situation that concerns you, that is going to be directly related to what you will propose as program outcomes, those measurable changes that will result because of what it is your organization will do. The third question, why is this happening, what's the cause, will be directly



related to the methods that your organization will propose to the actual program you propose to implement.

So as you begin planning a program, don't start with your organizations' need for money or what your organization wants to do, the program. Always start with a thorough examination of the why. Why is this important? Why does it matter? What's causing it? Thanks. Stay tuned for more mini webinars.