Tips on How to Write a Proposal

All proposals must include certain basic information. These basics include:
Why are you doing this project?
What will you be doing?
How will you be doing it?
How long will it take?
What are the 'learning outcomes'?
How will these 'outcomes' be evaluated?

Executive Summary / Project Introduction:

Some people consider this the most important part of the proposal because it is the reviewer's first impression. Even though it appears first, write it last because it is a summary of the proposal. The Executive Summary/Introduction is a *concise description* of the project covering objectives, need, methodology, and dissemination plans. Questions to consider addressing: 1) what your project is about, 2) why the project is worth doing, 3) why your project is a good topic/subject for fulfilling the objectives of the class requirements, and 4) what has inspired you to do this particular project. It should identify the expected learning outcomes of the project, and it should be less than half a page.

Learning Objectives:

Indicate the expected 'learning outcomes' of the project, preferably in measurable terms. This shows what you will do (expected outcomes), how you will apply both new and mastered skills, and by when. When the project is completed, you and the instructor will be able to evaluate it and determine whether the project succeeded or not in achieving its objectives. Identify short-term and long-term objectives.

Methods/Procedure:

The "Procedure" (also called Methodology) is the critical part of the proposal and is often the longest part (1/2 to one full page). It is a *plan of action* for how the learning objectives will be achieved - outcomes. It must convince your teacher that you clearly understand your task, have a logical time plan for solving your problems (creating solutions), and have identified all the resources that you may need. This section usually starts with a description of the overall approach, its relevance, effectiveness, and innovativeness. Then it gives details on methodology, the subject(s) being addressed, and how anticipated problems will be managed. You must also include in this section which units in the textbook are these learning objective related too. Follow the instructor's handout to make sure that you are covering all required Units, etc. You must also note if the expected objective is something new to you, or something that you have done before. (Methods/Procedure continued)

-Some of the other questions the reader will expect you to answer in this section are:

What are the tasks and sub-tasks identified to achieve your objectives?

What materials will you need to carry out your project: equipment? computer support?

What research or background information is needed for the project and how will this information be collected? If the project requires a survey or interviews, the design of this instrument (especially the selection of participants) must be explained and justified.

Provide evidence that the time frame you will need to accomplish identified tasks or subtasks can be completed by the deadline.

Evaluation:

Describes the means by which you and the instructor will know if the project has accomplished its objectives. It may also describe plans for collecting additional information to improve the project (i.e.: in-progress evaluations-please be sure to address what your 'in-progress' work will be). What is the purpose of the evaluation, what data will be collected, how will it be analyzed, and how will the results be reported? (See instructor's handout for additional information.)

Qualifications: This section outlines the ability of the grantee to successfully complete the project. Show prior related experience, and equipment available. Importantly, list key personnel, subjects, potential access issues, etc. that might have to be addressed to successfully complete your project.

Timetable: Describe how long (days, weeks) specific tasks or components of the project will take. If possible, include a milestone chart in this section. You must meet deadlines.

Image Counts: The appearance of your proposal does make an impression on the reviewer. The narrative description ***should be a minimum of 2 yet not exceed 3*** typed, Letter-Size, 1 to 1.5 spaced pages, 11-12-point font. The proposal should be neat and readable, and it is recommended to complete it at least a day or two before it's due.

Notes: