

# Outline of a Proposal

## Peter Bowbrick

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When you have determined what the project is about and how you can help, you can then write the proposal. This means that you can write it quickly, excitedly and coherently. You may not be able to do this if you fill in sections as you go along.

### **Covering Letter**

1. This is to persuade the prospective clients to read the proposal and to put them in the right frame of mind.
2. It should briefly summarize the problem and evidence for it (e.g. a public outcry)
3. Summarize the project in 25 words
4. Introduce the firm: references, previous work for the client, networks
5. Introduce the person who will present or follow up
6. Be signed by the MD to give credibility.

### **Title**

7. The title is important. It can say a lot 'Kindergarten Cop', 'Uplifting of the Rural Masses.' It is an important selling tool. It will be repeated time after time. Avoid acronyms: CARE, SAP etc. Avoid jargon, literary references, and puns. They rapidly lose the message. Ideally, the title should be the result, the problem solved, the outputs achieved.

### **Cover Page**

Project Title

Duration

Amount

Firm's name, address,  
Telephone, Fax, E-mail

Person responsible?

Abstract?

### **Summary**

8. Justification: two sentences
9. Objectives: two sentences
10. Benefits to client
11. Benefits to donor
12. Methods or activities: two sentences
13. Evaluation system
14. Cost

### **Introduction**

15. Your credibility:
  1. Who are you?
  2. What are your organization's goals (particularly important for non-commercial)
  3. How project fits your goals.
  4. Academic and experience competencies
  5. Credibility

## 6. Credibility for this project

Important to remember that you are not doing this for your benefit: it is their concerns that are central, and your credibility is related to their concerns.

### **The Problem**

0. Whether you have identified it or it is stated in the TOR, it is necessary to spell it out in detail. It may be self evident to you, but you have been working on it for ages. The client may never have thought about it.
16. Supporting evidence. Previous studies, research, political pressure, etc.
17. Make it clear that the problem is soluble. □ Freedom from Hunger□ is too big, and removes your credibility.
18. State it in terms of outputs and outcomes. This makes it look as though you will achieve something.
19. Say why they should be willing to pay for it.

### **Methods and Activities**

20. Say what you will do, not how. OK to say multiple regression analysis of results of stratified random sample if they push you. Jargon may or may not be appropriate.
21. State activities.
22. Sequence of activities suggests that you have thought about it. Diagrams or networks may be appropriate
23. Is your method unique or much the same as your competitors'?
24. How does your method relate to the outputs stated?
25. Brief CVs or person descriptions of staff: CVs in appendix.
26. Brief job descriptions attached.
27. Timing of input of each consultant, presented similarly to sequence of activities.
28. How the consultants will relate to the client organization
29. Steering committee
30. Total person input and cost.

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31. Define scope and limitations. Your project may be restricted to one area, to single women below 30, etc. State how selected.
  32. Risk. What assumptions do you make? Availability of data etc. Put what they must provide here. Re emphasize it later.

### **Costs and benefits**

1. Total costs
33. Benefits if basic target met.
34. Cost benefit ratio

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

35. How will they know you are putting in the agreed inputs?
36. How will they know you are doing the agreed activities?
37. How will they know you are reaching your carefully defined output targets?
38. Who will do the evaluation?
39. This includes data collection, reporting. It may mean establishing a baseline situation that you can judge change by.

### **What client must provide**

40. Data, vehicles, interpreter, office, computer?

### **Sustainability**

41. What happens when the project ceases?
  1. Can they run it by themselves?
  2. Will they need a continuation? Who will finance it?
  3. If it is a blueprint, who will replicate it?

### **Dissemination**

42. Dissemination of many different messages:
  1. Results of project

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2. Blueprint for replication
  3. The fact that there was the project, so the firm or organization is on the ball.
  4. The fact that the donor financed it
  5. The fact that Mr X instigated the project and hired the consultant

43. Who do the different messages go to?

44. How and when are they disseminated?

### **Appendix**

2. CVs of consultants

### **Financial Proposal**

45. This is often done separately, so that neither the freelance consultants nor juniors in the client organization know how much the firm is being paid.