

A top-down view of a desk with a white marble surface. In the upper center, a clear plastic container holds several pink binder rings. In the bottom right, a spiral-bound notebook with a gold-colored spiral is visible. In the bottom left, a small clear container holds several pushpins. A pink object is partially visible on the left edge.

6 Powerful Tactics

TO INSTANTLY IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES OF
GETTING FUNDED

Strategies to increase your odds of winning a grant

1. Introduce Yo' Self!

When contact information is available, it is important that you connect with your potential funder to introduce your organization. Explain what your mission is, what your goals are, and what you have already accomplished. This will start to build a communication bridge between you and the potential funder. Building a relationship will increase your chances of being funded.

2. Know Who You're Talking To

Put some respect on your funder's name! Put in the effort to research and educate yourself on who they are, what they fund, when they fund, and their mission statement. Find each funder's website and read every. single. link. Look for information about their funding priorities, the number of grants it awards annually, and the grant request range. It is imperative that you keep this information in mind and form your application answers around these fundamental facts. Remember, they want to give you money to further *their* mission. Explain that you are passionate about acting on your funder's mission and that the money will be used accordingly.

pro tip...

Ask before you speak! Building a relationship with your funder is all about respect and courtesy. How would you feel if a stranger walked up to you and asked for help without saying "hello" first. Similarly, many funders will not be pleased to receive a grant proposal without any warning from the applicant. Review the funder's website or call their point of contact to find out what initial approach or approach document they require.

3. Follow Directions

Reading the grant application guidelines thoroughly is critical to being funded. Read the grant's guidelines not once, not twice, but three times. Review the first time to understand the general application instructions. Review the second time to focus on the writing format the funder is requesting for the application. Review the third time to note all of the requirements for the narrative. If you have questions or don't understand something, review the website once more and then pick up the phone and ask. Highlight narrative instructions and look for sections that tell you how the funder is evaluating your response. By simply following directions you will have a competitive edge on other less vigilant applicants and increase your approval rate.

4. Check Your Spelling

We've all been there, rushing to type those last few paragraphs before your "creative juices" stop flowing. You've got the perfect narrative and your proposal is on point. You're ready to submit. But wait! No matter how good your content is, the quickest way to get denied is if there are spelling errors everywhere. It comes off as unprofessional and unprepared. Take a minute to clear your mind, then go back and look over your application for grammar, punctuation, and formatting errors. Ask a (*qualified*) friend or board member to look over the application as well with a fresh set of eyes.

5. Don't be a sore loser

If you find out that you are not approved for a grant, don't be discouraged. This is a chance for a great learning opportunity. The first thing you should do is contact the funding agency to thank them for the opportunity to apply. Then, find out why your application wasn't rewarded funding and ask for your reviewer's remarks. Analyze the weak points in your application and develop a plan for rewriting them. Once you have rewritten the weak sections, you can use these updated narratives to apply for funding at other grant making agencies. Also, the same funder will typically allow you to apply the next funding cycle with your new and improved application.

6. Show appreciation!

When you win, celebrate! You wrote an award-winning grant application! Although most funders don't like to consistently support the same organizations, they will most likely still give you the opportunity to apply again during the next funding cycle. Make sure you show gratitude by thanking the funder and/or inviting them to a board meeting or special event to acknowledge their monetary gift and the impact it will allow your organization to have on the community. Also, ask if you can do a press release or if the contribution is confidential.

meet your coach



hi, i'm GIGI!

I am a mompreneur that started off in the financial consulting world, but didn't feel fulfilled. I was satisfied but not complete. I knew I was not in the position to help everyone, but I longed to help others. Then 5 years ago I learned about the nonprofit sector. I got so excited. I sat down one night and thought about all of the things I would love to do to help others. I had never felt this much "joy" about work in my life. When I took my first gig as a nonprofit financial literacy program director I was in awe. I felt like I was out of place in a world controlled by money, power, and greed, and I finally found somewhere that I could call home. That my kindness will never be mistaken for weakness, because that is my job! To be who I am naturally: caring, giving, supportive, was such a relief. I am so blessed to now be in a position to help others follow their purpose.

Visit me here for more info! NonprofitForNewbies.com