

Competencies 5 – 9; Introduction:

It's been a while since we prepared and posted Competencies 1 through 4. Since that time, we have conducted presentations regarding preparation for the GPC exam and the benefits of the GPC designation; encouraged others to follow in our footsteps; and done our due diligence toward renewing our GPC designation. As we review each of the Competencies ourselves, it becomes evident to us that we have benefitted greatly from this exercise.

Grant professionals are often asked by others exactly what it is that we do and what, in addition to being able to write, is expected of us. These Competencies help us to explain what we're all about. Questions regarding ethics in our profession arise on a regular basis. We urge you to become familiar with the GPA and GPCI expectations for grant professionals, the Code of Ethics.

As we share our own insights with you, we have strengthened our own commitment to our field. We sincerely hope that whether or not you pursue GPC certification that you will gain something from our efforts.

Sincerely,

Nancy Robbins-Lackey, GPC

Competency 5

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Competency 6

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Competency 7

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Competencies 8 and 9

Competency 5. Knowledge of post-award grant management practices sufficient to inform effective grant design and development.

01. Identify standard elements of regulatory compliance.

Having knowledge of post-award grant management practices is essential to the design of a holistic and effective program. This knowledge will inform the program design and development process, and ensure the grant writer has familiarity with regulatory compliance issues, and the different roles and responsibilities of project and management staff. From the funder's perspective, they will review past grant performance to see if the agency is capable of managing another grant. An agency's reputation, including past performance is what earns the trust of funders.



Grant compliance requirements differ depending on the grant type. A federal grant will require greater regulation than a foundation grant. It is best to identify and discuss internally, the implications of the regulatory and compliance measurements, *prior to applying* for any grant.

The administrative requirements that apply to most programs arise from two sources: The “Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments” (also known as the A-102 Common Rule) and 2 CFR part 215 (OMB Circular A-110), “Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations,” and the agencies’ codification (or other form of implementation) of OMB Circular A-110. As a basic overview, the A-110 requirements which require prior approval of the program officer include:

- Change in key personnel such as a Project Director or Principal Investigator.
- Absence of a Program Director or Principal Investigator for extended period of time.
- Reduction in time spent by the Program Director or Principal Investigator of 25% or more.
- Budget revisions greater than 10% if federal part of budget is greater than \$100,000.
- Programmatic changes in scope or program design.
- Subgrants (changes and introduction of).
- No cost extensions.
- Equipment purchases exceeding \$5,000 per unit with a useful life greater than one year.

Grant records must be kept for three years or until a dispute is resolved (including any subcontracts/grantees). Just as the compliance requirements different for grant types, they also vary for grants and contracts. Grants are less restrictive than a contract overseen by a Project Director, have little oversight, and are obtained through an unsolicited project announcement. The organization receives payment up front. Contracts conversely, are restrictive, legal and binding, and are overseen by a sponsor. The organization receives payment at the end of the contract, unless stipulated as such in the contract terms. A contract has no open competition,

provides goods and services to many different purchasers and is not subject to federal compliance requirements.

02. Identify effective practices for key functions of grant management.

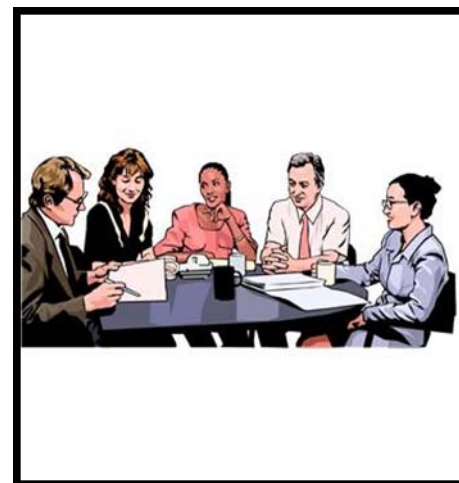
Upon notification of grant award, one of the most effective activities you can do as a grant writer is to immediately schedule a post-award meeting with the Project Director, Controller and Executive Director. The purpose of this meeting is to review grant timelines, benchmarks, evaluation measures, budgets, program tracking measures, and outcome measures. This important activity assists in taking the responsibility off of the grant professional and ensuring it resides with the appropriate individuals. In an ideal world it would be best to conduct this meeting with any commitment and reporting documents provided by the funding source. When a grant award is made for a different amount or timeframe than applied for, internal adjustments need to be made in agreement with the funding source, the post award meeting is a great opportunity to discuss how you might propose retooling to the funder and/or implement the agreed upon retool program design.

03. Differentiate roles and responsibilities of project and management staff and other key principals affiliated with grant projects.

Taking the time to develop and refine job descriptions for each role within the project will benefit program staff as well as serve as communication tools between the grantee and the funder. When you take the time to ensure that each position complements the program activities and covers the scope of the project, you will have an easier time identifying where improvements can be made, where greater economies and/or efficiencies of scale can be realized, etc. Additionally, the upfront time you spend on this important activity will ensure the alignment of staff expertise to job requirements and thus roles and responsibilities relating specifically to the goals and objectives of the project. For the purpose of hiring staff, this facilitates making hiring decisions based on achieving grant outcomes rather than personality issues.

04. Identify methods of establishing transition to post-award implementation that fulfill project applications (e.g. document transfer, accuracy in post-award fiscal and reporting)

The best way to prepare for the project's end (or the completion of the funding period) is to do so at the beginning of the project. Ensure evaluation measures are properly in place and at project's end to successfully transition to post-award stage. Continue to work in partnership with internal departments including human resources/personnel to plan for the hiring or transitioning of staff after grant funds have been expended. Work to ensure there is bridge funding or ongoing operation funding to support the project after post-award or until the project transitions to operational funds. Work diligently to ensure operations of the grant project do not end abruptly at the end of the grant period.



The following is a list of activities that will assist to ensure a successful transition to post-award implementation.

- Evaluate the extent to which measurable objectives have been met for internal and external purposes.
- Be aware that effectiveness is not always measurable in statistics. Determine what has really occurred and been accomplished.
- Perform or use internal audits and reviews.
- Oversee project compliance with annual program or single audit requirements.
- Submit financials, performance and closeout reports per terms and conditions of award.
- Liquidate all obligations incurred under the award within set deadlines.
- Submit allowable reimbursable costs for prompt payment.
- Refund any balances of unobligated cash that have been advanced or paid, and that is not authorized to be retained for the project.
- Negotiate any settlement necessary for upward or downward adjustment to the federal share of the costs after closeout reports are received.
- Account for any real and personal property acquired with federal funds or received from the federal government.
- Oversee any final performance audit and establish an adequate system for record retention.

Competency 6. Knowledge of nationally recognized standards of ethical practice by grants professionals.

01. Identify characteristics of business relationships that result in conflicts of interest or give the appearance of conflicts of interest.

"It takes many good deeds to build a good reputation, and only one bad one to lose it."
Benjamin Franklin.

There are numerous scenarios in which a business relationship could result in a real or perceived conflict of interest within the non-profit sector. For example, non-profit board members are frequently affiliated with private businesses in their community that might benefit financially from a purchase by the non-profit organization.

A proactive approach is the best method of addressing such issues. Having a clearly delineated set of operating policies precluding transactions that might result in financial gain to a board or staff member or their families can be instituted. Members of the board and senior staff should agree in writing to uphold this policy. Additionally, the non-profit organization should always obtain competitive written bids to ensure that the best product at the most competitive price is chosen. A non-profit's good reputation is critical to the ongoing success of its mission and

should not be compromised by any situation that could be construed as a conflict of interest on the part of stakeholders.

A grant professional working in a consultant capacity may also encounter opportunities involving a conflict of interest. For example, if a grant professional is working for more than one client applying for the same grant, he or she needs to be forthcoming and avoid a conflict of interest by providing professional services to just one client in this competitive situation.

02. Identify circumstances that mislead stakeholders, have an appearance of impropriety, profit stakeholders other than the intended beneficiaries and appear self-serving.

Transparency and accountability in all aspects of a non-profit's operation can help avoid a perception of impropriety or self-serving behavior. Transparent activities which testify to an organization's accountability include open meetings, a grant administration plan, financial disclosure statements, budgetary review, and independent audits. In the non-profit sector, transparency is critical to the sustainability of the organization and to its ability to fulfill its responsibilities to stakeholders, including donors, sponsors, program beneficiaries, board members, staff, and the community.

Grant professionals must also adhere to ethical and transparent modes of compensation which translates to working for a salary or a fee. Unethical forms of compensation would include writing oneself into the grant budget as an evaluator or writing for a percentage of the amount requested. *Percentage fees frequently entail falsifying a budget.*

Writing a grant on commission is usually unwise as well as unethical. The application typically succeeds or fails for any number of reasons outside of the grant professional's control, including:

- The non-profit organization's reputation, success record and financial history
- Existing relationships between the funder and the nonprofit board and senior staff
- The level of competition entailing number of other requests and their origins
- The amount of funding available in a particular cycle
- The state of the economy and funders' finances; whether assets are growing or shrinking

Non-profit organizations exist to benefit the public but forfeit that ability if trust is compromised. A non-profit organization must continuously earn the public's trust through ethical leadership and responsible practices. The reputation secured by accountable and transparent nonprofits is an invaluable asset. Funders will choose organizations they trust to fulfill their stated mission, community members will volunteer their time for ethical agencies, and clients will seek the services of reliable organizations.

03. Identify effects of choices that foster or suppress cultural diversity and pluralistic values.

An organization attempting to suppress cultural diversity and pluralistic values is not only engaging in counter-productive and unethical practices, it also violating the law. Equal opportunity for all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, etc. is mandated by the federal government. Even a perception of a violation could jeopardize funding. The legal and statutory requirements for Equal Employment Opportunity Affirmative Action clearly require the inclusion of a diverse workforce by all non-profit organizations.



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A grant professional should also be aware of grant programs and funding opportunities that focus on cultural diversity within the client base. A comprehensive summary should be included in the proposal outlining the non-profit's organization commitment to this initiative pertaining to clients based on demographic data.

04. Distinguish between truthful and untruthful and accurate and inaccurate representations in grant development, including research and writing.



Grant professionals must be truthful about their professional experience and knowledge before committing to any engagement. Grant development usually requires a great deal of cooperation and coordination among many different people in the organization. Misrepresentation of one's level of expertise or depth of knowledge could hamper the efforts of fellow team members and jeopardize the opportunity for funding. Ethical standards promote values critical to collaborative work, including trust, accountability, mutual respect, and fairness.

Additionally, grant professionals should not be associated with any opportunity that could be misleading to funders or stakeholders. Many grant applications focus on promoting a variety of important moral and social values, such as social responsibility, human rights, animal welfare, education, and health and safety. Ethical lapses in grant development can significantly harm the beneficiaries of these programs. An organization that submits faulty data may compromise funding and its ability to help those most in need of its services.

05. Identify issues, effects and countermeasures pertinent to grant professionals' individual heritages, backgrounds, knowledge and experiences as they may affect the grant development process.

A grant specialist is morally obligated to treat all persons with dignity and respect by the very nature of the profession. Grant professionals must not only recognize but also embrace the reality that people have different cultural, linguistic, social, class and ethnic backgrounds. Every person can be enriched by the lives and experience of others. Therefore, grant professionals should

actively seek input from communities of color, the disabled community and from all stakeholders who are still under-represented in the profession. Additionally, the grant professional must be objective and always focus upon what actions are best for the program and the grant project.

06. Identify funding sources that may present conflicts of interest for specific grant seekers and applicants.



While a proactive approach to identifying new and potentially lucrative sources of funding is commendable, there will be occasions when a particular funder is inappropriate. Such funders may have “tainted” money through association with corporations whose operations are in direct opposition to a non-profit organization’s mission. For example, a non-profit organization offering health services would be ill advised to accept funding from any entity subsidized by the tobacco industry.

Therefore, it is essential to thoroughly research potential funding sources and then determine if a grant from this entity conflicts with a non-profit organization’s mission. Inappropriate funding could damage an agency’s good reputation and adversely affect its relationships with other funders and the community.



07. Identify issues and practices pertinent to communicating information that may be considered privileged, propriety and confidential.

By necessity, personal and private information is often disclosed in a professional working relationship. Information may be required to provide services to a client. This information is confidential as mandated by the law, and disclosure could make a non-profit organization legally liable. Disclosure could also severely damage the non-profit organization’s relationship with the client and make it virtually impossible to help the individual.

As noted by the Grant Professionals Association, a grant professional may not disclose any information that is considered privileged, proprietary or confidential. Such data includes, but is not limited to written and verbal disclosures, records, and video or audio recording of an activity or presentation without appropriate releases.

Every grant professional is personally responsible for learning the specific legal regulations governing their scope of services. For example, one cannot disclose patient information that may be accessible in a health services organization as mandated by the Health Insurance and Accountability Act (HIPAA). If working for an educational institution, one must be conversant with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) which prohibits the dissemination of student information.

Additionally, all non-profit organizations must employ accurate and consistent accounting methods that conform to the appropriate guidelines adopted by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants for the type of organization involved. The grant professional is frequently privy to confidential financial information regarding recompense for staff within their organizations would be in violation of ethical behavior in disclosing salaries, bonuses, or other financial data to unauthorized sources.

08. Identify unethical and illegal expenditures in a budget.

Unethical or illegal expenditures in a budget can damage a nonprofit organization's reputation.



Many ethical budget dilemmas can be avoided by educating everyone involved in preparing the budget on acceptable expenditures. Some of the key issues to be addressed include the following:

- Track grant-related expenditures carefully.
- Ensure the funds are used in accordance with the grantor's intent.
- Provide timely reports on the use and management of funds.
- Obtain explicit consent by the grantor before altering the conditions of grant agreements.
- Do *not* add grant writing services into the budget.
- Do *not* request salaries for project directors that when added to other sources of compensation will total more than 100% of their yearly cost.
- Do *not* inflate salaries for senior staff – the Form-990 is public information. Salaries should be budgeted on actual rates paid by the organization.

09. Distinguish between ethical and unethical methods of payment for the grant development process.

The Grant Professional Association provides clear guidelines regarding ethical and unethical methods of payment for the grant development process, including the provisions that a grant professional:

- Receive recompense in the form of a salary or a specified fee. *Percentage compensation based on the amount of the grant is unethical.*
- May accept performance-based compensation, such as bonuses, provided such bonuses are in accordance with prevailing practices within the members' own organizations and are *not based on a percentage of grant monies.*
- Will *not* accept or pay a finder's fee, commission, or percentage compensation based on grants and shall take care to discourage their organization from making such payments.
- Ensure that compensation is *not* written into the grant unless acknowledged and explicitly endorsed by the funder.

10. Distinguish between ethical and unethical commitment, performance and reporting of activities funded by a grant.



It is incumbent upon a grant professional to make every effort in ensuring funds are used in the manner specified by the grantor. Additionally, accurate and detailed reports must be prepared and submitted in a timely fashion to the grantor delineating the specific use and management of the funding. Grant professionals must also be scrupulous in representing any financial data, including providing accurate information regarding matching requirements which can be verified by the source.

In summary, a grant professional is responsible for adhering to a clearly defined code of ethics; also known as “the principles of conduct governing an individual or a professional group.” A comprehensive overview of the Grant Professionals Association’s Code of Ethics can be viewed at <http://grantprofessionals.org/about/ethics>.

Competency 7: Knowledge of practices and services that raise the level of professionalism of grant professionals.

Unfortunately, there are individuals and corporations who have given the grants profession a very bad name, charlatans who misrepresent what we do, with false promises. For that reason, the Grant Professionals Association has adopted a code of ethics and Core Competencies that separate true professionals in the field from those looking to make easy money with false claims.



“Trust me; it runs like a charm.”

Competency 7 addresses steps that grant professionals can take to elevate how we are perceived by the public, potential funders, and even future employers.

01. Identify advantages of participating in continuing education and various grant review processes. Because our profession has been abused by those who misrepresent us, it is essential that we develop and demonstrate the highest levels of professionalism. For that reason, the Grant Professionals Association has developed standards that denote this professionalism. Knowledge regarding best practices in our field, keeping abreast of new trends, and obtaining credentialing as a Grant Professional Certified are the means toward elevating the profession to the level it deserves. What social service agency, private hospital, arts organization, or university could survive without the most proficient grant professionals?

Workshops, training sessions, and conferences are generally available for grant professionals at the local and national level. The Grant Professionals Association holds an annual conference that has much to offer for grant writers and managers from entry level to seasoned, working at any venue. Members of the Association also have access to multiple resources 24/7 via the GPA web site.

At the local level, grant professionals in many parts of the country can join GPA chapters or grants collaboratives like the Tampa Bay Grants Collaborative. Groups like these provide professional development with monthly presenters and trainers who specialize in topics relevant to our profession. The relationships formed via networking at group meetings frequently lead to collaborations with new community partners. In addition, GPA chapters and local grants collaboratives keep the grant writer informed regarding new funding opportunities, available resources, and additional opportunities for professional development.

For those who are ready to take their professionalism and career to the next level, the GPA offers the opportunity for credentialing through testing. This is not a certificate of completion for coursework or a training program, but a bona fide credential based upon rigorous standards and psychometrically measured testing. The Grant Professional Certified (GPC) designation says that you have demonstrated that you meet the highest of standards in your field.

But the journey doesn't end there. Those who pursue the GPC designation continue to elevate the profession while meeting standards required to maintain their credential. This includes continuing education through attendance at approved conferences and other offerings, continuing paid employment as a grants professional, demonstrating your professional performance by submitting journal or newsletter articles, submitting no fewer than five grants in one year, conducting professional presentations, serving as a proposal reviewer, and by your professional service through volunteer activities such as mentoring those newer to the profession, serving on boards or committees for the GPA or your grant professionals organization.

02. Identify advantages of participating in professional organizations that offer grant professionals growth opportunities and advance the profession. Opportunities to increase your professional knowledge, develop new professional networks, and learn about increased sources of funding are very advantageous. Within your professional network you have opportunities to exchange ideas, get answers to questions, and develop new approaches for doing your job, through unlimited communication with a large group of seasoned and emerging grant professionals.



“Our presenter today will address how to interpret and use new Census Data in the proposal development process.”

The information you receive at chapter and collaborative meetings is current and relevant to the audience. Members who attend GPA and other conferences frequently report back to the group regarding new grantsmanship related trends and practices, new approaches to proposal development or writing for specific types of funders. Membership in a professional organization alleviates feelings of professional isolation and assures the grants professional that you are not alone. A sense of community within our profession benefits you both professionally and personally, while the impact of your professional development benefits your employer and the entire grants profession.

03. Identify how grant professional networks (e.g. mailing list services, community alliances) enhance individuals' professional growth and advance the profession. In addition to what has already been said, the new relationships you develop as a member of a professional network open up even more doors. For example, the GPA web site and Journal are available to members. Local or regional professional organizations usually have their own web sites filled with current and useful information, as well as links to additional resources. As a member of a professional group, you have the opportunity to share your knowledge and skills as a mentor to new members and those new to the profession. You benefit by keeping on top of your game and those you mentor become grateful beneficiaries of your expertise. If you are new to the profession or to the geographic location, a mentor will be of great value to you.

Should you choose to pursue GPC designation, you will be assisting the Grant Professionals Association to enhance national recognition of the experience and qualifications required of those who engage in our profession. By doing so, we all benefit, as our profession becomes nationally recognized by government, funders, and potential benefactors, as a career path pursued by professionals who demonstrate the highest ethical and professional standards and abilities.

04. Identify strategies that grant professionals use in building social capital to benefit their communities and society at large. Among those who seek grant funding, there are those who

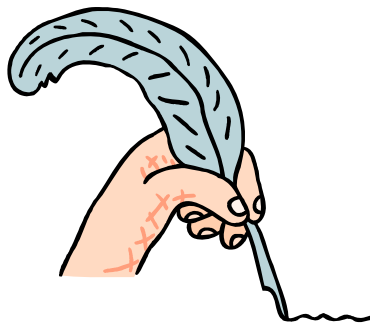


have a lengthy history of success and those who may be just starting out, who are not yet known by potential funders, who lack social capital and resources to obtain and sustain project funding. Grant professionals can span the divide between the “haves” and “have-nots” through collaborations, partnerships, and sub-awards that provide emerging entities with opportunities for growth and development. Frequently, an emerging organization lacks the resources to even apply for certain grant awards. Subcontracting or partnering with a “lead agency” can enable the fledgling organization to grow both financially and programmatically, under the guidance and mentorship of the larger organization.

In addition, grant professionals can open the door for emerging agencies with funders they might not otherwise know. Many funders encourage or even require collaborations among grantees;

this enables smaller entities to seek funding that might not otherwise be available to them. *“The creation of the social capital market is a bold, chaotic, possibly insane, but potentially game-changing endeavor that has the power to completely rework how money flows through the market to shape society.”*¹

Although assigned only five points on the Grant Professionals Certification Institution’s credentialing exam, Competency 7 emphasized that by 1) enhancing our knowledge base through participation in professional development activities and events; 2) participating in professional organizations for those in our field; 3) maintaining a professional network; and 4) building social capital, we can be expected to engage in practices and services that **raise the level of professionalism of grant professionals.**



COMPETENCY 8: Knowledge of Methods that Cultivate Relationships Between Fund-Seeking Organizations and Funders



One of your unheralded responsibilities as a grant writer is to cultivate relationships with new funders and maintain appropriate lines of communication with existing and past funders. Relationships with funders need to be handed artfully and with sincerity.

01. Identify characteristics of mutually beneficial relationships between fund seekers and funders.

When looking at a potential funder, think about what compatible interests exist between your agency and the funder. Do you share a common mission, purpose, focus on a particular population in a particular area?

- Determine if this is the optimum time to approach the funder in terms of where you are in your project planning and their funding cycle. Are you able to provide adequate information as to the project’s goals, timeline, outcomes?

¹ Edgington, Nell; *Nonprofits and the Emerging Social Capital Market*; <http://www.socialvelocity.net/2009/09/nonprofits-and-the-emerging-social-capital-market/>; September 9, 2009

- Assuming that your project seeks to address a relevant issue in the community, can your proposal reflect enough enthusiasm about the project to get the funder excited about it? Consider forwarding published articles about a promising approach your agency wishes to adopt.
- Is your project looking to tackle a particular problem in a new and promising way? The funder could find it very appealing to be involved in a groundbreaking approach, provided they trust your agency to handle the job.
- Would a project you undertake with the funder's support reflect well on the funder? The funder needs to visualize a positive benefit for themselves as well your agency and the community.

02. Identify strategies to determine funder-relation approaches that suit fund-seeking entities' missions, cultures, and values

How you communicate with the funder is crucial; it must fall within the range of acceptable communication from the funder's vantage point. Establishing a personal connection with the funder is invaluable in easing communication.

- Research a potential funder by visiting their website, viewing their recent annual reports, or utilizing online research sources (i.e., the Foundation Center's online services). 990's provide a wealth of information about what types of agencies/projects the funder supports and how much money they have given, or if they even accept unsolicited proposals.
- Make sure that the funder is sufficiently aware of your agency's history, strengths and standing in the community. Convey what your agency is doing that aligns with the funder's mission.
- Be prepared to make your agency's annual report and latest financial report available to the funder, to assure them that you have the capacity and track record to successfully undertake the proposed project.
- Look toward establishing a long-term relationship with the funder, not only in terms of support you are seeking now, but also as a source of support for future projects.

03. Identify methods to help fund-seeking organizations create effective collaborations with other organizations appropriate to funders' missions and goals.

Remember: No one size fits all. The way you approach and cultivate a funder has to be customized and fit the funder's mission, culture and values. Consider utilizing some of the following strategies:

- Do any of your board members, staff members, or individual supporters of your agency already have a connection to the funder? If so, are they willing and allowed to advocate for agency's project?
- Engage funders via luncheons, agency tours, recognition events, or visits to the funder (don't forget to bring appropriate organizational and project-related materials)
- Include the agency's key management in the cultivation process and make sure that relevant agency staff understand the funder's culture and cultivation preferences

Can you convincingly relay your agency's ability to successfully handle the project in terms of leadership, staff and resources? (Hopefully, if you received past support from the funder, your agency's reputation is stellar based on timely report submissions that describe successful project outcomes. If your agency is new to the funder, your reputation in the community better be solid.)

Collaborations have become increasingly important to funders. Identify methods to help create effective collaborations with other non-profits who share a common purpose.

- Be sure that each agency's mission and area of interest fit well together.
- Make sure to partner with reputable, well known and well supported organizations.
- Is the potential partnering agency familiar to the funder?
- Are additional funders already committed or will additional funders be solicited for the project?

04. Identify methods of relationship cultivation, communication, recognition, and stewardship that might appeal to specific funders.

At the very least, graciously thank funders who have supported your projects. Make sure you convey to them exactly how their support will make a positive difference for those you serve. They will remember your appreciation the next time you approach them for funding.

Also consider:

- Will there be volunteer opportunities available to the funder's employees?
- Will there be opportunities for interaction with the program beneficiaries (provided that does not violate client privacy)?
- Many funders ask if you will provide opportunities to promote their support. You might consider promoting the funder's support through press releases, newsletters, and other printed/electronic materials, preferably including photographs and agency logo. Videos can also illustrate the funder's support and importance to a particular project.



COMPETENCY 9: Ability to Write a Convincing Case for Funding

Much of the guidance offered in Competency 9 is covered in the previous 8 competencies. However, good advice bears repeating!

01. Follow guidelines.

The first rule of thumb in writing your case statement is to follow the funder's directions, to the letter! Read the application guidelines carefully.

If you have any questions at all regarding the instructions, contact the funder in the manner they prefer (i.e., via e-mail, by phone, etc.)

- Follow all formatting instructions, including margin widths, font size, word/page limitations, etc.
- Proof-read your work and also have a colleague proof your case statement. Did it move them?
- In addition to required attachments, also include other attachments that bolster your case statement, provided you are allowed to do so.

02. Use conventions of standard English

- No jargon - - try to write for a general audience
- Use active verbs
- Make sure spelling/punctuation/grammar is correct
- Do not throw in unnecessary big words

03. Organize ideas appropriately

State your project's goal in clear terms and describe the project's measurable objectives.

Ask yourself:

- Is your case for support sufficiently convincing?
- Is it logical?
- Does your narrative flow nicely?
- Is your proposal cohesive as far as how the various elements tie together? Does it bring the best possible case statement forward?

04. Convey ideas clearly

Some time-worn tips:

- Do not be overly-wordy, but do make sure to sufficiently cover key points.
- Try not to be repetitive.
- Find a balance between being too vague and overly descriptive.
- Avoid being bland (for example, instead of writing, "This project is really important," describe *how* it is important).

- Use a combination of long and short sentences; your writing should have a nice rhythm.

05. Make a persuasive argument

Your writing skills are never more important than when you are trying to persuade a funder to support your agency's program or project.

- Try to be as enthusiastic, interesting and persuasive as possible.
- Stress the urgency in addressing the problem.
- Be accurate in your description of the problem and honest about how you will address it.
- Convince the funder that your agency is well-positioned to get the job done.

(Note: Refer to Competency 4 for further elaboration on How to Craft, Construct and Submit an Effective Grant Application.)