

HOW TO SOLICIT FOUNDATIONS EFFECTIVELY

THE PROPOSAL (REQUEST) SHOULD CONTAIN THESE GENERAL THEMES:

- 1) The problem, the challenge: what it is we want, and must, do
- 2) How we expect to deal with the challenge (or problem)
- 3) What the cost will be (include an analysis of alternative methods of funding)
- 4) The good things that will happen when we are able to function as desired

MOSTLY, FOUNDATION OFFICIALS HAVE THESE QUESTIONS IN MIND:

- 1) How does the project serve, rather than require? (They do not want to fund the needy. They want to fund usefulness, standard raising, stimulation.)
- 2) Is the organization sound? (They must have confidence that their funds will be utilized by competent and dedicated people.)
- 3) Is there a future for the organization? (They must see life after their support.)
- 4) Are we to be the only Savior? (Show other funding sources and funding prospects to let them know we are not laying all of our needs at their feet.)

PROPOSAL PRESENTATION PROCEDURES:

- 1) You are on the right track when you seek in-person preliminary conferences.
- 2) Always be sure the person who knows the most about the subject is present.
- 3) Deliberate carefully the best paths you will take regarding the presentations to Foundation paid staff and Trustees.
- 4) Understatement is a virtue when it comes to describing what you do.
The program speaks volumes for itself, and does not need embellishments.
- 5) Always make the written proposals to the point, brief, and simple. Use sub-headings if you wish to delineate the various components of the proposal.

Eight Ways To Earn A Quick Rejection

(re: Dr. Elizabeth H. Locke, Executive Director, The Duke Endowment)

- 1) You fail to request a specific amount
- 2) You fail to show how the requested grant fits into the larger picture
- 3) You fail to show that others are committed to the project
- 4) You direct your proposal to the wrong person
- 5) You "scattershot" proposals to several foundations simultaneously
- 6) Your goal is unrealistic
- 7) You describe the problem but not the solution
- 8) You ignore established eligibility requirements