

## Summary of a One-Sheet Proposal

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- Start with a *headline* to summarize the purpose of this proposal.
  - State your *objective*—the purpose of your proposal.
    - You are doing what for whom and when?
    - How will the big-picture goal to be accomplished? Make this cause-focused.
    - What will be the outcome? The impact in the short term and long term?
  - Provide *background* on the project.
    - Why are you doing this project?
    - What problem are you solving? What need are you addressing?
    - How will your stated objective be fulfilled?
    - Do you have statistics, case studies, facts, or figures to support the case for this project?
    - How does this fit in with the overall strategic goals of the organization?
  - Explain the *financial need*.
    - What is the total cost of the project or initiative?
    - What does this total cost include?
    - Be concise and specific.
  - Describe the *status* of project.
    - What stage is the project in?
    - What has been accomplished thus far?
    - Has money been raised for it? (What percentage? Any grants? And so on.)
  - State the *action* you're asking for.
    - Please consider...
    - We're inviting you to make a leading matching gift of...
    - I'm asking you to underwrite the cost of...
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- ✓ Keep it simple, clear, and concise.
  - ✓ Proofread, proofread, proofread! Your report should look professional, without grammar errors or typos.
  - ✓ Choose an appropriate font and size—for example, Times Roman, twelve-point—and maintain it throughout your proposal.
  - ✓ Use italics, bullets, or one-sentence paragraphs to highlight a few key points. (Bold is fine for title and subheads, but not for emphasis. Similarly, avoid using underlining or all caps.)
  - ✓ Use paper that is bright and welcoming.
  - ✓ Make certain you meet or come in ahead of the stated deadline.
  - ✓ Never mail or just drop off a proposal—hand it to the right person in person.
  - ✓ Less is better!