GRANTWRITING

Nailing Your Needs Statement

THE GRANT PLANT

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Presentation Topics

- Introductions
- What are needs statements?
- What should be included?
- How do you make your best case with data?
- Putting it all together
- Questions

Introductions

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What are needs statements?

Placement of the Needs Statement

Function of the Needs Statement

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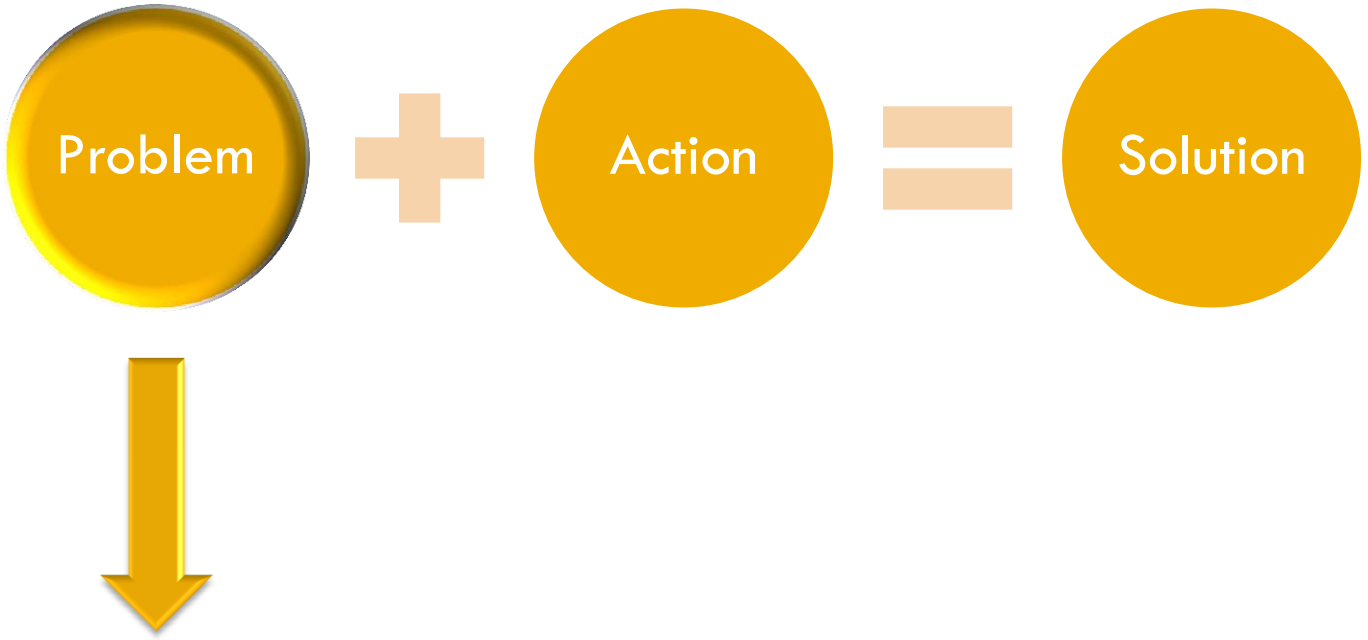
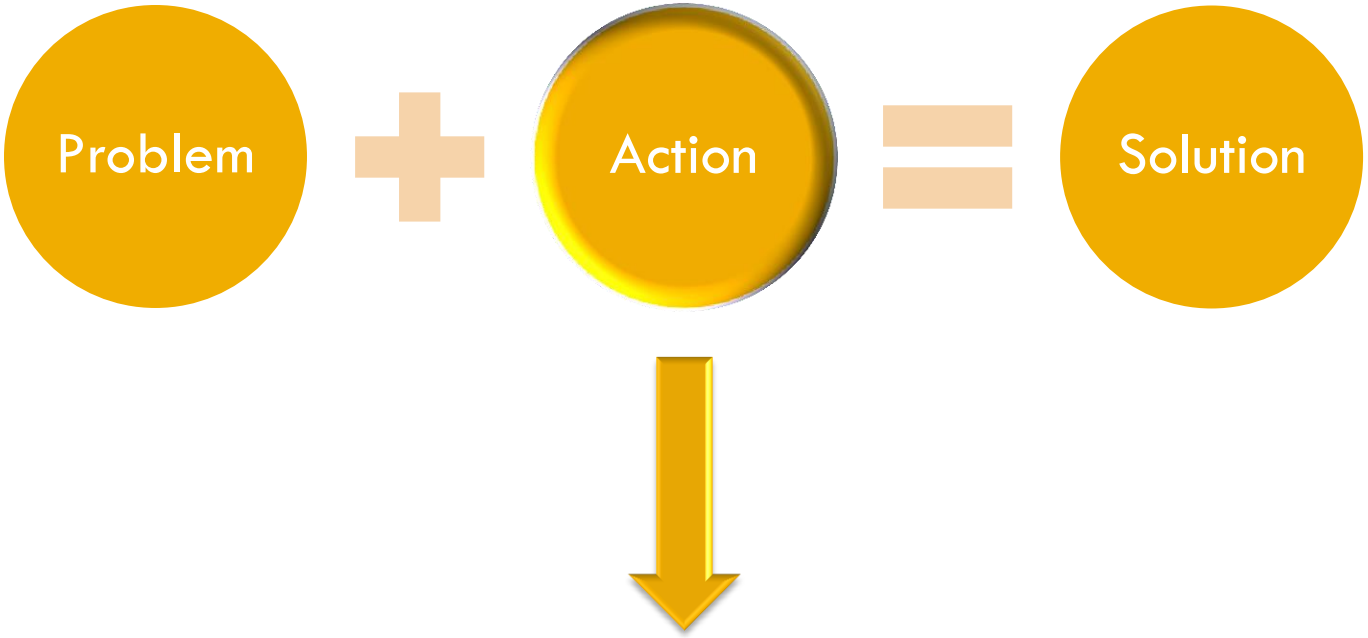


Problem or need for an *external* constituency

Function of the Needs Statement



What *you* propose to do to address the problem

Importance of Needs Statements

In short, you answer the question:

"Why care?"

- Demonstrates that there is a problem that:
  - Is important
  - Is significant
  - Is urgent
- Builds trust
- Relates to your mission statement
- Relates to the funder's priorities

Takeaways

- Establishes the problem.
- Describes conditions *outside* your agency.
- Leads to the helpful actions you propose.
- Is your first impression.

Needs Statement Contents

Contents for needs statements

Major Content Types

- Problem description
- Problem recognition
- Problem implications
- Problem hurdles
- Problem urgency
- What solving problems means
- Human interest story

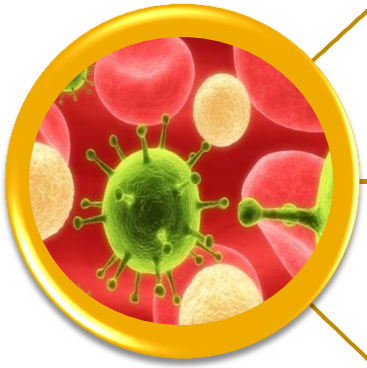
Contents: Problem Description

Major Content Types

- Problem description - The 5 W's
  - Who?
  - What?
  - Where?
  - Why?
  - When?

Problem versus Symptoms

Cause: Flu



Fever

- Dehydration
- Worsening of other symptoms

Aches

Cough

- Sore Throat
- Secondary bacterial infection

Symptoms

Problem vs. Symptoms -- Leads to Solution

Cause Rabbit Hole

…Alice had not a moment to think about stopping herself before she found herself falling down a very deep well….

Alice in Wonderland, Lewis Carroll

Contents: Recognition

Major Content Types

- Problem recognition
  - Who else sees it?
  - Community stakeholders views
  - High profile views
  - Data on the problems – raw data (e.g., Census) or data that has been analyzed (e.g., Center for Education Policy Research [CEPR] reports)

Contents: Implications

Major Content Types

- Problem implications
  - What are resulting problems?
  - If not resolved?
  - What happens to community?
  - What happens to target audience?
  - Cost to society?

Contents: Hurdles

Major Content Types

- Problem hurdles
  - Gap
  - Knowledge gaps
  - Current Work
  - What has prevented resolution/improvement
  - Logjams and speed bumps

Contents: Urgency

Major Content Types

- Problem urgency
  - Why now?

Contents for needs statements

Major Content Types

- Human interest story
  - Similar client
  - Similar circumstances
  - Positive resolution
  - Demonstrates your interventions

Takeaways

- Orient: Covers the Five W's
- Engage: Problem urgency and importance
- Narrow Solution: Challenges and gaps

Data and Statistics

Data and Statistics Intro

"There are lies, damn lies, and statistics"

– *Benjamin Disraeli, British Prime Minister*

Role:

- Supporting
- Rely on Context
- Objective

Basic Rules

- Timely
- Unbiased
- Reliable

Data Searches

Example Sites - Data

- US Census – www.census.gov
- USDA Economic Research Service - www.ers.usda.gov
- UNM Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) - https://bber.unm.edu/bber_data.html
- New Mexico Economic Development Department – www.edd.state.nm.us
- AECF Kids Count Data Center: http://datacenter.kidscount.org/
- Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation: http://kff.org/statedata/
- NM Department of Health Indicator-Based Information Systems (IBIS): https://ibis.health.state.nm.us/

Data Searches

Example Sites – Analyses & Comparisons

- UNM Center for Education Research & Policy – http://cepr.unm.edu/cepr-publications.html
- County Health Rankings - http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/
- Share NM - http://sharenewmexico.com/communityplatform/newmexico/map
- NY Times Article on Best/Worst Places to Grow Up: http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/05/03/upshot/the-best-and-worst-places-to-grow-up-how-your-area-compares.html?abt=0002&abg=1
- Economic Development Administration - http://clustermapping.us/region
- Community Commons - http://www.communitycommons.org/

Data Wrap Up

Data Functions

- Describes
- Compares
- Trends
- Predicts
- Explains

Key Sources

- Demographic Sites
- Federal Agencies
- State Agencies
- Foundation Websites
- Article/Journal Collections
- News Outlets

Need Statement Examples

Example

- Divide into groups of 3-4
- Review need statement examples in handout
- Can you pick out the components we discussed?

Putting it all Together

Need Statement Tips

- Address the 5 W's
- "Weighty Words"
- Get 'em in the heart, get 'em in the head
- The 4 C's
- Thoughtful wording of statistics
- Use formatting skillfully
- Check scoring, rating criteria

Finally…

The bottom line is that to have a fundable project, it must potentially solve the problem your organization and the grantmaker are interested in and must generate results that can be measured in some way.

Questions

- The Grant Plant is dedicated to providing superior and affordable resource development services to assist nonprofit organizations in enhancing the quality of life for New Mexico residents.
- We offer a range of services, including data and prospect research, grant writing, editing, and reporting.
- Grants calendar: https://www.thegrantplantnm.com/upcoming-grants/

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