

STYLE

Proposals should speak with one voice. Sections that are written in different styles, or use different fonts, often have different authors, who have very different ideas about the project. Make sure each section logically follows from the previous section.

For the most part, a proposal is graded according to the merits of each of its sections. Nonetheless, a proposal that does not follow basic rules of style can be difficult to read and critique. Here are a few stylistic rules.

A well written proposal will:

- Avoid Jargon.
- Define all acronyms.
- Not use the first person.
- Have no run-on sentences.
- Use concise language.
- Be free from typos and grammatical errors.
- Avoid metaphors or flowery language.
- Not make emotional appeals. A good case is built on research and reason.
- Have sections that logically follow from previous sections.
- Support all facts, even the seemingly trivial ones. The reader should be able to answer the “How do you know?” question for any assertion made.

From the “Reviewers’ Handbook: A guide to reviewing standard grant proposals” written by the Grants Office of the Maryland State Department of Education – November 1998