

How to Write a Research Proposal

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Abstract

Many clinicians will need to write a research proposal at some point during their careers. It may be for an employer who is to accommodate a reduced workload to account for the research, for an ethics review board which must approve the project, for sites where the clinician hopes to recruit participants, or for funding agencies which may offer financial support (Cormack, 1994). The success rate of research proposals being funded is about 30 percent from my experience sitting on national and provincial granting agencies; therefore, it is important that novice researchers be knowledgeable of the major factors that need to be considered when deciding to write a grant proposal for funding. Frequently, the granting agency rejects the proposal because some portion was neglected or their guidelines were not followed. Something as simple as missing the deadline automatically brings a rejection.

The purpose, then, of this manuscript is to provide the reader with some of the typical topics to consider. These topics, which are modified from those presented by Portney and Watkins (2000), are ones that the researcher needs to consider when preparing a proposal. The modification, therefore, divides the paper into three major areas – the research plan, budget support for the research, and other important topics.