

Brent's presentation to the
Urban Riparian Symposium
about grants and grantwriting

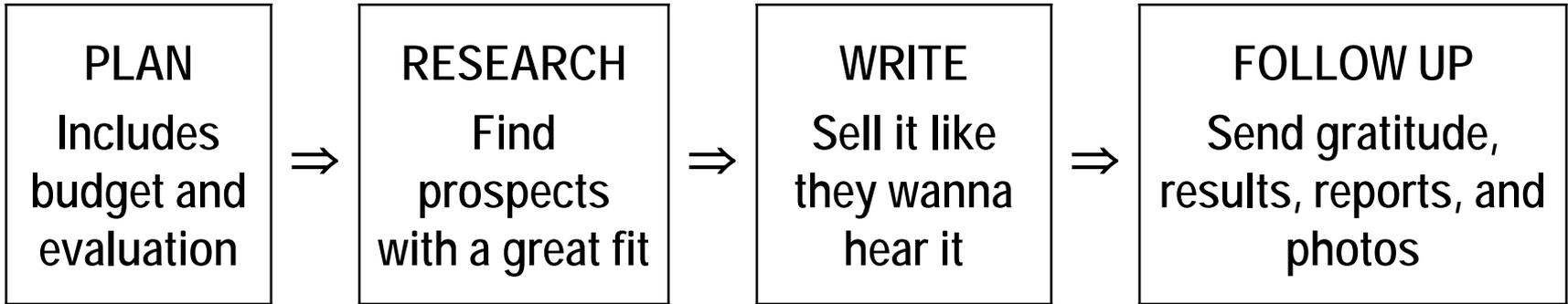


Every year, Austin Youth River Watch transforms the lives of 120 high-school students through holistic, youth-development activities that focus on environmental stewardship and academic success.









Step One: PLAN

- How will you evaluate whether you were successful?
- How will do your work? (You should know the answer to this in excruciating detail, *especially* if it's a new program.)
- Other details: How do you know that you're doing something valuable? How much will it cost? What are your contingency plans? Marketing & PR?
- Be realistic, then pad your budget a little.

Step Two: RESEARCH

- Use every resource available:
 - Web: Google, Foundation Center Libraries
 - Friends, family, colleagues -- ask them
 - Who funds others like you? Steal their funders.
- “If the fit don’t fit, you won’t get shit.”™
- Put yourself in the prospect’s shoes.
- Call them, email them, etc. Don’t be shy.

Step Three: WRITE

- Follow the directions. Let your OCD flag fly high...
- Be compelling with data & anecdotes & research, not flowery language. Be clear and concise, etc.
- Address the fit you have with the funder.
- Make the final package look purty, but professional.
- Again, put yourself in the prospect's shoes.
- *If you're not a good writer, find someone who is.*

Step Four: FOLLOW UP

- Whether the answer is yes or no, always follow up with a thank you and a request for more information.
- Send reports as frequently as you can, even if they're not required. Include photos.
- Again, follow directions.
- Again, put yourself in their shoes.
- Be honest about what went good and bad.

Brent's tips on grantwriting

1. Be realistic about what skills you do have, and what skills you don't.
2. Put yourself in the prospect's shoes, every step of the way.
3. Don't take "no" personally.
4. Collaborate... carefully.

Brent's tips on grantwriting, *con't.*

5. Your program and evaluation plans and your budget should be written at an eighth grade comprehension level.
6. NEVER submit an unrealistic budget.
7. When you do research on a prospect, don't try to think of ingenious ways that you fit their profile.

Interesting Trends

- Corporations are changing their processes.
- Collaborations are even more in demand.
- Government money is drying up.
- Foundations are collaborating more.
- “Overhead” is no longer a dirty word?
- The super-rich are getting pushier.

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More info on Austin Youth River Watch at:

www.RiverWatchers.org

Want to see our kids in action?