

IT WAS A DARK AND
STORMY GRANT
APPLICATION



OR

How to write proposals that people want to read

Christina Soontornvat



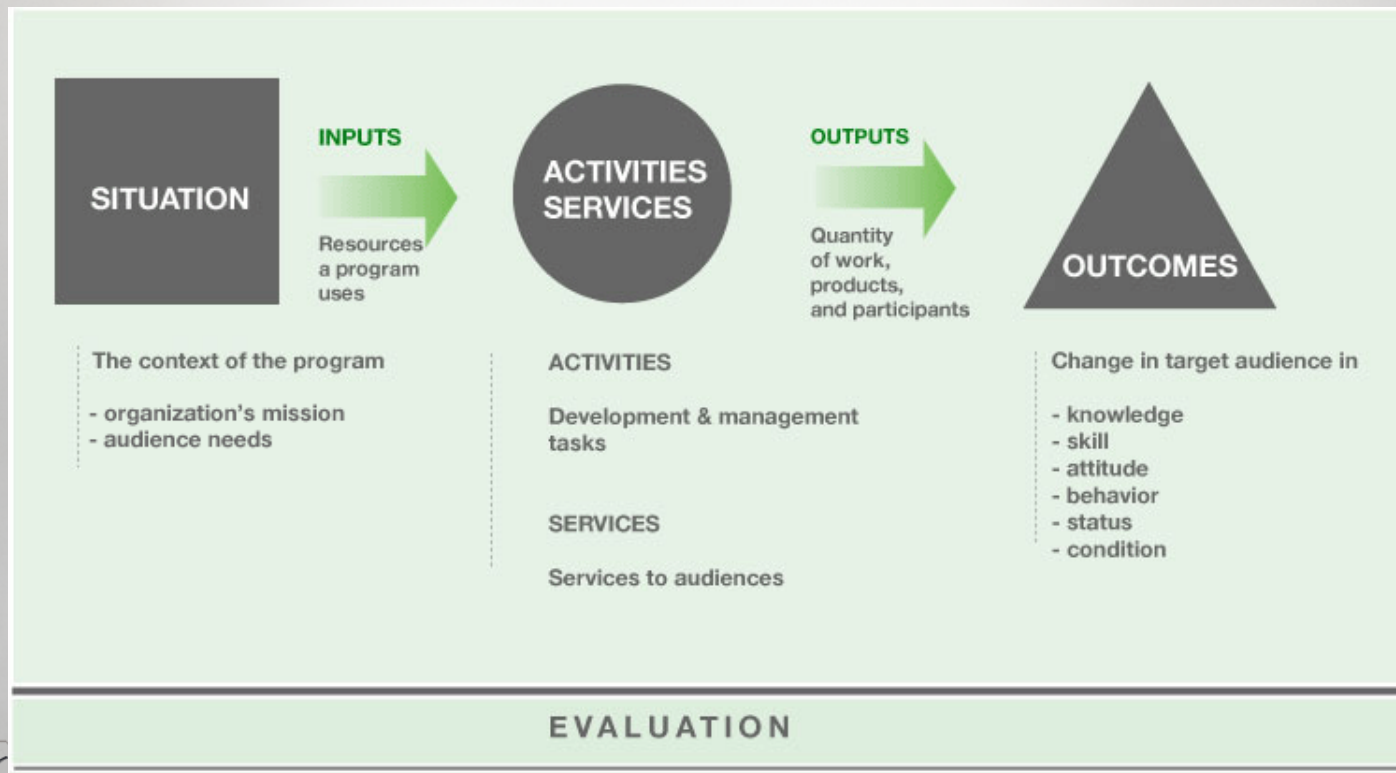
THE BASICS

- ❖ You have used good grammar and proper spelling
- ❖ You are eligible for the grant
- ❖ You have followed the proposal guidelines
- ❖ You have started building a relationship with the funder



BEFORE YOU START

MAKE AN OUTLINE





START AT THE END

OUTCOMES should be SMART:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Relevant
- Time-bound



GREAT FIRST LINES

All children, except one, grow up.

– PETER PAN

“Where’s Papa going with that axe?”

– CHARLOTTE’S WEB

Mr and Mrs Dursley, of number four Privet Drive, were proud to say that they were perfectly normal, thank you very much.

– HARRY POTTER

My mother drove me to the airport with the windows rolled down.

- TWILIGHT



GREAT FIRST LINES

The Weatherford Science Center requests \$40,000 to support expansion of its evolution exhibit, “The Monkey Within Us All”.

A decorative border with intricate scrollwork and floral patterns surrounds the central text. The border is white and set against a dark background.

GREAT FIRST LINES

DESCRIBE THE NEED FOR YOUR PROJECT

Our country faces a crisis of inequality in STEM.

DESCRIBE HOW YOU WILL USE THE GRANT FUNDS

This capacity-building grant will enable us to hire a Development Director and make our Director of Education a full-time employee.



VOICE

Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her.

- EMMA



VOICE

If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don't feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth.

- CATCHER IN THE RYE



VOICE

Lack of access to STEM programming is particularly acute for racial minorities. Without early exposure to such experiences, students are unlikely to establish a strong STEM identity. The result is that only 15% of STEM degrees are held by underserved groups.

Less than 15% of STEM degrees are held by people of color. This statistic is not merely troubling. It is tragic. Our organization tackles this inequality head on through our summer STEM programs.

A decorative border with intricate scrollwork and floral patterns surrounds the central text. The border is white and set against a dark background.

VOICE

- ❖ Consider your audience
- ❖ Be consistent
- ❖ Be authentic
- ❖ Avoid jargon (Yes, define STEM!)



SHOW, DON'T TELL

SHOWING

A tear rolled down Lucy's cheek
as she watched Alfred walk away.
She brushed it aside and bit her
lip to keep more from coming.

*Not for you, she thought. I'll never
cry for you again.*

TELLING

Lucy was sad.
And that pissed her off.



SHOW, DON'T TELL

SHOWING

Our evaluation results speak to the impact we make on students:

- ❖ Student confidence in math and science increased by 34%
- ❖ 89% of students became more aware of math and science careers.

TELLING

Our after school program makes a tremendous impact on students. It makes a transformative change on their lives, turning them into people they didn't even know they could be.

A decorative white floral border with intricate scrollwork and leaf patterns surrounds the central text area.

PASSIVE VS. ACTIVE

The raindrop was really shiny.

The raindrop shimmered.

Helen was skipping across the
lawn.

Helen skipped across the lawn.

A decorative border with intricate scrollwork and floral patterns surrounds the central text. The border is white and set against a dark background.

PASSIVE VS. ACTIVE

400 students were served by our program in 2014.

Diversity has always been very important to our organization.

Our program served 400 students in 2014.

Our organization prioritized diversity from the beginning.

A decorative white floral border with intricate scrollwork and leaf patterns surrounds the central text area. The border is set against a dark background.

WEAK VS. STRONG

We believe our program **has the potential** to increase students' sense of connection to the environment. **Research indicates** that the more time children spend outside, the more they care for the outdoors.

The more time children spend outside, the more they care for the outdoors as adults (*Low, 2002*). By connecting children to nature, our program cultivates the next generation of environmental stewards.

WHITE SPACE

But I must explain to you how all this mistaken idea of denouncing pleasure and praising pain was born and I will give you a complete account of the system, and expound the actual teachings of the great explorer of the truth, the master-builder of human happiness. No one rejects, dislikes, or avoids pleasure itself, because it is pleasure, but because those who do not know how to pursue pleasure rationally encounter consequences that are extremely painful. Nor again is there anyone who loves or pursues or desires to obtain pain of itself, because it is pain, but because occasionally circumstances occur in which toil and pain can procure him some great pleasure. To take a trivial example, which of us ever undertakes laborious physical exercise, except to obtain some advantage from it? But who has any right to find fault with a man who chooses to enjoy a pleasure that has no annoying consequences, or one who avoids a pain that produces no resultant pleasure?

But I must explain


To you how all this mistaken idea of denouncing pleasure and praising pain was born and I will give you a complete account of the system, and expound the actual teachings of the great explorer of the truth, the master-builder of human happiness.

- ❖ No one rejects, dislikes, or avoids pleasure itself,
- ❖ because it is pleasure, but because those who do not know
- ❖ how to pursue pleasure rationally encounter consequences
- ❖ that are extremely painful. Nor again is there anyone who loves or

Pursues or desires to obtain pain of itself

Because it is pain, but because occasionally circumstances occur in which toil and pain can procure him some great pleasure. To take a trivial example, which of us ever undertakes laborious physical exercise, except to obtain some advantage from it?

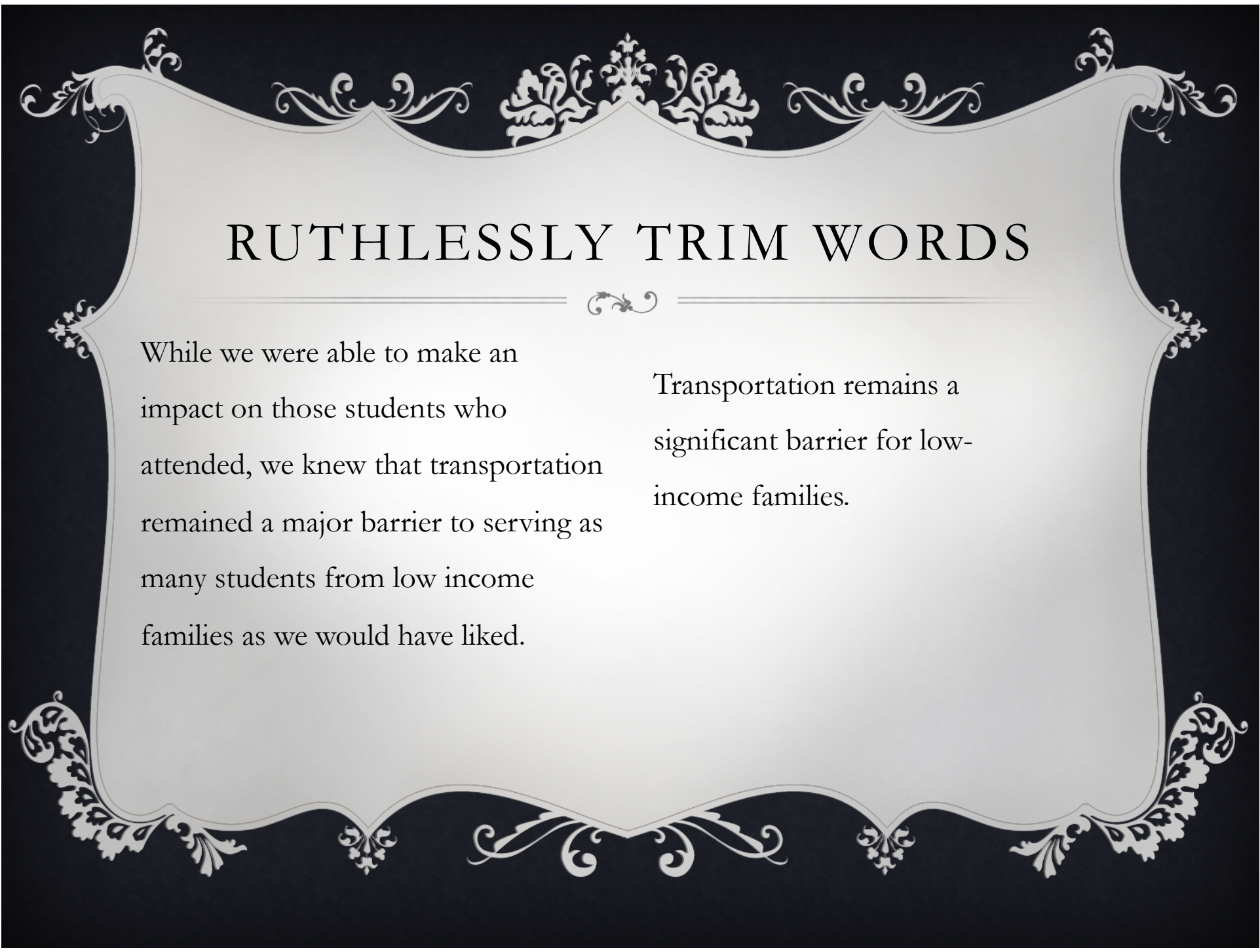
But who has any right to find fault with a man who chooses to enjoy a pleasure that has no annoying consequences, or one who avoids a pain that produces no resultant pleasure?



RUTHLESSLY TRIM WORDS

Quietly, Lucy made her way to
the door, carefully placing each
foot down, toe first.

Lucy tiptoed to the door.



RUTHLESSLY TRIM WORDS

While we were able to make an impact on those students who attended, we knew that transportation remained a major barrier to serving as many students from low income families as we would have liked.

Transportation remains a significant barrier for low-income families.



READ IT ALOUD



BE CLEAR

- ❖ Be specific.
- ❖ Pay attention to the section titles.
- ❖ Be clear. (Did I say that already?)

A decorative border with intricate scrollwork and floral patterns in white, framing a central light gray area. The border is symmetrical and features a scalloped top and bottom edge.

FIND BETA READERS



BECOME A REVIEWER



WRITE SH***Y
FIRST DRAFTS.



REVISE, REVISE, REVISE.



GET A THICK SKIN.



KEEP WRITING!

RESOURCES

- ❖ Hogg Foundation Library: <http://ddce.utexas.edu/foundationlibrary/>
- ❖ Grant Professionals Association: <http://www.grantprofessionals.org/resources.asp>
- ❖ The Foundation Center: <http://www.fdncenter.org>
- ❖ Greenlights for Nonprofit Success:
<http://www.greenlights.org/services/fundraising>
- ❖ Charity HowTo: <http://www.charityhowto.com/nonprofit-free-webinars>
- ❖ Texas Nonprofits: <http://www.texasnonprofits.org/>



CONTACT ME

Christina Soontornvat

www.soontornvat.com

csoontornvat@gmail.com