HOW TO WRITE A SUCCESSFUL GRANT APPLICATION

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PRESENTED AT THE 1ST ANNUAL

'HOW TO FESTIVAL'

ECHO CENTRE SATURDAY APRIL 26, 2014

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

CITY OF PORT ALBERNI

WITH THANKS TO STEPHANIE STEVENS, SCOTT KENNY, GUY CICON AND JANICE HILL

GETTING MONEY
FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION

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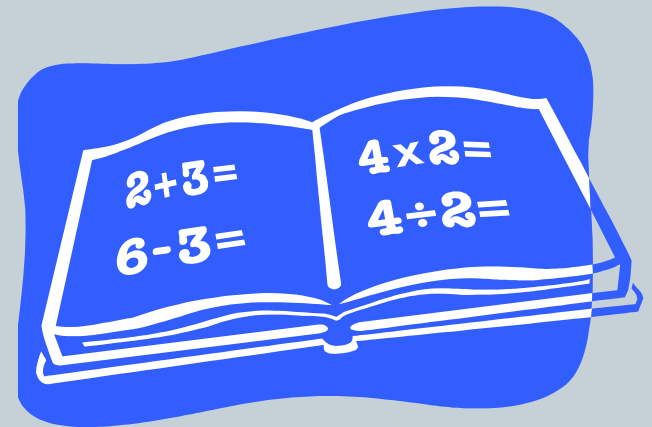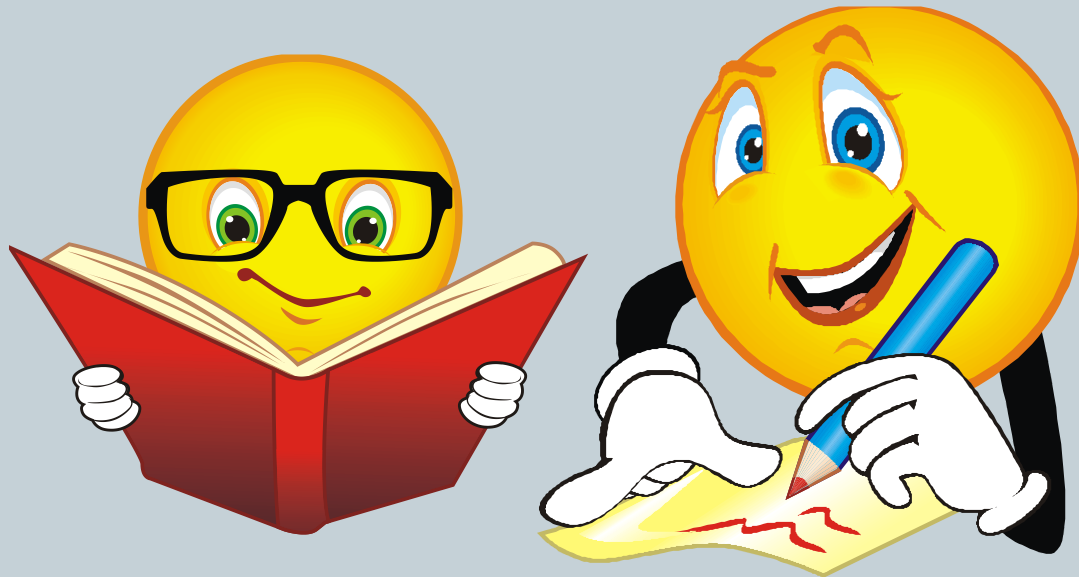## NOW DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION?

You are NOT within the area they fund

Your Budget

SO IT'S BACK TO THE BASICS

2+3=
6-3=

4×2=
4÷2=

- Read all about the potential funding source… everything you can find… all of it… carefully… many times… before you start

- Read THEIR application form… all of it… carefully… many times… before you start

- Read THEIR application guidelines… all of it… carefully… many times… before you start

- Read the list of who they have funded in the past… for what… and for how much

- Read THEIR eligibility criteria… carefully… several times… before you start

- If you are <u>absolutely convinced </u>you are a great fit for this funding source, then start to respond to ALL of their questions / sections

- IF they are not asking you to fill in an <u>online application*</u>, begin with bullet point answers and have sticky notes on hand so you can capture all of the thoughts that cross your mind about your application as you are working on it

- If at all possible, give yourself lots of time to write it

- Tell a **compelling** story that <u>addresses their interests </u>too; to do that you have got to know what you are talking about and be able to provide a perspective that makes them sit up and pay attention

- Have 3rd parties provide their professional opinion about the need that exists and the benefits that would accrue

- Explain how it fits to your strategic plan AND the community's AND the government's AND the funding source's (all that are applicable)

- Know who the reader is and write it for them

- Put yourself in the mind of the reviewer

- Help them check off the boxes

- If you know a previous grant recipient, even if it's just casually, CALL them and ask for their advice or if you could have a copy of their successful application

FILLING OUT AN ONLINE APPLICATION

- IF they ARE asking you to fill in an <u>online application</u>, AND it is your first time in doing one of those, PHONE OR EMAIL them first and ASK for any tips or suggestions they might have for filling it in

- Try writing the online sections in a Word document then pasting them in

- Many of these online application forms limit the number of characters you can insert in each section, so <u>Practice, Practice, Practice</u> telling as compelling a story as you can in as few words as possible

- If it doesn't state that you can add attachments, ASK

- Read your writing on the screen AND in hard copy

- Have someone else read your work, checking for inconsistencies, grammar, spelling and the fit to the funding source's interests

- Read about the potential funding source again… everything you can find… all of it… carefully… <u>AFTER</u> you are finished

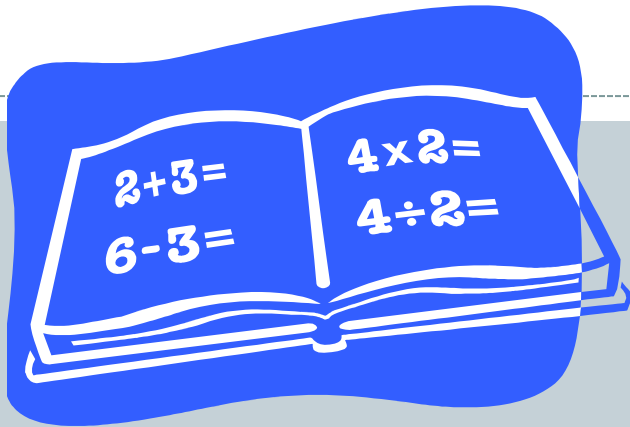- Read THEIR application guidelines… all of it… carefully… <u>AFTER</u> you are finished

THEN ASK YOURSELF:

- What is missing?

- What could be said more succinctly?

- How could it be written to have more impact?

- Is this everything they have asked for?

ARITHMETIC

2+3=
6-3=
4×2=
4÷2=

MAKE SURE…

- your budget is bullet proof… that it ADDS UP every which way and sideways

- your other revenue sources are committed

- your estimates of expenses are accurate

- your proposed 'in-kind' contributions are eligible

- you show how you arrived at your numbers; don't make them guess

- If they reveal how they score their applications, ASK someone else to score your submission before you send it

- If they do not reveal their scoring system, ASK someone else to score your submission before you send it

- CULTIVATE a relationship with the funding source; be crisp, professional, thoughtful, considerate, NOT needy

IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED

TRY, TRY, & TRY AGAIN

NEVER GIVE UP

ASK THE FUNDING SOURCE FOR FEEDBACK

(DON'T GET DEFENSIVE)

OTHER

- Make a list of questions that occur as you read and write and do your budget

- If your questions are not answered by what they have posted, CALL THEM and ask

- Letters of support help (write a template AND ask to have it personalized)

- Sometimes a Picture really is worth a thousand words

OUR PRIMARY SOURCES *

- http://www.ruralbc.gov.bc.ca/granttool.html

- https://charityvillage.com/directories/funders.aspx

- http://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/18.asp

- http://www.victoriafoundation.bc.ca/granting/other-funding-sources

- * Beyond Google