

The Plan of Action

The plan of action, sometimes referred to as action steps or tasks, is a step-by-step description of what you will do to accomplish each objective you've defined in your grant request.

The plan of action can make or break your request. Incorporating details in this section of the grant request is critical. If you cannot demonstrate to the grantmaker that you have a strong, workable plan ready to implement, then it is unlikely you will receive the grant award.

It is important to tie every task to an objective, making sure that you've listed all the tasks needed to accomplish each objective. Be specific. Begin each task with a verb. For example:

<i>Hire an architect</i> <i>Order 20 new computer stations</i> <i>Establish a policy review committee</i>

Assign a cost, timeline, and responsible person for each task. An entry in your plan of action might look like this:

February 2017	Capital Campaign Exec Committee	Hire an architect	\$500.00
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The step-by-step plan of action will generate the project timeline and guide budget development, so it is important to make it detailed.

In addition, setting forth tasks or activities in this fashion can aid program planning. Without such a plan, certain necessary steps might be overlooked—which ultimately means your budget won't reflect the full cost of the project.

These action steps and their sequence are also very helpful to the person in charge of managing the award once the request has been funded.

Create an outline of everything that needs to be accomplished under each objective. After listing every task you can think of, pass the worksheet around the office to get additional ideas about what has to happen to accomplish the objective. Getting others to participate in this process also facilitates "buy-in" from staff and volunteers for the overall project.

At this point, your plan of action will probably be too detailed for the grant proposal. You'll need to go back and summarize some of the tasks. However, you will have developed a specific plan that you can follow when it's time to implement the award, and that alone is worth the effort.

In addition, if the grantmaker has questions about any of the line items in your budget you can quickly refer to this plan to answer them.

Here's a sample of a plan of action, tied directly to one objective:

Objective #1: To market a comprehensive and contemporary parent education program to 15% of the county population, or approximately 11,000 people, through a two-year outreach effort.

Action Steps	Who's Responsible	When
Design contemporary outreach program	Community Educator	May - June
Expand community collaboration	Executive Director	March - ongoing
Coordinate the new program w/ other agencies	Community Educator	May - June
Write and distribute monthly PSAs, ads and emails	Community Educator	May - ongoing
Develop a monthly calendar of events and post on the website	Community Educator	May - ongoing