

A BRIEF GUIDE TO WRITING PROPOSALS

Deciding on a Topic

Choose a problem that can be solved. Complex, large problems, such as poverty, hunger, or terrorism, usually require complex, large solutions. Most of the time, focusing on a smaller problem or a limited aspect of a large problem will yield a more manageable proposal. Rather than tackling the problem of world poverty, for example, think about the problem faced by people in your community who have lost jobs and need help until they find employment.

Considering the Rhetorical Situation

- PURPOSE** Do you have a stake in a particular solution, or do you simply want to eliminate the problem by whatever solution might be adopted? 55-56
- AUDIENCE** Do your readers share your view of the problem as a serious one needing a solution? Are they likely to be open to possible solutions or resistant? Do they have the authority to carry out a proposed solution? 57-60
- STANCE** How can you show your audience that your proposal is reasonable and should be taken seriously? How can you demonstrate your own authority and credibility? 66-68
- MEDIA / DESIGN** How will you deliver your proposal? In print? Electronically? As a speech? Would visuals, or video or audio clips help support your proposal? 69-71

Generating Ideas and Text

Explore potential solutions to the problem. Many problems can be solved in more than one way, and you need to show your readers that you've examined several potential solutions. You may develop solutions