**Proposal Outline (Planning & Writing)**

1. **Part I (Planning Proposal)**
   1. Define the Audience
      * Who will be reading the proposal? What level of familiarity with the topic they have? What might need to be defined or elaborated for proper understanding of proposal?
      * What do we want them to get from the proposal? What do we need to give them so they can make the decision we want them to make?
      * What do they want to hear? What would be the most effective way of getting through to them? How can we help them understand what we’re trying to say?
   2. Define the Issue
      * What is the situation this applies to?
      * What are the reasons of this?
      * Are we sure those are the real reasons? How?
      * Has anyone ever tried to deal with this issue before?
        1. Yes? Did it work? Why?
        2. No? Why?
   3. Define the Solution
      * Proposal needs to offer a problem and a solution that will convince uninterested, skeptical readers to support it.
      * Is the solution logical and feasible? What’s the timeline for implementation?
      * Think about the solution in terms of objectives
        1. Primary: Goal that ***must*** be achieved with the project.
        2. Secondary: Goals that we ***hope*** are achieved with the project.
   4. Keep Elements of Style in Mind
      * How are we going to be persuasive?
        1. Can use emotional appeals, but should always rely on facts
      * Avoid writing in jargon and using obscure abbreviations or needlessly complex language.
        1. Be straightforward and write in plain, direct language.
   5. Make an Outline
      * This will not be part of the final proposal but will help organize thoughts.
      * Should consist of:
        1. Problem
        2. Solution
        3. How we’ll solve it
        4. Why is our solution the best?
        5. Conclusion.
2. **Part II (Writing Proposal)**
   1. Start with firm **introduction**
      * This should start out with a hook, so we can capture readers from point one.
      * Make the proposal as purposeful and useful as possible.
      * Use background information to get readers in the zone.
      * Then state the purpose of the proposal.
      * Make sure to start out with facts and not opinions.
   2. State the **Problem**
      * This is the beginning of the body of the proposal
      * Here’s where we should state the problem
        1. What is the problem?
        2. What is causing the problem?
        3. What effects does this problem have?
      * Emphasize why our problem needs to be solved, and solved immediately
        1. How will it affect the audience if left alone?
        2. Make sure to answer all questions and cover them with research and facts. Use credible sources liberally.
   3. Propose **Solutions**
      * Most important part of the proposal.
        1. How will we address the problem?
        2. Why will we do it this way?
        3. What will the outcomes be?
      * Discuss the larger impact of ideas
      * Address why we will solve the issue this way. Why is it better than something else? If it’s more expensive, why can’t we use the cheaper option?
      * Everything we write should either address the problem or how to solve it.
      * Research proposal extensively. The more facts we can give, the better.
      * If the proposal doesn’t prove that our solution works, it is not an adequate solution. If it isn’t feasible, it is also not an adequate solution.
   4. Include **Schedule and Budget**
      * When do we envision the project starting? At what pace will it progress? How does each step build on the other? Can certain things be done simultaneously? Be as meticulous as possible as will give readers confidence that we know what we are talking about.
      * Make sure our proposal makes sense financially; always consider the company’s budget.
        1. If they can’t afford the project, then the proposal is not an adequate one.
        2. If it does fir their budget, include why it’s worth their time and money.
   5. Wrap up with **Conclusion**
      * Should mirror introduction, succinctly wrapping up our general message.
      * If there are consequences to our proposal not being undertaken, address them.
      * Summarize benefits of our proposal and make sure they outweigh the costs.
      * Leave the audience thinking ahead and thank them for their consideration and time.
   6. Edit Work
      * Revise as necessary to make it clear and concise; ask others to critique and edit it. Make sure it is attractive and engaging as well as organized and helpful
        1. Have another set of eyes read over work.
        2. Eliminate jargon and clichés
        3. Avoid the passive voice whenever possible
        4. Use strong, direct language
   7. Proofread Work
      * Editing focuses on getting the content as clear and concise as possible; meanwhile, proofreading makes sure that it is free of mistakes.
        1. Spelling, grammar or punctuation errors.