SAMPLE NEED STATEMENTS

Successful Needs Statement:

A 1999 report from the New York State Department of Health showed that the Town of Libraryfield ranked among the worst in the state over a 3-year average for infant mortality, low birth weight and premature births, late entry into prenatal care, unmarried parents, teen pregnancies and poverty. An Everywhere County Prenatal Focus Group report revealed that communication by families and doctors is generally poor. There is a need for information on: childbirth education opportunities, support services, childbirth preparation, breastfeeding, sibling preparation for new baby, and post-partum depression. The focus group indicated that the public library could be helpful in directing new parents to resources and materials. In order to meet this need, the library proposes a grant program to expand collections and programs by linking for the first time with family practitioners and the Libraryfield Memorial Hospital to reach expectant and post-partum mothers and their children.

This is a good example of a needs statement. The author first references the community problem through a report by a state organization and then mentions findings from a local committee. A focus group in the planning stages is providing information regarding the target population and their needs. It is important to note where you get the information – a documented problem has more weight than a general observation by one person. There is a clear definition of the problem: there is not a dissemination of information about pregnancy into the community, and there is a clear role for the library. This project naturally fulfills a library's mission statement of providing information to the community. There is mention of appropriate partners that work directly with the target population.

Problematic Needs Statement:

Libraryfield is an economically depressed community with many people out of work. In the past, this community has been a thriving little town but with many industries moving out there is a large segment of the population who need help. Libraryfield has a population of teen mothers living in poverty. The library can help this population by providing services. The library will expand their family services collection by 1,500 titles dealing with pregnancy needs. The library and its partners will also offer eight programs over the grant year dealing with such pregnancy topics as: breastfeeding, prenatal care, post-partum depression and more. The addition of a grant-funded staff member to coordinate efforts with the local medical field will make the project a success.

This needs statement can be improved. The author should cite how the community problem of teen pregnancy was discovered. Is this from a report or survey? The needs statement should focus on the target population and why they need services. Be brief in the description of the project – the bulk of the information will go in the project description section of the narrative.

SAMPLES FOR TARGET AUDIENCE SECTION

Successful Target Audience Section:

The target groups for this project are the parents and children in the community. There are approximately 8,000 students enrolled in the 10 elementary schools and 4 secondary schools and approximately 500 students enrolled in St. Peter's School (Gr. K-8) and St. Mary's School (Gr. K-8) during the past year. Working with various PTAs, a sizable audience is anticipated for each Internet

training program. Both parents and students are interested in developing Internet research skills in order to be competitive in today's world. There are very few computers available within the school district and no comprehensive instructional program is in place. In addition, press releases in local newspapers and flyers available at the library will invite any parent (whether a child is enrolled in a participating school or not) or educator in the community to attend the training programs, especially the general program held at the library.

This target audience statement clearly defines an audience that is within the population guidelines for this category. By giving the enrollments of the school community, reviewers have an idea of the size of the expected target audience. There is a clear indication that the library will be collaborating with the PTAs, a natural partner when working with the schools. There is a statement about why this particular population needs this program. Finally, an example of how publicity will be conducted is included in this statement.

Problematic target audience section:

The target groups for this project are the parents and children in the community. We will publicize to the local elementary and secondary schools. Working with various PTAs, a sizable audience is anticipated for each Internet training program. A potential enrollment of 4,000 students is anticipated for our programs. In addition, press releases in local newspapers and flyers available at the library will invite any parent (whether a child is enrolled in a participating school or not) or educator in the community to attend the training programs, especially the general program to be held at the library.

This target audience statement needs some work. By giving the potential enrollment at 4,000 the reviewers are left wondering where this number is derived from? How did the grant writers come up with this number? There is no explanation of why this population of parents and children can benefit from this program.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Successful project descriptions have a clearly defined goal, measurable objectives supporting the goal and activities that will fulfill the objectives. The following is an example of a successful project description:

> *The goal of this project is to explore oral language as a door to literacy by actively engaging children in grades K-6 and their parents and/or caregivers in talking about stories and literature through library sponsored programming.*

OBJECTIVE: 100 % of participating libraries will attend at least 85% of the grant-funded training sessions learning family literacy programming techniques for school-age children and their families. Activities:
> a. *Six continuing education workshops, facilitated by well-known and regional experts, will be offered to participating libraries on the topics of Storytelling, Running Parent/Child Book Discussions, and Book Battles.*
> b. *Grant participants will serve as peer mentors for other system member libraries who have questions about school age programs.*

OBJECTIVE: Parents and children will receive training in the "art of storytelling" and at least 75% will report doing storytelling at home..
Activities:

    a. *"Telling Personal or Family Stories" workshop for parents will be held at site libraries.*
    b. *Participating libraries will sponsor workshops for students on storytelling.*
    c. *Participating libraries will host storytelling performances by a well-known storytelling team.*
    d. *Each family will be given a journal to record at-home storytelling activities.*

These are only a few of the objectives and activities this grant writer created to support here goal of engaging children and parents in oral language and literacy. The goal is clearly supported by measurable objectives and the activities fulfill the stated objectives. Many grant writers follow a similar format in writing out their goals, objectives and activities that makes it easy for reviewers to see the connections. Each objective will have a corresponding evaluation in the evaluation section.

EVALUATION/OUTCOMES SECTION

Every objective should have a corresponding evaluation. Evaluation can be either quantitative data or qualitative data. Quantitative data or in the language of outcome based evaluation, outputs are typically measured in numbers. Qualitative data or outcomes show the changes in the target audience in skill, knowledge, abilities etc. Successful grant writers will show what will be measured and how it was measured.

Some examples:

    Example 1: This grant project focuses on created lessons for low-literate adults using subscription databases.
    Quantitative Data or Outputs

Measure	Collection Method
Tutors trained	Attendance at workshops
Library staff trained	Attendance at workshops
Workshops presented	Schedule of workshops
Curriculum developed	Count of curriculums posted on web site
Lesson plans created	LV quarterly report
Web site use	Web site hit counter
Bibliographies developed	Count of bibliographies posted on web site

    Qualitative Data or Outcomes

- # and % of tutors who attend an in-service program who can successfully conduct 3 prescribed searches for high interest low reading level material at the end of the training. (Reported by trainer observation)
- # and % of tutors who attend an in-service program who can successfully create a lesson plan to use with their student at the end of the training. (Self-assessment by tutor at end of workshop)

- # and % of students and tutors who report high satisfaction with using database resources to practice skills. (LV quarterly tutor/student reports; web surveys at 6 month intervals; web site feedback)

Example 2: This grant application was written to provide library services to child care providers.

Quantitative Data or Outputs

Outputs	How Measured
Number of child care providers registered	Completed registration forms
Number of kits created and circulated	Library catalog; Circulation statistics
Number of providers who attend library-based trainings and workshops	Program check in forms
Number of providers who choose to become part of a library-facilitated network of local child care providers	Network registration forms

Qualitative Data or Outcomes

Outcomes	How Measured
# and % of child care providers who report increased knowledge of early literacy and child development	Pre- and post-provider training surveys Project librarian conversations with providers Project librarian observation
# and % of child care providers who report increased participation in library-sponsored early literacy activities	Individual child care provider logs of kit usage Surveys from library-sponsored early childhood programs in addition to those offered through the grant project
# and % of child care providers who indicated an increase in self-esteem regarding the important role they play in the social, emotional and cognitive development of the young children they care for.	Pre- and post- project provider surveys Sharing of project tip sheets with parents as documented in provider logs