

Keys for a One Page Major Donor Proposal

Start with a headline to summarize the purpose of the proposal.

State the objective, or purpose, of the proposal.

- What are you doing? For whom? When?
- What is the big picture goal to be accomplished? How? Make it cause-focused.
- What is the projected outcome? Short term and long term?

Give background on the project.

- Why are you doing this project?
- What problem or need are you solving?
- How will objectives be fulfilled?
- What statistics, case studies, and facts support the purpose of this project?
- How does this fit the overall strategic goals of the organization?

Define the financial need.

- What is the total cost of the project or initiative?
- What does this total cost include?
- Be concise and specific.

Share the status of the project.

- What stage is the project in?
- What has been accomplished thus far?
- Has money been raised for it? What percentage? Any grants? Etc.

State the action you are asking the donor to take.

- Please consider...
- Make a lead gift...
- Make a matching gift of...
- Underwrite the cost of...

Tips

Keep it simple, clear, and concise.

Proofread, proofread, proofread!
Your report should look professional, without errors.

Choose the right font and size and maintain throughout your proposal. Bold font is fine to highlight a few key points.

Include logo and infographics for visual appeal, if possible.

Never mail or just drop off a proposal. Hand it to the donor, in person, preferably in a meeting where you can share more.

