Writing a Successful Proposal

General Tips

- Is the project worth doing?
    - Will the project/product change the way orthopaedics is practiced?
    - Will the project/product advance orthopaedics?
- How will you do the project?
    - Develop a list of aims and research plan
- Share ideas with colleagues
    - Seek critical feedback – don't take criticism personally
- Make it easy for the reviewers – peer review is burdensome
    - Keep it short and simple
    - State key points and basic concepts directly – keep it as non-technical as possible (avoid jargon)
    - Keep it neat, easy to navigate, clearly written

Organization

- **Abstract** – succinctly describe every major aspect of the grant – what, why, and how?
    - Section will be read by all reviewers
    - Introduce research question and brief overview of background and significance
    - State specific aims
    - Briefly describe approach and/or methods
    - Highlight the significance
    - Should be written last
- **Specific aims** – what are you doing?
    - Describe long term goals
    - Pose the research question/reason for the project
    - Focus on aims with good supporting preliminary data and scientific expertise
- **Background and Significance** – Why are you doing it?
    - State the problem
    - What have others done in this field? – use citations
    - What will this project add to the field? Gaps in knowledge this project intends to fill
    - Why is this worth doing? How's it innovative?
- **Preliminary Studies and Results** – what you have already done and how it was done?
    - Describe recent studies relevant to proposed project that establishes capability and feasibility of accomplishing this work
- **Research Design and Methods** – How you plan to do the research, why you are doing this way, when and where you are doing it?
    - Design overview
    - Detailed description of the methods to be used
    - Describe new methodology to be used
    - Describe how results will be collected, analyzed, interpreted
    - Provide a work plan – projected task sequence and timetable

- **Budget Justification**
    - Describe duties of all personnel/consultants to be paid
        - Be specific, try to identify an individual
    - Justify any equipment needed – software, etc.
    - Detail and justify travel costs
    - Be realistic – padding or under-budgeting will be recognized

What the reviewers are looking for – see evaluation form

- **Significance** – does the study address an important problem?
- **Approach** – Are the conceptual or clinical framework, design, methods, and analysis adequately developed, well-reasoned, and appropriate to accomplishing the aims?
- **Innovation** – Is the project original, does the project advance orthopaedics?
- **Investigators** – Are the investigators appropriately trained to carry out the work?
- **Environment** – Does the proper equipment, collaborations, and subject populations exist to carry out the proposed work?
- **Budget Justifications**
- **Inclusion of Women, Minorities, and Children**

Be Careful, Be Persuasive, EDIT, EDIT again, Proofread.