Project Formatting:

## What is a Proposal Essay?

A proposal essay is exactly what it sounds like: it proposes an idea and provides evidence intended to convince the reader why that idea is a good or bad one.

Although proposals are generally a significant part of business and economic transactions, they are not limited to those two areas. Proposals may be written for any college classes, scientific fields, as well as personal and other professional areas.

Your Essay will be shared with peer’s and myself in your Draft “Elevator Pitch” and then your final proposal will be submitted to Turn It In. It should be roughly 3-4 pages in length.

## Before You Start: Pre-Writing Strategies

Much of the work is done before you type a single sentence. Before sitting down to write your proposal you’ll want to spend some time on each of the following.

1. **Get to Know Your Audience**. Remember, a proposal essay is an effort to convince a reader that your idea is worth pursuing - or that another idea is not worth pursuing. To that end, you have to know who you’ll be writing for. Are they business people? Academics? Government officials? If your audience is primarily business people you’ll want to justify your proposal by pointing to possible financial benefits. If they’re government officials, you may want to emphasize how popular a certain proposal is.
2. **Do Your Research**. Having secondary sources who can support your claims will go a long way to persuading others of your proposal. Spend some time talking to experts or reading their research.
3. **Pre-Write**. Before starting the actual essay, spend some time brainstorming excellent ideas. Once you have a bunch of good ideas, spend some time thinking about how you’d like to organize them.
4. **Revise, Revise, Revise**. Never turn in a first draft! Have a trusted peer or colleague read your paper and give you feedback. Then take some time to incorporate that feedback into a second draft.

## Main Parts of a Proposal Essay

## 1. Introduction

This is the most important part of your paper in some respects. You need to both introduce the topic and show the audience why they should care about this topic. It should answer the question “So What?” It’s often helpful to begin with an interesting fact, statistic, or anecdote to grab the reader’s attention.

Your project purpose should be to solve a problem. As such, you’ll want to highlight a particular problem that you think your project would solve. Know your audience so that you can emphasize the benefits your proposal would bring.

## 2. Proposal

This is a statement of purpose. This section should be brief and only discuss what your actual proposition is. It is okay for this section to be only a few sentences long if the proposal is short. Do not include details about how you will carry out the proposal in this section.

## 3. Plan of Action

How will you go about completing your project? What will you do to show your audience that you are prepared? This is where you go into detail about how your proposal will be implemented. A couple things to include:

1. **Convince:**You need to convince your audience not only that your proposal is a good idea but also that you’re the person who needs to carry it out. Highlighting your qualifications about why you’re suited for the task is helpful
2. **Detail:**In discussing the implementation, you’ll want to give enough detail to show your audience that you’ve thought about how the process will work. That said, you don’t want to bore them with overly-technical or boring details. Images can also be helpful here.
3. **Anticipate:** Anticipating potential implementation problems is both good practice and communicates to your audience that you’ve thought carefully about your proposal and about potential stumbling blocks.

## 4. Time-Line?

Set up milestones (by day or by week) that you will accomplish to keep yourself on track. Be sure that your timeline is more than a simple reiteration of the assignment deadlines and be detailed; it should reflect some awareness of the demands of your time outside of class, as well as the different stages in the process of the project. You may also want to include other notable time commitments (significant midterms, a trip to visit family, etc., away games for a team).

FYI – you will have at least one class per week to work on your project but you will not be able to get it all done in that time.

## 5. Will it work?

Focus this area on why the proposal will work. Quite simply, is it a viable proposal? You can draw on similar past experiences to show why this proposal will work just like previous ones. This is where your Inquiry research may come in handy. Has this been done before in other places and were they successful or simply why do you think it will work based on your knowledge and experience

## 6. Desired outcomes

Simple. State what the goals of your proposal are. It might seem repetitive with the sections where you mentioned the benefits, but it serves to really "drill" home the point.\*

## 7. Necessary Resources

Another simple part. What is needed to complete your proposal? Include tangible (paper, money, computers, etc.)and intangible items such as time. Please also indicate the resources that you need assistance getting. I need to know if your proposal requires the school to provide materials and the cost of those materials. This is something we will have already talked about in your draft pitch.

## 8. Preparations Made

Show the audience that you know what you are doing. The more prepared you look the better your chances are to get the proposal passed (or get a better grade if it is for a class).

## 9. Conclusion

Do NOT restate your introduction here if you choose to mention the "history" of a certain proposal. However if you did not introduce your proposal with some historical background information, here is the part where you can quickly restate each section above: Proposal, plan of action, all the "why's" of the paper and so on.

## 10. Works Cited/Consulted

# If you cite any sources, you'll also need to have a works cited at the end of the proposal, with the citations in MLA format. Any parenthetical citations in the text itself should also follow MLA guidelines. Even if you don’t have a works cited, you should include a preliminary bibliography at the end of your proposal containing at least 4 sources; be sure this is in proper MLA form as well (please be sure to include URLs for your source UNLESS you found them through a database). Also, please after each citation, note how you found it.

# For example, this is a citation that might appear in the bibliography/works cited of a paper on Women & Computer science:

# “Women and Computer Science – Science Q&A – Readers’ Questions – New York Times Blog.” New York Times. 16 Apr 2007. Web. 19 Apr 2008 . Found through a search of NYTimes.com