

New to Grant Writing?

TIPSHEET

By Melissa Draut

Three things helped me get started:

1. *Grant Writing for Dummies* by Dr. Beverly Browning – read this while working on my first grant project (and it got funded!) Dr. Browning's *How to Become a Grant Writing Consultant* is a slim book chocked full of practical advice on running a grant writing business. Also check out *Grantpreneur* by Katherine Heart, GPC, M.Ed. if you are contemplating starting your own consulting business.
2. Grantsmanship Center Training – this weeklong training is the best! Excellent instructors, lots of resources and friendly networking. Worth the time and price. I would advise taking this after six to 12 months in the job, so you know a little and have a sense of where you need coaching. www.tgci.com
3. Fund Raising Executives of Metro Louisville (FREML) - The best thing I did for my career was join FREML. This local group provides great speakers, good networking and scholarships for professional development – and all for only \$40 annual dues. www.freml.org Find a networking group that works for you. FREML funded several scholarships for me to attend professional development. The Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) is also an option www.afp.org

Three things helped me get smarter:

1. Continuing education:
 - Since I was new to the non-profit industry, I joined the Center for Non-Profit Excellence (similar non-profit support organizations are in most markets and states) and attended many of their workshops to learn about the non-profit industry.
 - Indiana University Fund Raising School programs and non-profit topic workshops helped me become better versed in how fundraising and non-profits work. These workshops provided spot-on training and put me in touch with people in the non-profit arena.
 - *Chronicle of Philanthropy* is a must read too.
2. Grant Professionals Association (GPA):

I discovered GPA in 2012 and found “my people”. The GPA national conference was one of the most motivating and valuable experiences I have had in my career. GPA resources range from special interest groups for advice to free use of Grant Station searchable database. www.grantprofessionals.org
3. Experience:

Like anything, it takes time and practice to be a professional grant writer. It takes months, sometimes years to make research, relationship building and proposals pay off with actual grants. I had started researching one “big” foundation in 2009 that seemed like a fit for our organization and was promptly turned down after the letter of inquiry. In 2013, I tried again, was invited to make a full proposal and eventually ended up with a two-year commitment. You have to learn when to try again – and learn when to pass.