

How to Prevent Grant Funding

General Big Hitters

- **Remember, instructions are for sissies**
- **Let the NIH assign your grant to a study section**
 - Think that it's best NOT to look at who sits on the reviewing study section or in fact to research *study section rosters* in advance to make sure your application is sent to the right panel. Not knowing who is reviewing your application, you can be sure to either miss the opportunity to cite their work or to misinterpret what they have published.
- Don't bother with letters of support/collaboration
- ***Never, ever show your grant application to anyone before submission***

Content

- Hypothesis / Specific Aims
 - **Propose complex aims each of which is contingent on achievement of the one prior**
 - **Make sure your hypotheses will be rendered moot unless one and only one outcome is obtained.**
- Background / Study Design
 - Mention by name as many well-known investigators as possible without explaining/justifying their role, which has no budget allocation either
 - Propose experiments using reagents/cell lines/transgenic models you don't have & are challenging to generate
 - Do not include statistical methods for each hypothesis.
 - Do not include power analyses for each proposed statistical test.
 - Do not consider alternate approaches to the question, because you think the reviewers wouldn't have thought of it on their own. They will think of it.
 - **Do not discuss possible pitfalls in your approach.**
 - Do not demonstrate the reasoning behind the selection of your approach instead of other possible alternatives.
 - **Do not acknowledge any assumptions you might have to make to design your experiments.**
 - **Do not try to summarize your complex experimental design in a summary table or figure. This would unnecessarily simplify things.**
- **Figures and Tables**
 - Mislabeled tables/figures (better yet, don't include any)
 - Make legends small/cryptic

Formatting

- Use as many uncommon abbreviations as possible without definition.
- Don't waste space between paragraphs
- Do not number or label main sections, subsections, etc. using outline format and clear headings
- Do not draw special attention to key information in your proposal like your central hypothesis by underlining or any other additional formatting. If reviewers have to look hard to find this information, it will force them to read your grant very carefully.
- End vague sentences describing statistical analyses with "etc."