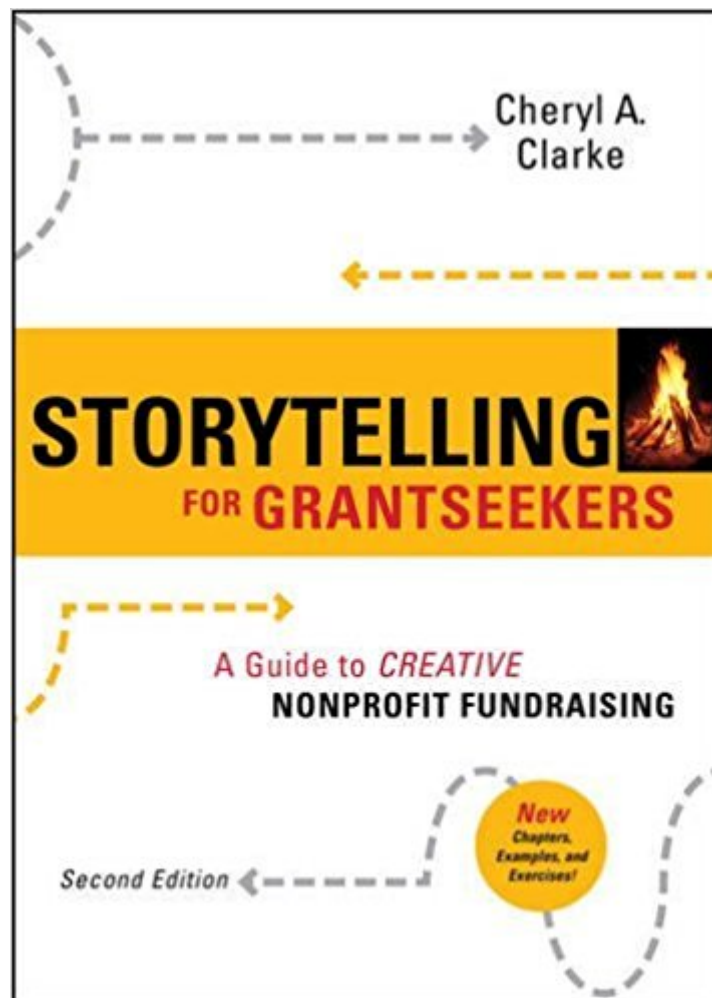




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# Storytelling For Grantseekers: A Guide To Creative Nonprofit Fundraising



## Synopsis

Grantwriters often have little or no training in the practical task of grantseeking. Many feel intimidated by the act of writing, and some don't enjoy writing. In *Storytelling for Grantseekers*, Second Edition, Cheryl Clarke presents an organic approach to grantseeking, one that views the process through the lens of the pleasures and rewards of crafting a good story. Grantseekers who approach the process as one in which they are connecting with an audience (grantmakers) and writing a narrative (complete with settings, characters, antagonists and resolutions) find greater success with funders. The writing process becomes a rewarding way to tell the organization's tale, rather than a chore, and their passion and creativity lead to winning proposals. This book walks readers through all the main phases of the proposal, highlighting the creative elements that link components to each other and unify the entire proposal. The book contains resources on crafting an effective synopsis, overcoming grantwriter's block, packaging the story, and the best ways to approach the "short stories" (inquiry and cover letters) that support the larger proposal. Clarke also stresses the need to see proposal-writing as part of a larger grantseeking effort, one that emphasizes preparation, working with the entire development staff, and maintaining good relations with funders. In *Storytelling for Grantseekers*, new and experienced grantseekers alike will discover how to write and support successful proposals with humor and passion. New edition features: Overall updates as well as both refreshed and new examples Workshop exercises for using the storytelling approach New chapters on the application of the storytelling method to other fundraising communications like appeal letters and case statements, as well as the importance of site visits

Example of a full narrative proposal

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

**STORYTELLING FOR GRANTSEEKERS** This second edition of the best-selling book *Storytelling for Grantseekers* contains all the resources and information needed to help craft a persuasive summary, package a compelling narrative story, and create a short story approach to letters of inquiry. Cheryl Clarke walks grantseekers through all the phases of developing an effective proposal and highlights the creative elements that link components to each other and unify the entire proposal. Clarke also stresses the larger grantseeking effort, one that emphasizes preparation, working with the entire development staff and board of directors, and maintaining positive relations with funders. Using this resource, new and seasoned grantseekers will discover how to channel their passion and creativity to tell their organization's tale and create winning proposals.

Completely revised and updated, this new edition contains:

- A collection of new illustrative examples
- Exercises that incorporate the storytelling approach
- Suggestions for planning and hosting successful site visits
- A helpful example of a full narrative proposal
- Information about how the storytelling approach applies to other fundraising communications such as appeal letters and case statements

**PRAISE FOR THE SECOND EDITION** of *Storytelling for Grantseekers* "Clarke's book is easy to read and follow, and her contention that grantmakers will be persuaded by a compelling story that demonstrates both knowledge of program and need for funding is spot-on."

&#151;CATHERINE FISHER, trustee, The Thomas J. Long Foundation "Cheryl Clarke breaks down the steps of writing a successful grant proposal and makes the entire process as natural as that of sharing the story of all the good work that our organizations do in the world."

&#151;DOROTEA REYNA, director of development, California Institute of Integral Studies "I recommend her book to all my students."

&#151;VIVIENNE FRENCH, part-time faculty, Truckee Meadows Community College, Reno, Nevada "My first edition is worn out from good use."

&#151;JEAN THERRIEN, executive director, Neighborhood Family Practice

**THE AUTHOR** Cheryl A. Clarke is a fundraising consultant with more than 20 years of experience in the nonprofit sector. She works with a wide range of nonprofit agencies to improve their fundraising capacity. Clarke is also a much-in-demand trainer and speaker and has presented at several international conferences of the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

I loved this book. It was interesting and full of writing information to make the proposals more interesting. By using the storytelling method, the proposal will be easier to read and more natural. However, it doesn't take away from the technical material that has to be in the proposal. I would recommend this book to anyone writing proposals. It will add to the skills that a technical writers already has. It is very easy to read. I didn't want to stop reading it.

This is the second time I am reading this wonderful guide to grantwriting. It's an excellent resource for grant writers, fundraisers and other nonprofit professionals seeking grants. Cheryl Clarke uses the art of storytelling as a framework for writing grants. It's a great way to get your grant in front of funders. I highly recommend this guide.

Very enlightening. This approach to grant writing is creative and encouraging. It helped guide me through the process. It is worth your time.

Easy read. Gives very practical information on how to write a grant and make it stand out.

Excellent resource for those new to this kind of work.

Very unhappy with this book. It arrived quickly and on time, but within a few uses of this book the pages began to fall out of the book! This was supposedly a brand new book, but new books don't do that. dOr if they do they are just poorly made. Not happy with the manufacture of this book, especially since I am using this book for a class and its hard to read when the pages keep falling out. Would not recommend ordering through .

The book does provide some useful information for grantseekers. I currently work on the grantmaking side of grant writing and agree with the author on certain things to be aware of, include in proposals, etc. I gave it four stars because the writing is a little cheesy and sometimes I find myself weeding through the non-informative stuff to find the good stuff. Overall and easy and informative read for someone starting out in grantseeking/fundraising.

I kinda liked this book. Until now I have made it a point to avoid writing a book review for any nonprofit fundraising books on grant writing. I guess I am breaking with tradition for this book because I see some redeeming value to it. The first edition for this book came out in 2001 and had

two less chapters and no appendix. Also, chapters 2, 3 and 6 of the original edition have been reworked for the new edition. I suspect I will be posting a Search Inside feature for this book in the next month or so. As a result, I won't be listing the chapter titles here. However, if they are not listed then I encourage you to examine the Search Inside feature at [http://www.amazon.com](#) for the first edition. See ISBN: 9780787956301. The new or updated chapters are:

2. Research & relationships: Finding & cultivating your audience
3. The short story: Writing letters of inquiry
6. Goals, objectives, & methods: Making changes by addressing the problem
11. Site visits & beyond: Interacting with funders
12. Beyond grants: Applying the storytelling method

A. The final manuscript: Two letter proposal samples

The book includes numerous examples of inquiry letters, introductions, location descriptions, cases for support (needs), goals-objectives-desired outcomes, and executive summaries. I found them all to be well done. This book is all about how to make a grant proposal readable. And I wish it had stuck to that topic alone, because when it moved into the realm of research and packaging the grant proposal that is where I had problems. Two books that might be of interest to the reader of this book are: "What's Your Story?" (ISBN: 9780132277426), and "Developing Your Case for Support" (ISBN: 9780787952457). I think both of these books will complement "Storytelling for Grantseekers" which seems to be a kind of short little book at less than 180 pages. Let's face it, a nonprofit that has a chance of winning grants almost always has to be an established one. And nonprofits like that typically have a sound written Business Plan, a well-written Case for Support, an Annual Financial Report, a functioning Annual Giving Program, and some major donors. Hopefully there is also an awesome tricked out Web site that helps spread the word about the nonprofit and solicits donations, too. If the nonprofit has all of this BEFORE it attempts to apply for grants, then there really is no need to do special research in order to create a grant proposal. Hence, I did not see the need for Chapter 2 (research & relationships) in the book being reviewed. I would have liked the book better if Chapter 12 were moved to the front of the book and replaced the existing Chapter 2. The new Chapter 2 could explain that the grant writer need not do research. But instead he or she can cut and paste the story that already exists (or should exist) in the nonprofit's business plan, case for support, Web site, etc. And if the Web site includes the story, then references can be made in the grant proposal to the nonprofit's Web site if the grant funder wants additional information that could not be included due to space limitations in the grant proposal requirements. I loved Chapter 8 on budgets. But I thought chapters 10 and 11 could have used a little bit of work. Chapter 10 dated the author for me. She seems to be fixated on grant proposals that need to be sent to a printing press for distribution. I bet she believes in solicitation mailings via snail mail for Annual Giving Programs instead of email solicitations, too. I think the book would have

been better if the author had explained the virtues of the software application called Adobe Acrobat Writer. Anything that can be printed on paper can be printed to an Acrobat file (PDF file). And it sure is easy to send a PDF file as an attachment in an email. No mention of this was made in the book. As far as Chapter 11 goes, I found it to be either dated or incomplete. I'm sure there are some instances where a grant funder may want to make a site visit. However, in today's Internet Age it is so much more professional and economical to create a Web site that provides a "tour" of the nonprofit online. The funder can simply visit the Web site and get an eye full. Without such a Web site the organization will look a bit "less than" and probably not be up to snuff in the eyes of the grant funder. And that translates into "no donation." None of this was mentioned in the book. 4 stars!

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