

Grant Procurement Strategies For Success

Learn the Grant Mindset

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- Experience

- Gewalt Hamilton Associates, Inc., Senior Project Manager, 2023 - present
- Village of Buffalo Grove, Village Engineer, 2013-2023
- Village of Barrington, Asst. Dir. Engineering & Building, 2008-2013
- Lakewood Homes, Project Manager, 2003-2007
- Lake Zurich, Civil Engineer, 2001-2003
- Civil/Environmental Engineering 1996-2000
- Dec. 1995 Graduate

Outline

- Successful Village Funding Model – Learn the Grant Mindset.
 - Planning ahead
 - Distribute the plan
 - Action

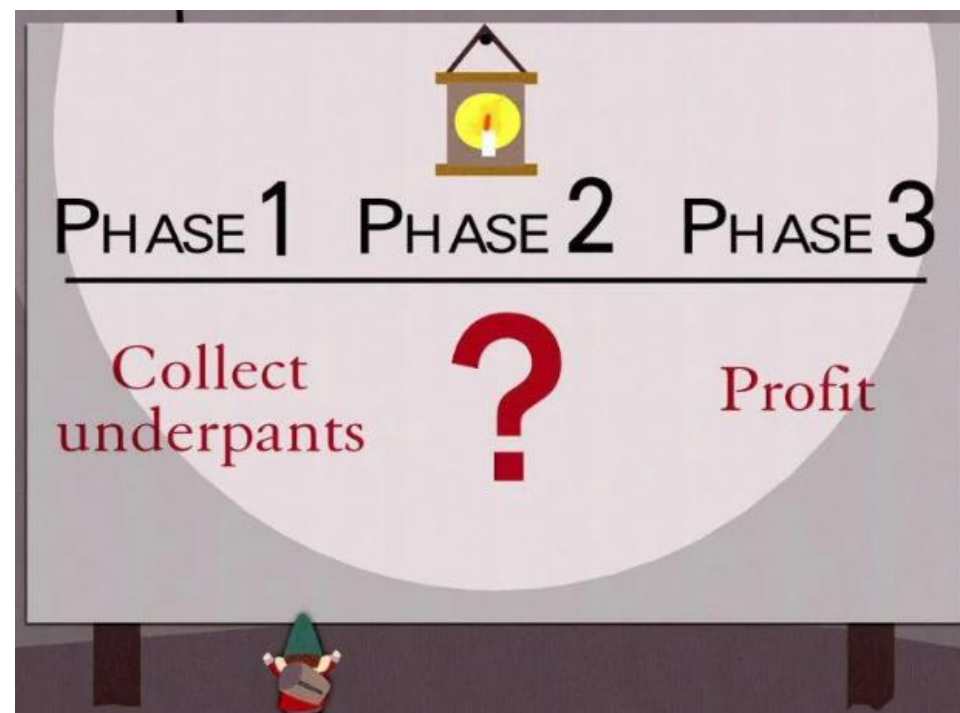


Become the Miracle Worker!

- When you can successfully bring grants to your town, your Village Board will think you are a miracle worker.
- The positive press it brings to the Village Management, the Board, and your department is immense.
- If you are a consultant, your client will love you, and their boss or board will shower them with praise.

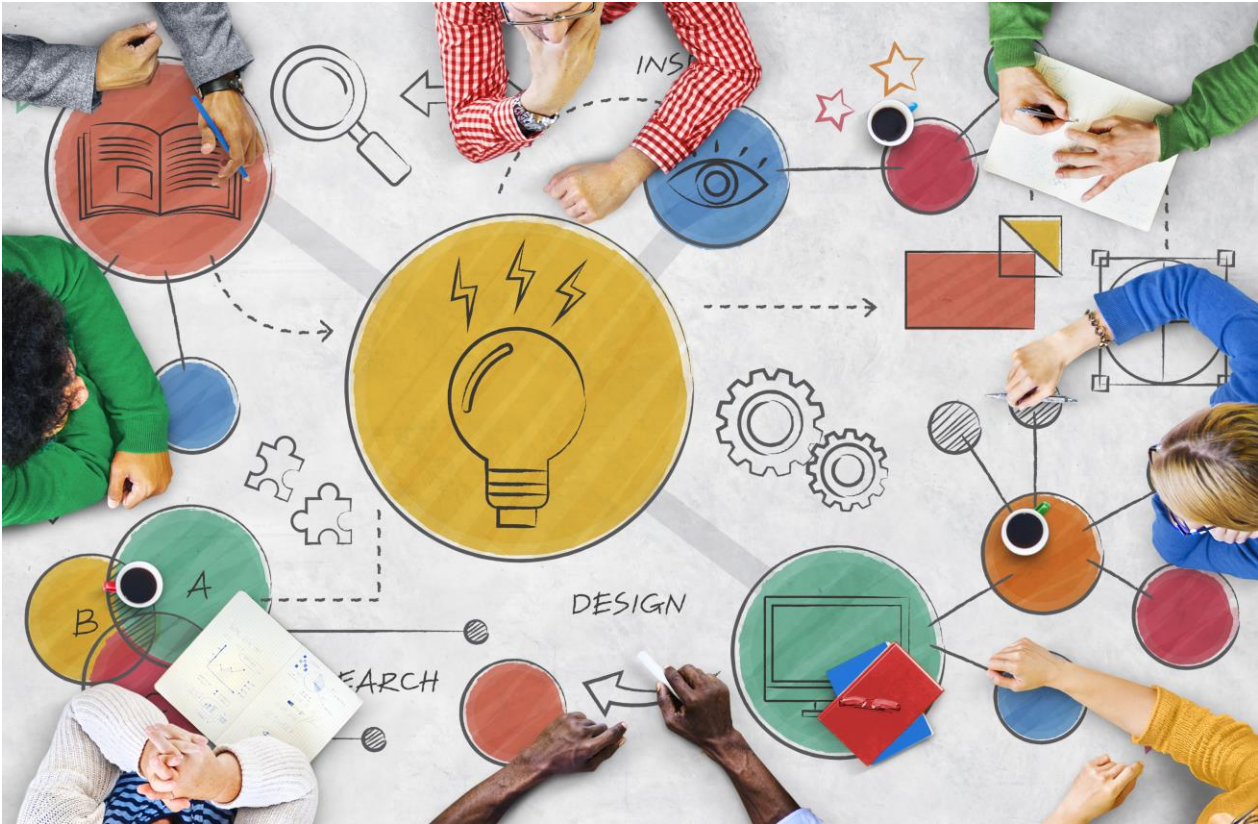
The 3 Step Grant Process – The Grant Mindset

- Plan
- Distribute
- Application



Step 1 – The Plan

- Have a 20-year plan
- Have a 5-year plan
- Have a wish list?
- Have something...



The Plan

- The plan should include: Everything!
 - Regular projects like maintenance
 - Road work to hydrant flushing, sanitary cleaning to sidewalk replacement
 - Economic Development ideas - road or utilities to help businesses/developments
 - Locations for Village owned parks or public gathering places
 - It should also include as much as you can
 - Projects that can be done now, in the next 2 to 5 years, and multi-stage projects
 - Wish list projects - won't do unless you have funding
 - Everything should be included
 - Make sure it has staff, board, and public support

The Plan

- Who helps create these plans?
 - Everyone!
 - At least public works and/or engineering
 - Village Manager, Director of PW, Mayor, Village board, etc.

The Plan

- Help on identifying projects for a town or agency
 - Review the Agency's Comprehensive Plan
 - Review their budget for goals and objectives
 - Match their goals and objectives to the grants
 - For example, bike friendly community – look for these types of grants

Community Development Assistance

- Think more than just public works maintenance - is there a parcel or lot in your community that just cannot get built? Is the community looking for a public gathering place?
- Economic Development is very important, it can provide revenue to help the agency meet its goals, mission, and objectives.
- Is the problem utilities or access? Both, or something else?
- Search for grants specifically for this problem
 - Extend utilities to it, find a grant for road or traffic signal work
 - IDOT grants for road access or Economic Development Program

Disadvantaged Communities (formerly Justice 40)

- This has partly been removed, but some grants are still directed to disadvantaged communities
- Some grants have different criteria, additional cities may qualify
- May reduce the local match required
- Huge advantage for disadvantages communities

Think Big - Partnerships

- Don't just plan for your community, work with your neighbors on bigger projects. Some grants are high dollars and need more than one agency
- Regional bike plan, regional industrial or commercial area
- Don't stop a road, bike path, park area at the community border, talk to your neighboring towns about continuing into their town or at a destination

Think Bigger – get your work done with a grant

- Think outside the box – what else can you include in the grant application?
 - Road work, sidewalk or path connection, road signs – anything
 - Detention for future development
 - Utilities for commercial area
- Think what else you can add into the grant to benefit the community?
- This cannot be stressed enough, find ways to stretch your budget with projects that help the agency while completing important items

Step 2 – Distribute the Plan

- Meet with elected officials and give them the list
 - Senators and Representatives, national and local
 - County Commissioners or Board members
 - Cook County Commissioners have a separate fund for them to allocate
 - They can be advocates for you and your projects
 - Meet their staffers who will send letters of support
 - Get on their email lists for grant announcements
 - You never know when a certain elected official needs a certain project in a certain area for a certain dollar amount

Step 2 – Be Aware of Grants and Deadlines

- This is sometimes difficult – lots of grants out there. Pay attention
- Plan ahead, know when grants typically come out and be prepared
- Get on email lists

Step 2 – redirect your energy

- Instead of a fire drill for a grant announcement, focus on future projects and find grants to match the projects
- If possible, design early and be “shovel ready,” especially the wish list items that won’t be done without funding
- Work with your elected officials and Village staff to discuss projects in relations to certain grants

Step 3 – Application

- Getting grants is very important for an agency to move forward
- Not just trying to stay afloat, but advancing important village initiatives
- This is where you look like a miracle worker

Step 3 – Application

- Letters of Support – everyone has them
 - Need to explain the how and why. For example, explain HOW it makes the road safer
- When crafting grant responses, use the requirement language
 - Similar to the how and why, not just cookie cutter answers
- Respond to the individual needs/info for the grant
 - Some may want public involvement, or deeper explanations of the how.

Step 3 – Award and Projects

- This is where you complete the projects and enjoy the fruits of your labor and hard work
- Communication – show the wins!
- Short lived, you need to keep focus on the next round

Grants

- There are several types and sizes for so many grants
 - Roads, bike paths, trees, utilities, economic development, hazards/stormwater
 - Lead service inventory – not for construction yet
 - Many Federal grants out there, but difficult for local municipalities

Summary - Develop the Grant Mindset

- Plan - Make a list or plan of regular and needed work, get to know your town
- Distribute - Get support for the plan, get to know your elected officials, and get the plan in front of them
- Application/Award/Action - Be prepared and ready, always be thinking ahead

Thank You!

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