How to Prepare a Grant Funding Timeline

Excerpted from "Grant Writing for Dummies"

What is a grant timeline?

A *timeline* in your grant application tells the grant reader when activities (also called *process objectives*) will begin and end during the grant's funding period.

What should my timeline include?

When you develop a project timeline, keep in mind that the grant reader wants to see answers to the following questions:

- What key tasks or activities need to be carried out to implement the program successfully?

- Did the grant applicant include all tasks, from the day funding is announced or awarded to the last day of the project's funding time frame?

- Can each task realistically begin and end in the proposed time frame?

- Are evaluation activities included in the timeline chart?

- Who's responsible for seeing that each activity is implemented and completed?

What should my timeline look like?

You can use your word-processing software to create a simple timeline table, or you can elect to go with a simpler text document describing key project phases and details. Just be sure not to overdo it with color; stick with one or two shading selections (gray or a light color so the reader can still read the text in the table's cells).

Because you probably can't absolutely determine the number of disruptions and malfunctions in implementing a grant-funded program, consider setting up your activity start and stop dates in quarterly increments. However, if you do have total control over the activities, you can use monthly increments to show when they start and stop or begin and end.

See this figure for an example of an activity timeline. It shows what the program plans to accomplish, when it plans to accomplish it, and who's responsible for seeing the activities (process objectives) through the completion phase.

Implementation Activities (also called Process Objectives)	Year 1				Personnel/Agency Responsible
	1st Qtr.	2nd Qtr.	3rd Qtr.	4th Qtr.	
Request City Council approval via a resolution to accept grant award monies.	•				Fire Department Administrator
Hire seat belt education specialist to design Fire Safety Program for targeted children and their families.	•				Fire Department Administrator
Design public media campaign to promote program.	•				Fire Department Public Information Officer
Meet with targeted schools and develop schedule for seat belt safety education.	•				Fire Safety Education Coordinator
Implement weekly curricula in targeted schools and classrooms throughout the City of Mesa.		•	•	•	Fire Safety Education Staff
Implement monitoring and evaluation methodologies to test knowledge retention and family applied learning actions for seat belt safety.		•	•	•	Fire Safety Education Staff Regional Seat Belt Safety Advisory Council
Modify or refine initial curriculum to correct message delivery deficiencies.		•	•		Fire Safety Education Staff
Identify other Maricopa County communities with high seat belt safety-related fatalities for elementary school-age children and meet with Fire Chiefs to plan and implement school-based seat belt safety education.			•		Fire Department Administrator and Fire Safety Education Staff
Continue to monitor education impact findings, unintentional injury reduction rates, and other indicators to demonstrate program success to stakeholders.			•	•	Fire Safety Education Staff Regional Seat Belt Safety Advisory Council
Prepare formal monitoring findings and evaluation reports for stakeholders (including funding agency)			•	•	Fire Department Administrator
Issue end of program press releases.				•	Public Information Officer
Prepare final closeout reports for funding agency.				•	Fire Department Administrator and City Grants Manager