

1. Definition and Meaning of Technical Proposal

The word proposal is derived from the verb 'propose' that means 'to offer or put forward for consideration, as a suggestion, plan or purpose'. Oxford Dictionary also defines the word 'proposal' as 'a formal suggestion or plan or the act of making a suggestion'.

Proposal, thus, means 'something proposed: plan or scheme'. It is often defined as a plan or scheme that persuades its readers to accept the writer's ideas. In other terms, a proposal is a properly conceived idea or plan, an action-oriented report. But it is different from a report. The proposal is a suggestive plan of future task where the proposer aims at getting the acceptance or the approval of the authorities but a report deals with what has already been done. In brief, "a proposal is a special type of analytical report designed to get products, plans, or projects accepted by others."

While defining a proposal Sharma and Mohan write, "We may thus define a proposal as a written offer to undertake a project for designing, creating something new or for changing or modifying an existing procedure, method, system or structure within a specified period of time"

Lesikar and Flatley define it loosely when they opine that "a proposal is a persuasive presentation for consideration of something".

2. Significance of Proposals

Proposals can be made by individuals or organizations with some specific purpose. They can be made to an organization or some government agency. Proposals can be submitted to government agency as appeals or bids for grants. For example, college or university teachers submit proposals to University Grants Commission, New Delhi or the organizations of the like nature for research funds or fellowships etc. The significance of proposals for an individual as well as for an organization can be summed up into the following points :

1. A proposal is a persuasive presentation for the consideration of something : a merger, a bid for an account, a research grant, and so on.
2. Proposals serve to improve the existing working conditions of an organization.
3. Proposals can be made internally from one department to another.
4. Good proposals help the organization to win financial returns.
5. Proposals relating to research activities play a very significant role in the progress of an individual or organization.

3. Kinds/Types of Proposal

Proposals are written for business enhancement, for scientific enquiry, for technical knowledge and so on. Various labels are applied to various types of proposals. Some of the main types are mentioned below :

1. **Business proposals** : Proposals dealing with any aspect of business, trade and commerce are known as business proposals.
2. **Research proposals** : Proposals, concerned with a project requiring scientific enquiry or systematic investigation, are known as research proposals.
3. **Technical proposals** : Proposals relating to the technical knowledge and skills are known as technical proposals.

The business proposals, the research proposals and the technical proposals may further be classified into two broad categories, mentioned below :

1. **External proposal** : A proposal written by a firm in order to win contracts for work is known as the external proposal.
2. **Internal proposal** : The writer prepares an internal proposal with a motive to convince the person or group in authority to allow him to implement his ideas. Internal proposals are, thus, submitted within a company.

There is one more method of classifying the proposals into two broad categories as mentioned below:

1. **Solicited proposal** : When a proposal is prepared in response to an invitation from a firm or some government or non-government organization, it is known as the solicited proposal. In such forms of proposals, the proposer receives a form from the firm inviting the proposals. The writer is required to supply the relevant particulars, as demanded by the firm. Solicited proposals are generally prepared in response to advertisements.
2. **Unsolicited proposal** : Sometimes a person prepares a proposal about a problem. This type of proposal is developed by an individual, without being asked or without any external encouragement. Such proposals are commonly known as unsolicited proposals where the proposer tries hard to rouse the interest of the people to whom he has sent his proposal. The writer hopes deriving some profits from the proposal.

■ 4. Characteristics of a Good Proposal

Every good proposal stands for some essential characteristics which are mentioned below :

1. A good proposal contains information which at once grips the attention of the person to whom the proposal has been sent. It should specify the scope.
2. The subject or the theme of a good proposal should be so worthwhile that it would rouse the interest of the person concerned who would consider the proposal indispensable.
3. The proposer highlights the benefits and advantages of the proposal which generates a desire to accept the proposal immediately.
4. Finally, a good proposal convinces the man concerned and he is provoked to take action.

■ 5. Drafting a Proposal Format of Proposal

While writing a proposal, the writer should pay attention to the structure of a proposal. The main parts of a proposal are determined according to the type of the proposal, if it is solicited or unsolicited; or internal or external. The structure of the solicited proposal is determined by the organization inviting it. In the words of Raman and Sharma, "The nature of each project and its requirements will dictate the structural elements of a proposal" :

Generally, all good proposals have four important parts :

1. Front matter
2. The technical section
3. The managerial and
4. The financial section

1. Front Matter

Front matter (sometimes known as prefatory part) includes the following elements :

Cover page/title page : The title page of a proposal includes the title of the proposal, the name of one who is submitting proposal and also the name of the individual or of the company to whom the proposal is submitted. Since, it is the first item to be read, all essential details should be clearly mentioned so that a clear picture of what the proposer wants can be conveyed.

Table of contents : In this prefatory part of the proposal, table of contents should be given. List of tables and figures should be clearly listed. Table of contents is prepared only for the proposals that are long.

Executive summary or abstract : To provide a preview of the proposal, a brief summary of a proposal should be prepared. In brief, it will mention the objectives, procedures and the outcome of the proposal. In case the reader feels satisfied, he goes through the details of the proposal.

2. The Technical Section

In this section, the proposer highlights mainly two things : problem and its solution. The writer should focus on the following heads :

1. **Statements of problem :** There should be the problem statement specifying what it intends to do. Moreover, it would explain the source of the problem and also the possible solution, and the benefits that will come from the proposal in hand.
2. **Purpose :** The purpose of the proposal should be clearly mentioned. According to Lesikar and Flatley an appropriate beginning is a statement of the writer's purpose to present proposal and the reader's need. Hence, the purpose should be clearly stated, for example:
 - (i) A proposal for reducing turnover of field representatives
 - (ii) A proposal to determine the job satisfaction of the current sales force
3. **Technical plan:** This section tries to answer the following questions :
 - (i) What is the solution of the problem ?
 - (ii) Can this solution be implemented ?
 - (iii) Should the solution be implemented ?
 - (iv) What are the limitations or restrictions over which the proposer has no control ?

Besides, this section will highlight the procedures which are going to be followed by the proposer. He has to tell the reader the methods and sources which he will use in collecting the required statistical data for his project. Moreover, there should be a clear mention of the time, required for the completion of the project.

3. The Managerial Section

The Managerial Section describes the project team or the personnel who will work directly on the project. All details relating to that personnel are mentioned in this section. The information is relating to several issues like :

1. His educational qualifications
2. His professional achievements
3. His experience in that specific area
4. Any other relevant information

Sometimes a number of persons are engaged to execute a proposal. To prove their credentials, a brief description of their educational qualifications, professional achievements and experience should be given.

4. The Financial Section

It includes a chart of anticipated expenditure. It is mandatory to all sorts of proposals. It provides a detailed account of the amount required for several items such as equipment, lab testing, salaries of personnel on project work, other contingencies and infrastructural facilities like building, water, electricity, machines and so on. However, this section of the body of the proposal provides a brief mention of the materials and expertise of the proposer so as to reassert his competence for the proposal he is going to undertake. This will ultimately persuade the reader and assure him of the success of the project.

5. Supplementary Parts

In some of the proposals, the supplementary parts like appendices and references are also included. Though it is not mandatory, it depends upon the nature of the project and the procedure adopted by the proposer.

6. Uses of Proposals

Whether it is a business project or a research project or a technical project, a proposal is the first step which is to be taken at the initial stage. It specifies the scope, presents an estimate of time and money, establishes the capabilities of the proposer for the job and also highlights the benefits that the customer is going to enjoy. All these descriptions in a proposal convince the agency to go ahead with the proposed plan.

Model Proposal-1

Title Page	
A Proposal for the Manufacturing of Surgical Appliances	
By : Prashant Kumar, Manager, Surya Medical Center, Kanpur	
<u>Date</u> :	March 5, 2005
<u>To</u> :	<u>Ministry of Health, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh</u>
<u>From</u> :	Prashant Kumar, Manager Surya Medical Center, Kanpur
<u>Subject</u> :	Proposal for the financial assistance for the manufacturing of Surgical Appliances.

Summary or Abstract : The project is about to set up a manufacturing unit of surgical appliances. Cotton, artificial limbs, instrument to measure blood-pressure, thermometer etc. would be manufactured. These would help the physically handicapped people in their day-to-day life. Now-a-days such surgical appliances are very much in demand.

Introduction

The Purpose : Life has become very complex today. Streets are over-crowded hence people often meet with accident and become lame. The artificial limbs will help them to walk and work properly as they did earlier. Other appliances will be of great use.

1. See before; 2. Required by law.

The problem : But the supply of these surgical appliances often falls too short of the demand. The establishment of this firm will meet out the people's demand. The availability of different surgical items will be increased.

Scope and limitations : The scope for these surgical appliances is very wide. In the national as well as the international market there is a great demand of India made artificial limbs.

Now-a-days we have heavy power cuts which may hamper the steady working of the manufacturing unit. One more problem which a proposer may come across is the availability of the raw material which often falls short of demand.

Methodology : In order to carry out this project systematically, the project work will be divided among the following units :

- (i) **The design unit :** Its main job will be to decide the shape and form of a limb which is proposed to be manufactured.
- (ii) **The material unit :** This unit will help in collecting the required material from different sources.
- (iii) **The management unit :** The main function of this unit will be to maintain coordination in the working staff. It will keep an account of the material brought from various sources, money spent and the quality of the product. It will also manage the labour required in the process of manufacturing these artificial limbs.

Significance : The project will be viable³ from human point of view. It will also be profitable to the proposer.

Cost estimate:	Raw Material	:	5,000.00
	Equipment	:	10,000.00
	Wages	:	2,000.00
	Contingency	:	20,000.00

(Maintenance of Machines, Correspondence, Traveling etc.)

Total ₹ 37,000.00

Model Proposal 2

Title Page
A Proposal
to Study and Improve the Supply Chain of
Global Fasteners Limited

By: Anoop Swami
 Marketing Manager
 Global Fasteners Ltd.
 Mumbai

March 5, 2010