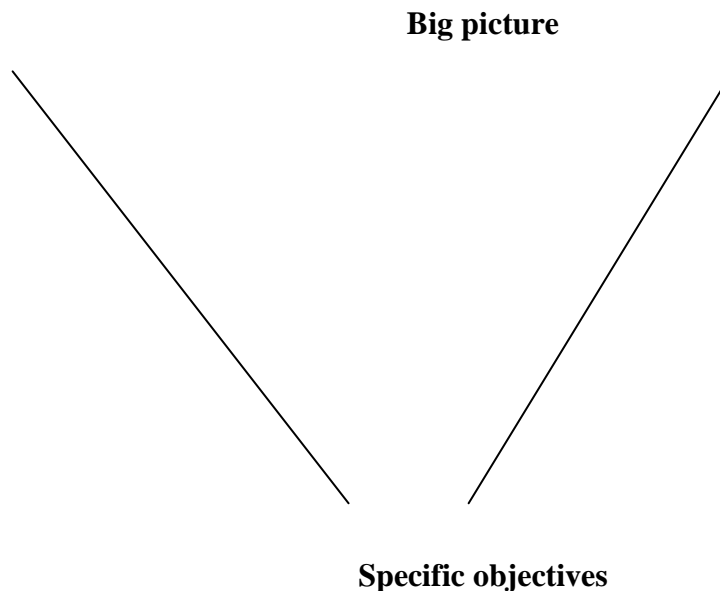


## Proposal Writing

- **Idea conceptualization: KISS**
- **This is a sales job, so your background section must convince the reader that what you want to do is vitally important. In the objectives/specific aims section, in ~ 1 page you need to summarize your arguments and objectives convincingly.**

**Think of a funnel:**



Suggested material to cover in background:

1. Define, name or describe the condition or issue
2. This disease/issue is COMMON
3. The disease/issue is BAD, and hurts people in the following ways: XX and YY
4. One thing we still need to know about this disease/condition, before we can fix it, or better understand it, is ZZZ
5. a promising approach to understanding or intervening on this disease/condition is AAA
6. Therefore, we propose the following study (provide a 1 paragraph or less summary of your entire study, referencing types of data, measures, size and source of sample)
7. We will address the following aims:

**Five point set-up:**

Example:

- I. Hypertension [is bad] and it disproportionately affects African Americans
- II. Many patients with hypertension are poorly controlled (esp. AAs), and this may be because physicians fail to aggressively manage hypertension
- III. African Americans may receive less intensive treatment
- IV. Even when doctors do actively manage hypertension, patients may not adhere to prescribed medication regimens (AA compliance rates lower)

**Therefore**, we need to improve physician management of hypertension and patient adherence to prescribed therapies to improve the treatment and control of hypertension.

**Common mistake** on aims page:

Referring to things in the aims that are not referenced previously. There should be no surprises (in words, terms, concepts, measures, populations, etc. ) in the aims themselves!

Literature Review (what relevant thinking or work needs to be summarized to further convince your reader that 1. you know what you're talking about 2. this is a really important endeavor 3. you're building on what's known/been done previously)

Example:

- I. Hypertension is common, poorly controlled, and disproportionately affects African Americans
- II. Changing physician behavior
- III. Changing Physician behavior through reminders
- IV. Improving patient compliance with recommended therapies
- V. Changing Patient Behavior through Physicians' use of Patient-centered counseling
- VI. Previous efforts to improve hypertension care
- VII. Summary of prior research

Preliminary Studies

- Brag, brag, brag
- Present pilot studies whenever possible (tables are good)

Methods

- Overview
- Specifics of carrying out the project
- Show you've thought about what it takes to do the project

Cosmetics

- Neat, clean presentation
- Use organizing subheadings
- Refer from section to section by name and page number
- Use tables to summarize key info (e.g. independent and dependent variables included in study)
- Help the reader! E.g. segways, introductions, summaries to sections

Proposal preparation process:

- Endnote/reference manager
- Use highlighting to remind yourself of issues to fix/further address
- Think about what has to be done administratively (and what are the deadlines) while you are writing science (e.g. budget has to be signed off on, so finish that, give to administrator so you can be working on science while they work on that)
- Keep ongoing list of things to deal with (as you write, you may think of other issues to cover in background section, methodological issues, etc., so write them down to deal with later, so you can keep focused on what you're working on at the moment)
- Figure out when your best time/way to write is and zealously protect that time! For example, don't get sidetracked on administrative issues or e-mail while you're doing heavy duty thinking and writing.
- Who can help you by reading, editing, playing devil's advocate? Department/section research meeting, specified colleagues here and elsewhere