



T4. Getting Fired Up About Your Grant Proposal: Successful Strategies

Tuesday, June 4, 2019
3:30 p.m.– 4:45 p.m.

Moderator:

- Tanya Howell, Family Assistance Program Specialist, Office of Family Assistance, Washington, D.C.

Presenter:

- Patrick Patterson, President, Global Partners for Fathers and Families, LLC, Raleigh, North Carolina

Tanya Howell: Welcome to Getting Fired Up About Your Grant Proposal: Successful Strategies. My name is Tanya Howell, I'm one of six federal program specialists in the Office of Family Assistance. I'd like to introduce Patrick Patterson. Patrick is President of Global Partners for Fathers and Families, LLC, a firm that specializes in growing capacity and funding for agencies focused on empowering fathers, men, and boys. He has secured corporate grants from Wells Fargo, IBM, Chick Fil-A, Aflac, State Farm, McDonald's, Molina Healthcare and others. Patrick has been a featured keynote speaker, workshop leader, and a trainer on fatherhood issues in 43 states. He also has a background in federal government.

Patrick Patterson: Good afternoon. I have been thinking about you for about a month, and in the words of my pastor, I'm going to let you all have it. My goal in writing grants, and also teaching how to do it, is that you become successful. I believe they're going to put a portal up, and everything that we're sharing at the conference, you will have access to.

Here are the things that people call me for on a regular basis. They often call me for grant writing training. We do these across the country. They will call me for grant writing assistance. In the last couple of years, I've actually helped organizations secure \$2-4 million in grants.

One of my favorites is here. You have a federal grant? How large was your grant? \$850,000 a year over 5 years? So, that'll buy you some hot dogs. The other thing that people ask for help with is evaluation and technical assistance support. Matt, my colleague and partner, is an evaluation expert. How many grants have you done evaluations for Matt? Let's just say 50.

How many of you are nonprofits? How many of you are not a nonprofit yet? In most cases when you're applying for grants, they typically want to give it to a nonprofit. And I love talking sports, so I apologize if I miss anybody, but if you know football, most players have on equipment and put a helmet on. They will not let you on the field without your helmet. The same is the case





being a nonprofit. You can't even get in the game if you're not a nonprofit. We help a lot of organizations set up their nonprofits. It's a pretty simple process. We'll walk you through that process.

Capacity building, and then being considered for future grant partnership opportunities. Our expertise is not just in the federal space. There are a lot of organizations, state and local agencies, and foundations that actually give grants. So, I have a bonus handout for you as well because I really want to leave you with some tools.

I have secured corporate grants from the likes of Aflac, IBM, Chick Fil-A. I want to share with you just one letter that I have used to secure corporate funding on the ground. I love the federal government. I worked for them, I've gotten contracts with them, but there are so many agencies across our communities that we never ask for money. We drive by them every day. And so, I really want to give you a peek into that with the time that we have. Here is the service that we provide, and I shared some of this with you earlier.

As we get started with grants, I want to tell you this piece. We all get tired. You have to have a why. When it's raining outside and there's a proposal due, and for me Shawshank Redemption is on. All I want to do is cuddle up and watch it. But I have a why. My why started when I was born in South Carolina, proud son, third of four children. Great family. I grew up in the projects. I grew up in a neighborhood where I didn't know we were poor. There was a man that fixed everybody's bike. There was a woman that braided everybody's hair. There was a lady who always had milk, or bread, or butter. The way we worked it out was give me a stick of butter until Friday when I get paid. Once I get paid, I'm going to return the favor. It was all in the same neighborhood.

After living with both parents for 15 years, my dad who had been a felon and spent time in jail, was 15 years sober, no drugs, no alcohol, just a hardworking man, found a job where he worked for a year, and on my 15th birthday became a manager. For 14 years he worked 3 jobs, and my dad was the kind of guy that every job he had, he wore name tags. Do you know what that means? He was pushing a mop or picking up trash. This one year, from 14 to 15 of my life, my dad worked a hard year on a job where he had benefits. I'm not going to ask who has benefits in here, but there's a difference when you work an hourly job and one that has benefits. The concept of taking leave and you still get paid is the major difference. You get to relax. The neighborhoods that I grew up in, my dad kept in touch with all of his buddies. When he got this promotion, he went to a program and in celebration they gave him a plaque. Once he got this plaque, his 3 buddies said to him we have to celebrate. After 15 years of no drinking, no drugs, they said we have to celebrate. Now you all know what celebrate means.





We moved from the projects to a single-family home. By the way, we were renting the house, but I didn't care. We had a washer and dryer, our own kitchen, a front and backyard. In the projects you know you share yards. We had our own. I think the first time they asked him to go out and celebrate, he said no because I think he thought about us. As a man now, that's what I think. The second time they asked him he said no. Just because of the way the world works, they asked him again. He said listen, I'll have one. And after that I'm out. And so they had one beer and then another. He didn't come home for three days. I have two brothers and I remember all three of us going to bed but not going to sleep. Why didn't we go to sleep? We were looking for our dad. Long story short, he went from drinking that night, to smoking, to shooting. So, the cycle, you know how that goes. The word that we use professionally is he relapsed. I believe the spirit of the Lord is what saved him for that 15 years. He relapsed. So, for the next two years of my high school life, junior and senior years, I'm going to school, and there's a man laying in the street, and it's my father. I'm playing football Friday night and there's a man getting arrested outside the stands. That's my father. To wrap this up, because I want to connect this, I remember saying if I ever had the ability to work with people, I'm going to work with fathers. That's when I was 15. I did it at church. God bless my mom. There were 4 of us. I don't know what meal we missed, because somehow the grits, the eggs, the bacon, the biscuits, nothing stopped. The green sneakers that I wanted to wear for football practice, somehow, somehow I got my sneakers. I got my cleats. I'm thankful for her, but the thing that I just want to point to you is since 1991, I have worked with fathers in some capacity. The only way that you go from 1991 to 2019 and beyond, I'm not done yet, is you have to have a why.

I've met so many people in the last 20 some odd years that say I'm into fatherhood because Lisa said we have a grant. And that's their motivation. In this work, you have to have a bigger reason why you're doing this. The first thing I want you to write down is, establish your why. I don't want anyone else to experience what I experienced. So, when I'm tired in the airport and I see a man pushing a child in the stroller, I tell him, keep it up brother. He doesn't know me, I don't know him. But I want that to be my why. If you apply for a grant you either hear a yes or a no. What are those odds? 50%. If you don't apply for a grant, what are those odds? 0%. First thing I want you to know is you have to apply. If you understand your why, you have to apply. If you are scared, you're not the right leader. You have to have a why. When I write grants, I see faces. I see people connecting with their children. I see men coming out of incarceration starting out. I see faces. It's bigger than putting pen on paper. The first word that comes to mind is mindset, and my mindset is what if we win? I know some are like what if we lose. So, you have to have your why.

Alright, let's take a quick pop quiz. First question. Writing a grant proposal is best done by a team. True or false. (True) Why do you say true?

Participant: You can be more thorough.



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Participant: You can't do it in a silo. Whoever is going to implement the grant, you need them on the team. You can have a great writer, but it doesn't mean anything if you don't have the right people. You need to have an invested team.

Patrick Patterson: It's important to have people who are on the ground involved in the process. Every year people inbox me on Facebook, "Heard about you from Lisa Thomas, I really need to holler at you." My response is "Call this number," which is my wife's number. My wife is the keeper of all time. My personal time, my work time. She is also a gatekeeper. I've also had people say, "I have two days left to finish this proposal, can you help me? You have to smile when you say, No, I'm so sorry." You have to make sure you have a team. I'm not a numbers person, but I can tell a story. So, you need both of those things. And so, the multiple perspectives are very important.

Second question. You can use federal grant dollars to pay for religious materials and activities. Anybody think it is true? (False)

I've been in situations where faith-based organizations get the funding and it's a large amount. They decide that there's a leak in this old building, and they're going to take \$10,000 and fix it. I'm going to call it "other expenses." The snowball method works, people misuse money. Here are the rules. You can be faith-based and receive federal funds, but you have to separate their activities. You can use place and time as separators

So, they send in the monthly report and nobody said anything, so they said you know what? We need new bibles. This is how this happens. Just because of the way the snowball works, people misuse or fraudulently use funds. You cannot use federal dollars for religious materials or activities. Here are the rules that I used to teach when I was with the federal government. If you are faith based, you can receive federal money. Have you heard of Jewish Family Services? Catholic Charities? Those groups are religious. The YMCA, what's the C stand for? They can receive federal funds. But what they do very well is separate their activities. If there are religious activities over here, they do those independently of their government funded activities. The two rules that I apply are space and time. If we're having bible study in this room, then you do your federally funded activities in another room. You also want to use time as a separator as well. So, you want to think about how you implement both of those strategies.

Last question. If the funder says the limit on your proposal is 45 pages, you should give them a 45-page proposal. True or false? (False)

In my experience working at a foundation and in the federal government reading proposals, in grants the rule is less is more. Typically, they give you a stack of proposals to read. People think





they go through a machine. No, there's humans reading. My first grant review, I was a very young 28-year-old married man with no children. We were in Delaware and asked to come to D.C., and for one week we were going to read 10 proposals. They were going to pay me \$1,500 at the end of the week for reading 10 proposals. I could not believe they were going to pay me to read. What people don't know is this. Sunday night when I got to D.C., there was a room full of people just like this. We were all in line to get \$1,500 on Friday. They brought us into a room, they put us in groups of five. It has to be an odd number because you need a tie breaker. As we're in this room they say here are the applicants that you're going to read proposals from. It's just a sheet of paper with 10 organizations. Then they bring out this box of proposals. These proposals were a maximum 100 pages. Most people wrote close to 100 pages. Now what I didn't tell you as a part of my life is, I was a poor student in high school. I finished high school with a 1.3 GPA. So, I wasn't a good reader. I've gotten better. I've finished college but it wasn't my favorite thing to do. But when you're reading proposals, when people win, they don't care how you scored them. But if they didn't win, they want to know why. You can't just say it was bad. You have got to say on page 45 you missed the section. In a group of 5 we all review, and we sit down and compare notes to say which are the best ones. There was one person that wrote a proposal in that stack. The limit was 100 pages. Their proposal was 47 pages. You want to condition the reader to want to fund you. Part of that is applying this rule. Less is more. Most of my proposals when I write them, I do my best to write within 5 pages less of the maximum. Because I want them wanting to read. You do not want to be in the stack on the last day of reviews and have 100 pages, because I'm not in any condition to want to fund you. So, you want to make sure that you're giving people the position and the opportunity to want to fund you. Two keys to grants. Timelines and guidelines. Who's written a proposal before? Let me tell you one thing you never have enough of. Time. I just saw something that came through the other day and it was due July 1st. I got it in May. My wife said you know, you're going to Nashville next week. I was like what, it's June? The clock is ticking. The way I manage that is I do an outline, and I work backwards from the due date. The second thing that I do with my proposals is, if I can, two days outside of the due date I submit. I have unfortunately had the experience of preparing a proposal, that was due at 5:00 p.m. I was done and went to run some errands. I was back at 4:00. Everything was already prepared. All I needed to do was hit submit. And for whatever reason, the world is hitting the same button so there's issues with the upload. You cannot play with time when you're working on proposals. So, rule of thumb, two to three days outside of the due date is what you want to do.

The last thing, with respect to grants is guidelines. I've had the benefit of working for the federal government and a foundation. Most funders are going to tell you what you need to know to win. They literally give you the answers to the test. What we do is interpret things, and it makes it difficult. Ninety percent of securing funding has to do with timelines and guidelines. If you can follow these two things, you're in the game.





Here's an exercise I want you to do. I want you to turn to the person next to you and answer this question with your partner. What is the first step in the grant writing process? Start writing, review the request for proposal, establish a grant writing team, conduct your research, or craft the budget.

For those who said start writing, raise your hand. Review the RFP, raise your hand. Establish a grant writing team, raise your hand. Conduct your research. We have some researchers in the house. Craft the budget. Okay the majority of you said review the RFP. Here's my process, and I've taken training around the country. I've done federal trainings, I've completed training at Duke University, but I've also written grants. I don't assemble my team until I know we're qualified. It doesn't take 10 people to find out if we're eligible. It's good to have more than one, because the RFP can sometimes be a little tricky, but my first step, and I've seen others do this, is to read the RFP. To find out what they're asking. You may not be a good fit. There is nothing worse than somebody trying to fit what they do into something that they don't do. So read the RFP, find out the requirements, find out what's point worthy.

I have had the occasion of winning a grant by two points over somebody. I'm talking millions of dollars. Every point matters. And so you want to be very intentional about finding out the rules of the game. Sometimes they say you must have a letter from child support, you must have a letter from the school department or the Department of Education. Find out the requirements first then, logically start lining up the pieces that match what they're requesting. You don't have a lot of time, and there's nothing worse than wasting a week thinking that we're heading in the right direction when we're not. Read the RFP. It's very important.

Let me give you five C's. **Compelling.** What does compelling mean?

Participant: It grabs you.

Patrick Patterson: It grabs you. I read a proposal recently. It said Oklahoma has the highest rate of female incarceration in the United States. That's the first sentence. You're making a compelling case. If you start your proposals off with the beautiful, rosy, poetic story, and I'm a reviewer, and it's Friday night and you're the last one? That's not working for you. You want to convince the reader that we have a problem. I use common language. I'll say this community is on fire. We have an urgent need for resources. You have to use words that give you the extremes, so people understand the depth of the problem. They use words like highest, lowest rate. But you want to make sure that people understand clearly there's a problem.

Concise. Less is more. Find someone who can help you read and say listen, you said that twice. People who are reading proposals are reading a lot of proposals, so you want to make sure you're concise.





Competitive. On multiple levels, what makes you competitive is who you propose as your team, what their experience is, and your budget. When I worked in the government, many times it was least cost to the government. Therefore, the difference between people winning \$1 million and nothing was that they overbid by a couple hundred thousand dollars. You want to be competitive. That's not just in your proposal, but in your pricing as well.

Clear. If you like using big words, don't do it in a proposal. My first review, the one I told you about earlier, one of the reviewers was laid off from his job. He was a truck driver. He didn't talk MSW, he didn't talk DCYF, he didn't talk OFA. He didn't talk our language. People wrote these beautiful, intelligent, high level proposals and they used all these acronyms. He scored it like that. If he didn't understand it because he didn't have a lot of time, he just scored it. It didn't make sense. So, you want to speak at a level that the average person can understand what you're saying. Clarity is key. Always say 4th to 6th grade level is where you want your verbiage in your proposal. If you want to show that you're intelligent, talk to your college classmates. Do it on your own time. But, if you're clear about your why, you won't waste time on a proposal trying to show people that you're smart. You want to be clear. You want people to read and understand this program is in Houston; it's serving this many fathers. Here are their doors, they're going to have outreach. Here's the outcome they're anticipating with the services. It should be that logical of an experience reading your proposal.

The last C is **compliant**. We talked about the RFP. What are some of the things that are listed in the RFP that they ask you to follow?

Participant: Font.

Patrick Patterson: Font. What else? Space. Margins.

Participant: Number of words. Headings.

Patrick Patterson: The number of words and headings. Sometimes they will say please italicize your heading. It is important that we follow instructions. I worked for a man when I was in South Carolina. We had an \$85 million foundation. When I first got the job, he said "If you don't follow my rules without my money, you're not going to follow the rules with my money." If the RFP says do not send tapes, then please don't send tapes. It sounds silly but people every day do things hoping to stand out, when what they are doing is ruling themselves out. Make it simple. This to me is a simple, technical rule that people decide early on I'm going to do me. And I know a lot of do-me people. They don't last long. Their efforts don't last long.





I think about my father. I think about the children who need to be with both parents, and that regulates me. I want to send in a sentence that just gives you I went to college, but then I recognize the person reading doesn't care about that. They really want to know how are you going to help these children?

Basics of Grant Writing Video is shown

This is one of my favorite videos. And I want you to tell me what you hear after it.

Video: Each and every year, the Ford Foundation awards approximately 1,400 grants to organizations all over the world that serve the public good. We fund a broad range of issues but at the heart of our work is the belief that all people deserve the opportunity to fulfill their potential, contribute to society, and have their voices heard.

Our grant making tackles the systems and structures that keep those opportunities out of reach for many communities. Each of our areas of work from education to human rights to economic fairness is overseen by teams of program officers. These teams are experts in their fields with years of experience and deep ties to the communities with which they work.

How do grants get made? Based on their extensive knowledge of the most pressing issues in their fields, program teams seek out people and organizations with bold ideas and scalable solutions. The teams work with prospective grantees to create grant proposals to support those solutions. Grant applications may also be submitted through the Ford Foundation website, but in a typical year less than 1 percent of unsolicited applications receive a grant.

How are proposals reviewed? Once a proposal is selected for funding, it goes through a thorough review which ensures we comply with all legal requirements for charitable giving. We hold ourselves to the highest standards of accountability. The foundation then formally approves the grant and issues an official grant letter.

How are grants monitored? Through visits, convenings, and written reports, program teams maintain close communication with the people and organizations they support, learning about their progress and challenges. It is a privilege to work on the front lines of social change with these visionary leaders and organizations, and it is our mission to support them transparently and responsibly.

Patrick Patterson: What did you hear? You heard the 1 percent. What is that? You know what unsolicited means? Let me tell you in lay language. Worked all week. Saturday morning at 7 a.m. my doorbell rings. Some person is selling vacuum cleaners. I didn't want a vacuum cleaner. That's unsolicited. Typically speaking if I didn't ask for it, I don't want it. In the grants'





world, what this means is someone who put together a really nice proposal decided to mail it to an organization. They didn't ask you for it, and what they're saying here is when you do that, less than 1% of those get funded.

I've had the benefit of writing grants for \$53 million. In the last couple of years, I've gotten \$100,000 from corporate organizations. At the core of every grant that I've had success in winning, is a relationship. For those who don't like spending time with people, and don't like speaking to people and don't like saying good morning, you thwart the opportunity to secure that funding. It's legitimate, authentic relationships.

There are people in this room I've known for 20 years in positions of influence that were not when we first started hanging out. But there are authentic relationships in place, so it's important that we understand that you want to position yourself to secure funding through relationships as well.

I'm going to give you some strategies and we'll go through this letter. I'm giving you seven things.

Read and follow the RFP. Ninety percent is following the instructions. I've seen some smart people with great programs who've not gotten funded because they didn't submit a cover letter. You spent two weeks doing nothing but working the RFP and you didn't submit a cover letter. Read the RFP. Follow it.

Organize. Put your team in place. On my team there's an evaluator. I'm pretty good at budgets. I can do budgets. I know how to spend \$2 million quickly. I'm really good at the narrative piece. The logic model, my evaluator has helped me with tremendously. It's literally finding the right people to help you. I'm not the best person to secure letters of support. You need somebody who has relationships.

Start with an outline. It might not be a full outline. It could be points, our partners, our approach, our evaluation plan. If you just write that, it literally follows the template of the RFP. You don't have a lot of time, so you want to do things to help you save time.

Keep it simple. Get someone to read your proposal. Someone who is going to be honest with you.

Use current data. How old is data when it's old? How many years? Do we say four or five? It depends on the source. For example, the census is 2019. Is that data old or not? That's your most recent data. And by most accounts that's pretty reliable data. It's recommended. It's respected





data. Always say four or five years as well. What are some of the good sources of data that we can use?

Participant: KIDS COUNT

Patrick Patterson: KIDS COUNT is amazing. Who has not used KIDS COUNT? If you have not, just plan four hours of your day because it's fascinating what you find out about your community. What's another good source of good data?

Participant: Census.gov

Participant: The DOE.

Participant: Community health profiles

Participant: American Community Survey

Participant: Department of Labor

Participant: The police department. Every day they're tracking what happened.

Patrick Patterson: So, there's several good sources, but it must be reliable data sources.

Integrate best practices. A lot of times people are afraid to do something new because they've been doing something well for so long. Follow the trends. This is very recent and some of you may be aware of this, but in the last 8 to 10 hours, the mode of communications for a lot of the fathers that we're seeking is not calling them. What is it? Texting them.

Some of us don't like data. But you can't just say it's a great idea. You have to be able to back it up with some evidence. For the last year we've tracked communication patterns with our fathers. The response rate when you make phone calls, is X. The response rate to text messages is Y. That backs up this integration of a new wave approach.

Last Saturday I started a Facebook group called Carolina Fathers. I'm from South Carolina and live in North Carolina. I started the group after talking to a man who is married, great profile, big house, cars, and lonely. So, I decided to start this group for fathers. I was thinking it would be a closed group just talking back and forth to each other. As of today, there are 1,600 fathers in the group. We post questions. The first person posted "I didn't know my father." The group is closed, it's safe, it's ours. The next day someone else posted "I'm about to get a divorce. I don't want to leave my children." So, now we close it in a little bit tighter just so they feel safe, but





what I will tell you is that's a channel. We're about to organize a major cookout. But these guys are like where do we link up? I finally found a tribe. You can't let that go to waste. In a proposal that I'm going to write in the future, one of my channels that I'm going to offer is this group, as one example. So, you have to use that. There's data there that supports that.

Collect letters of support early. Let's look at this letter together. A lot of my mentors get on me about giving out information like this. But I don't want you to leave wondering what I'm talking about. So, take this home and I'm going to ask you not to use this as yours. I want this used as a template. I don't care what you do with it. Put your own stamp on this. It means something different when someone says you wrote me this letter, what'd you write in it? And you have to look at it to review. I can tell you what this says because I wrote it. So, take this as a template. I want you to learn the practice of doing this.

There's an African proverb that I live by. Those who are closest to the problem are closest to the solution. It is imperative in your proposals that you explain you didn't just sit amongst professionals to figure out the solution. We actually engaged the who. The clients. The target population.

You have to remember, you want to help people want to fund you. Who's opened a piece of mail and you saw the number and you said I'll read this after. I'm asking for \$4,500 but I'm also giving it to them in a bite size. You want them to continue reading the letter. You don't want somebody to see the number 45, because most people when they see a letter like this, they're going to look for how much they are asking for. If you give them a number that is not realistic for them to fund you, they're not going to fund you. The other thing I want you to understand is this. When I say \$45, 100 boys, it gives you options. It's important that you give people options as well. But you want to give it to them in bite sizes.

The possibility of someone giving you more than what you can handle is real, because most corporations have mandates. You want to be very intentional. I don't play when it comes to what I'm trying to get. My first grant I got from Wells Fargo, I did not get funded. That was four years ago. I was upset because I had been banking with them since I was in college. I could've done what most of us do. Go to Facebook and say ban or boycott Wells Fargo. The next week I went to the lady who oversaw that department and I asked her "what can I do better?" rather than "what did I do wrong?" It's two different conversations. She said, well first of all, what you submitted was too low. I asked for \$500. It cost her more to process it than to pay me. She said good questions get you good answers. I asked her how much I should ask for. This is building a relationship. She said at least \$10,000. I wanted \$500. And do you know why I asked for \$500? Because I was scared. If she tells me no, no harm no foul. She said you need to ask for at least \$10,000. The second reason why I didn't get funded was because I submitted my application late. I didn't know. There's no deadline. But banks give their money out at certain times of the year. I





asked, when should I submit next year? She said I should come in August. And should I email anyone? She gave me all of my answers. If I had come in, thrown the proposal paper at her, and said you better give me some money, I would've lost that conversation.

I want to close by saying this to you. Ask for what you want. Particularly if you have a why in place. My why is very clear every day. You have to make that happen. Last thing, I'll read the last piece.

We are a registered 501(c)(3) organization in the state of South Carolina. This guarantees that your contribution is tax deductible. Why is that last sentence important? You want to tell them. Don't make people look on your website to see if you are a 501(c)(3). Help them help you. And then the last sentence. We are hopeful that you will join us in building the future for these students.

Finally, each of our sponsors will have their logos featured on our website and all printed materials to highlight your commitment to the local community and our families. This bank, this law firm asked how much the other group gave us. I told them in transparency. He talked, then he asked me where is their logo going to be on it? He said I want to make sure I understand where ours is going to be. So, I said where do you want yours to be? You can't close the conversation. So, he said I want ours at the top. Well that's a whole other bracket. But let me tell you, I'm not playing games. I'm trying to serve more children. So, if you go in there not prepared, you're going to lose.

I used to go in with my wife, because my wife is a mean watcher. I'm talking and she's checking the whole vibe. She's the one that can tell me, Patrick, take it down a thousand. We know I love this work, but she's the one that's going to help me understand the balance that's required.

You can't go in by yourself. You have to go in with someone else, because there are moments when they would ask her a question and that is when I am able to get my thoughts together. But these conversations are important. Grant funding is yours. The federal government wants to give this money out. I worked for the feds. They don't want you turning that money in if you're doing good work. It's really important that we understand that positioning yourself to receive the funding is very important.

Last thing I want to do is show you a budget. What's the numbers say? Is this a good budget or not?

Participant: No.

Patrick Patterson: What's wrong with it?



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Participant: If your staff takes up most of your budget then it is not going to work.

Patrick Patterson: Make sure your budget adds up. Make sure you have a trained fiscal person. I say this all the time when I'm talking to programs. You can have uneducated, untrained community people run any part of the agency but if I'm giving you \$1million, I need to make sure that you have a person who knows how to manage this money.

Last thing is evaluation. What gets measured? What gets managed? In social work there's a rule. If it wasn't written down, it never happened. We have to track what we're doing. Funders want to know what's working and what you can do to improve what's working. I'm not a fan of sharing only good news with funders, because funders want to learn too. They're giving up more money. If something is not working, they want to know what works. The way you become transparent with a funder is you build a relationship. I have a rule. When I get money from organizations, no surprises. The minute you surprise them with a report that says we thought we would meet this number, but we're 80 % below that number, and you haven't warned them, it's a problem. In the next two years there is close to \$200 million available for various programs. I want to encourage you to apply. Make sure you have a team. Follow rules and be timely. Let's do three quick takeaways before we close out. Give me one takeaway.

Participant: Don't be scared.

Patrick Patterson: Takeaway number 2, remember your why. We've gone international doing grants, and father trainings as well. This is not something that I wanted to do, but this work chose me. My first grant was me, deciding at my church that I was going to ask local organizations for funding. Not because I wanted to say I got a grant, but I wanted to help other people. It's really important that whatever is your why, that you have it. But it's taken me around the country a couple times. I'm a child from the projects with a 1.3 GPA. I have been around the world and I'm grateful that my children and wife have been a part of it. Takeaway number 3, establish relationships.

Last thing I want to share with you is a door prize. This is a children's book that my daughters and I wrote. I'm going to give this to somebody. It's called I Love When Daddy Reads to Me. It is a children's book that we've sold 7,000 copies in 27 states and now in 2 different countries. It is a tool that we are proud of because my goal in writing this with my daughters was for us to have an experience together. What has now happened is other fathers are having an experience with their children. So, when I tell you dream, dream.

People are watching us There are those from your community who know you are here in Tennessee, they know you're trying to do this work, and they're watching you. By proxy you are





inspiring them. So, the faith that I have has replaced the fear that I had. In this work, if you've been doing this for a little bit longer than a day, you realize this is no regular walk. It's a faith walk. And the way that you treat people will determine how you get treated. So you hang out in this hotel and you see people that you don't know, and you see them and you turn your head, and next thing you know you are at their office asking for a grant, and the one that says good morning you ask weren't you in Nashville? I think I saw you. Now that's an intentional comment. I think I saw you. Weren't you in Patrick's session?



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