Sharpening Your Focus:
Tips on Grant Proposal Preparation

NIH Renewals: Know When to Hold ‘em and Know When to Fold ‘em

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- Renewals
- Editing
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A successful grant renewal is about a new direction, not about continuing the same work, or about the fact that you did not finish the original work.

You may apply for a renewal if you:

- Found something novel in your previous work, or
- Have a new way to look at an old problem, or
- A new collaborator is enabling an exciting new direction.

You will have new aims and often a new title.

Give the reviewer confidence based on your past productivity, your progress (include report in 12 pp Strategy limit), your publications, and your new data. (Does it make more sense to take a no cost extension and finish some papers before
submitting the renewal? Average one paper/year of funding $250K.)

If you have made an impact in the past, reviewers are more likely to think that you will make another in the future. (Use your Biosketch personal statement to reiterate the impact you made.)

Don’t just list the new data you found, interpret it for the reviewers and let them know why the data lead to a new, promising direction. Your productive lab may have given you lots of new data, but you need to take a “big picture” perspective and evaluate which will lead to the largest impact or breakthrough.

Check out the competition. You should have a good idea of what your fellow players are holding in their hands, either based on grants they have had funded, articles they published, or by their scientific reputation. If other players already hold the winning hand in your intended new direction, reassess your chances. Check out: enGRANT SCIENTIFIC.

**Bottom line – be realistic about evaluating your chances.**

*This article was based on a presentation by Dorothy Lewis (Internal Medicine, University of Texas Health Science Center through PI Association)*