The Proposal Title –
Lure in the Reader

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This is a series of tips published in UMMS Research News about writing proposals.

Think of fishing for that elusive big catch – what strategies would you use as bait for the reader?

The title should:

- Match interests of reviewers and use appropriate key words.
  - Title is one element evaluated by NIH-CSR to assign application to study section

- Be specific, indicating the goal/product/payoff of project.
  - No generic terms, e.g., “project”
• No sweeping goals or processes, e.g., “study of mixed function oxygenases”

• Reflect the research problem and, possibly, approach to studying it.
  • Relates to Aims and Significance
  • Conveys novelty

• Use simple language; the more technical or discipline-specific the funding source, the more technical with acronyms your title can be.
  • e.g., okay to use DNA as widely understood term, maybe not CYP286.4
  • Most titles need to be understood by lay persons

• Be memorable, but not funny or flippant.

See some good samples:

• “Mechanism of reduced heart failure pathogenesis with phytochemical intake” from UMMS Grant Proposal Sampler (This site is password-protected with access restricted to Medical School faculty, staff, and postdoctoral fellows.)

• "Structural controls of functional receptor and antibody binding to viral capsids" from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).