

# Responsive and Effective Proposal Writing

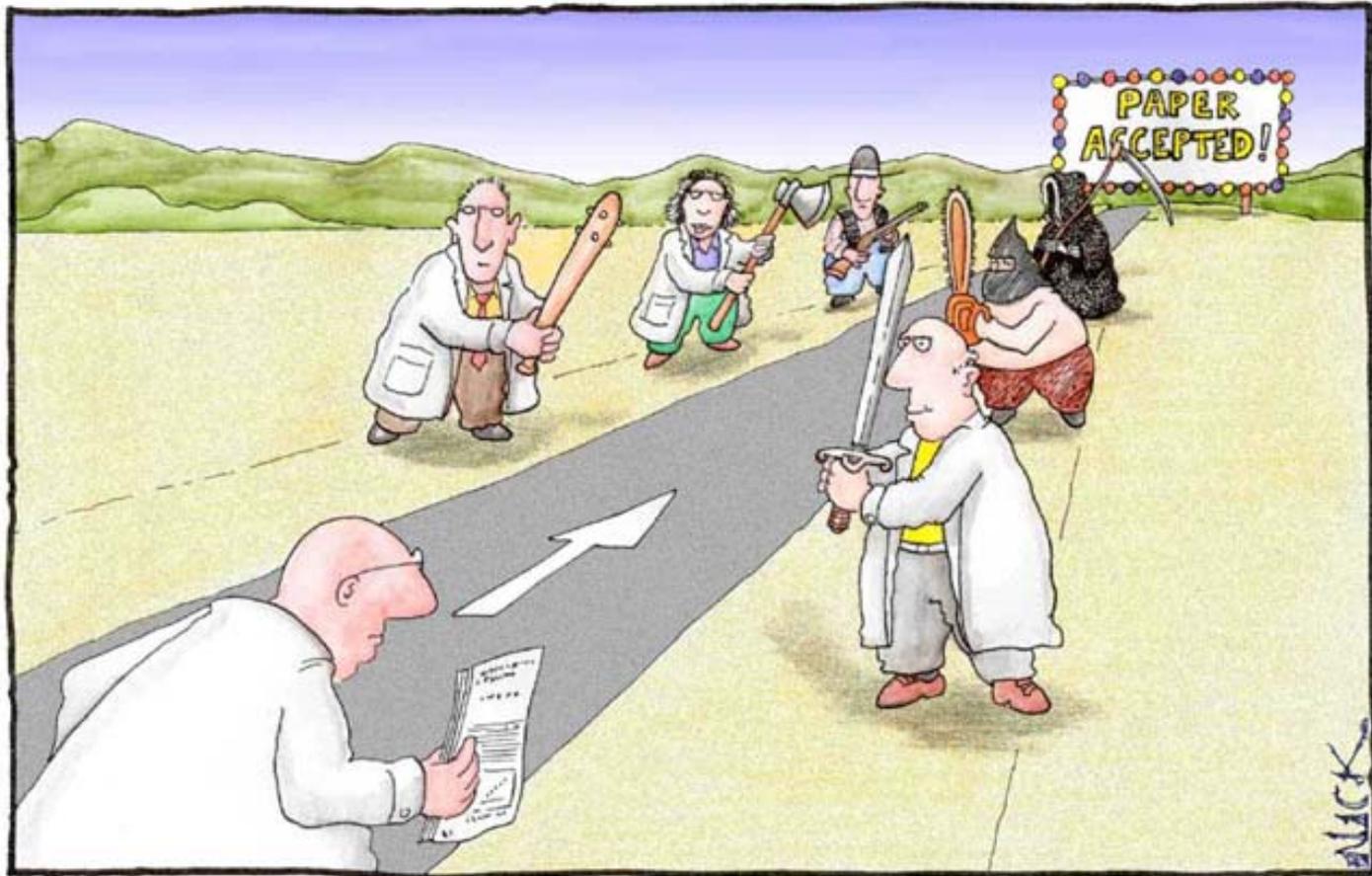
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University of Wisconsin-Madison

NEUP Workshop  
July 27-28, 2010



# Everyone wants to successfully get through peer review



Most scientists regarded the new streamlined peer-review process as 'quite an improvement.'

# Dilemma of the Junior Faculty

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There are so many research areas, how do I pick effectively



# Dilemma of the Senior Faculty

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I know so very, very much, how do I decide what to share with DOE

# Why was I asked to give this talk?

In the last two years I:

- Started the ATR NSUF job
- Haven't had time to be a lead proposal writer

and as a result:

- Wisconsin has done well on NEUP grants



# So I asked colleagues what they think works

POOCH CAFÉ

BY PAUL GILLIGAN



and here is what they said

# Know the topics

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Attend the DOE programmatic meetings to discuss topics of interest

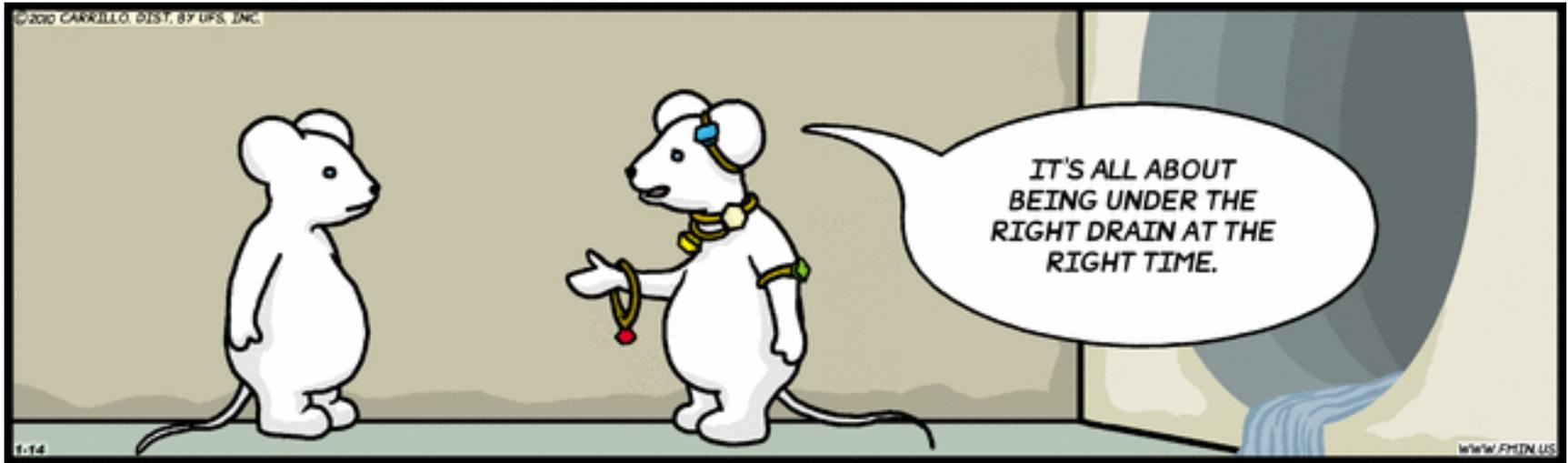


AD 763: Hopeful entrants in the first 'Easter Island Idol' competition.

# Choosing a topic

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Make sure that you have a clear understanding of the issues and do your research on the topic



# Choosing a topic

Work with people at the National laboratories to focus the scope of the work to their needs

Kemal  
Pasamehmetoglu

Phillip Finck

Jon Carmack



Dave Hill simulator

# Choosing a topic

Make sure that the proposal has a technical relevance to the program and attempts to answer key engineering questions



Trained Calculus Dogs

# Choosing a topic

Don't try to solve the whole problem, particularly for modelers. Nuclear materials are extremely complex. If you are studying IASCC or something of similar complexity be honest about the small part to which you might contribute and be clear about how it fits into solving the whole problem. Promising to model quantitatively all of a problem that has been challenging for 50 years is not necessary and will undermine the realistic and valuable parts of a proposal. Probably the same goes for experimental characterization/understanding.



# Choosing a topic

For those who are used to NSF, and DOE BES to a lesser extent, the balance of revolutionary but likely impractical vs. useful but perhaps incremental is somewhat different. Solid sensible plans that would not be considered by NSF are, I think, often valued by NE.



# Networking

Be aware that people at labs and in industry in nuclear often have many references (e.g., technical reports) that are not widely available but may be the pre-eminent data in the field. Interaction with people in the field at established institutions is therefore very important. Also, people in nuclear seem to be eager to help out on proposals, and often are willing to do so for no financial support and not even be Co-PIs. Don't be shy in asking.



# Teaming

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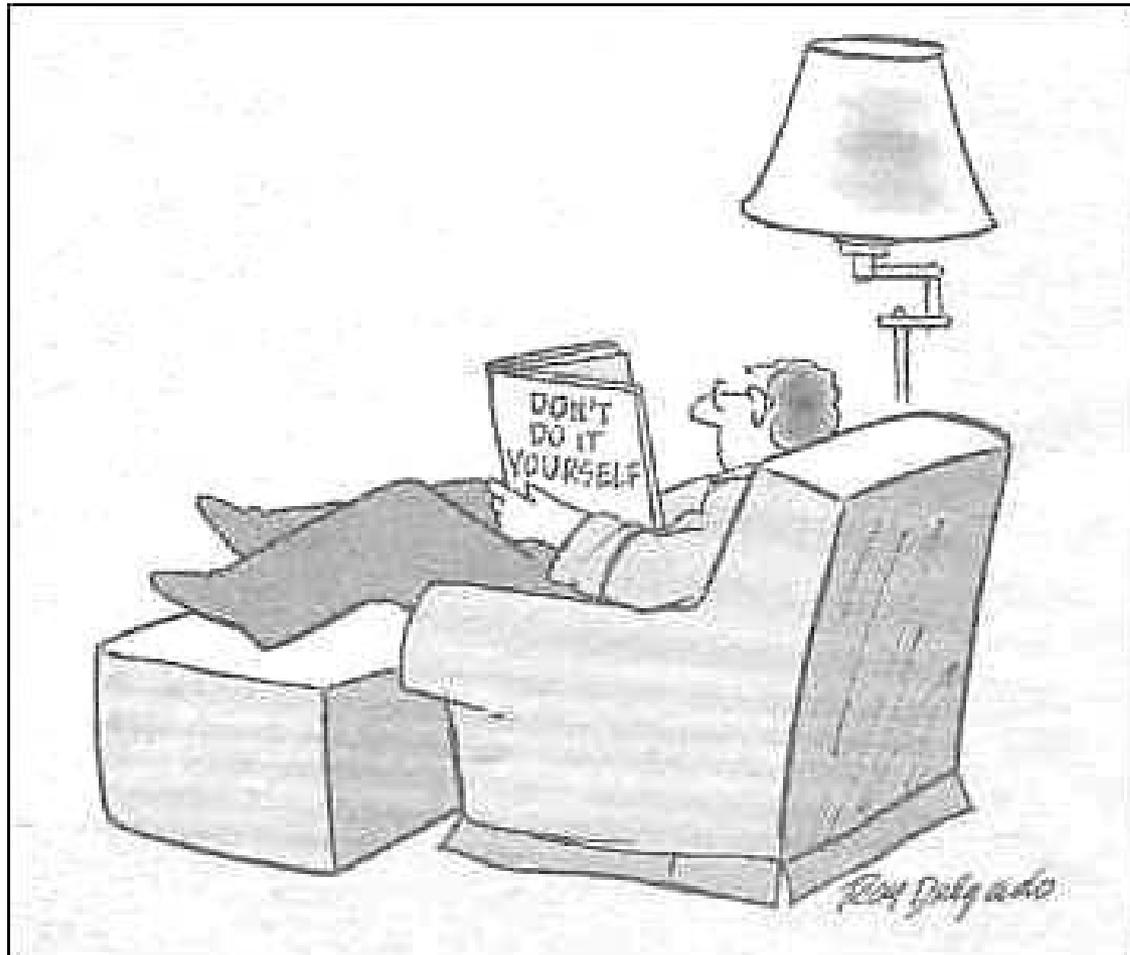
Develop a coherent plan to work with Labs to disseminate the information gained from the proposal - good to have a lab member on the proposal if possible.



# Teaming

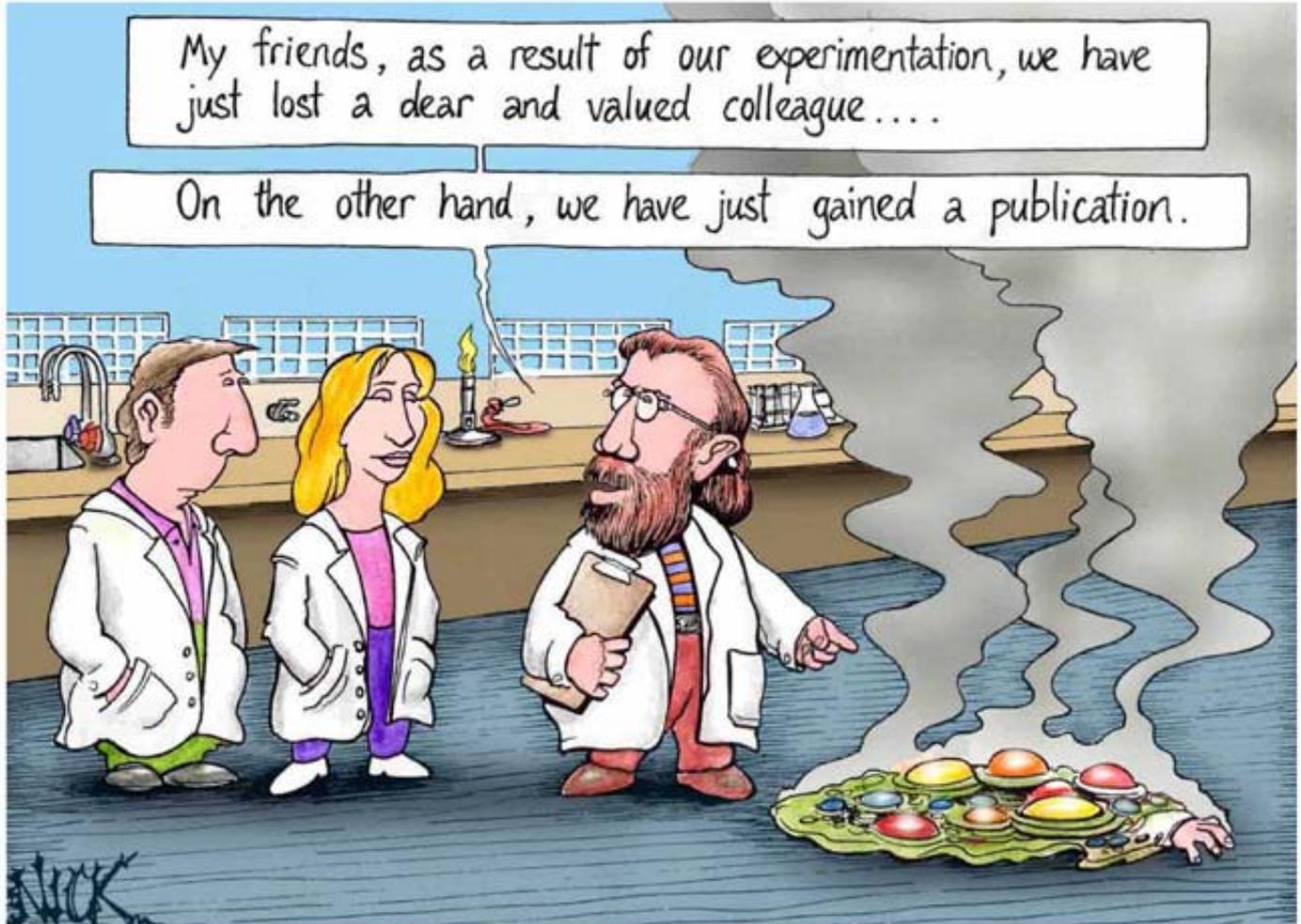
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Leverage work on other areas to make proposal more cost effective



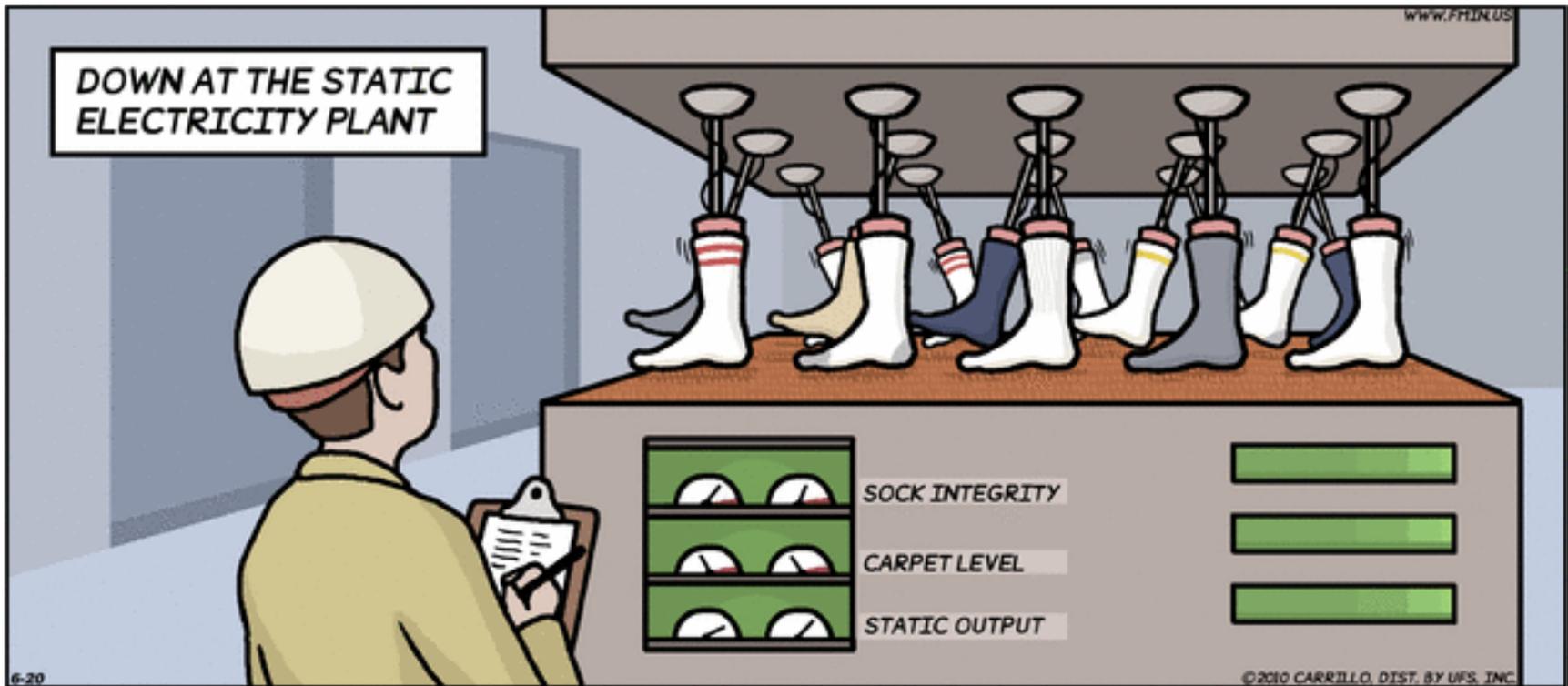
# Building a team

Try to build a team which includes the national experts in the field of interest.



# Propose to your expertise

State clearly the capabilities at your institution and the outcomes of the research



# Propose to your expertise

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Know what work is already being performed



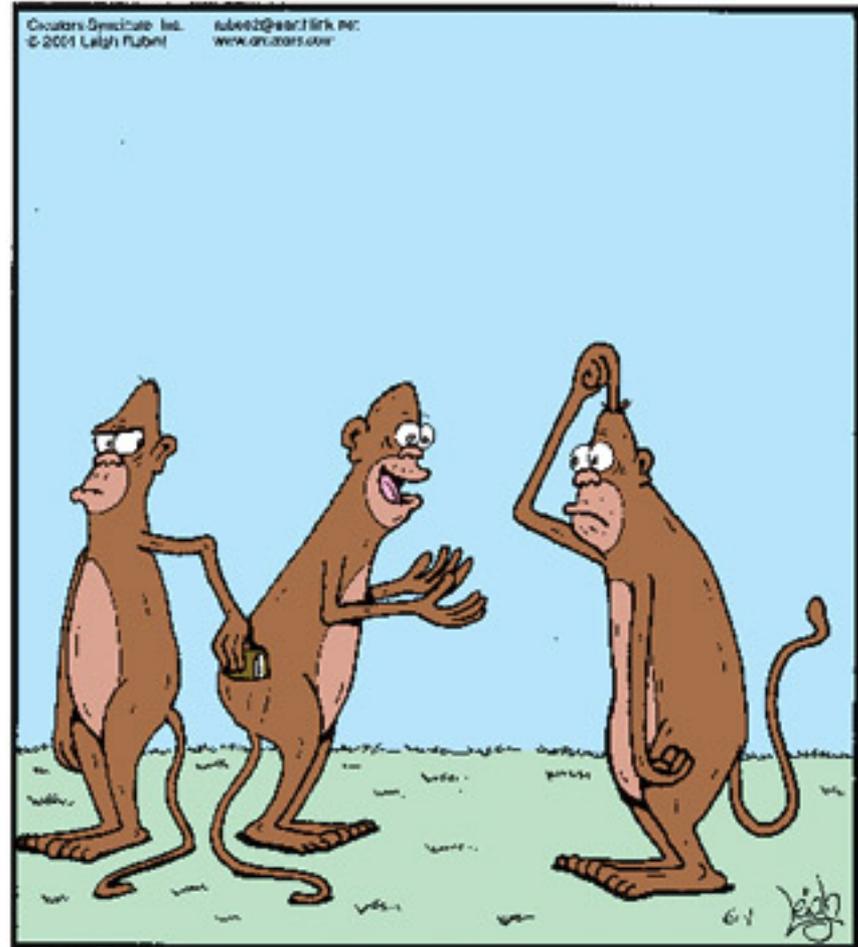
# Balance your proposal

Do not over-write part of the proposal (background, experiment, budget) at the expense of the rest



# Team to strengthen your proposal

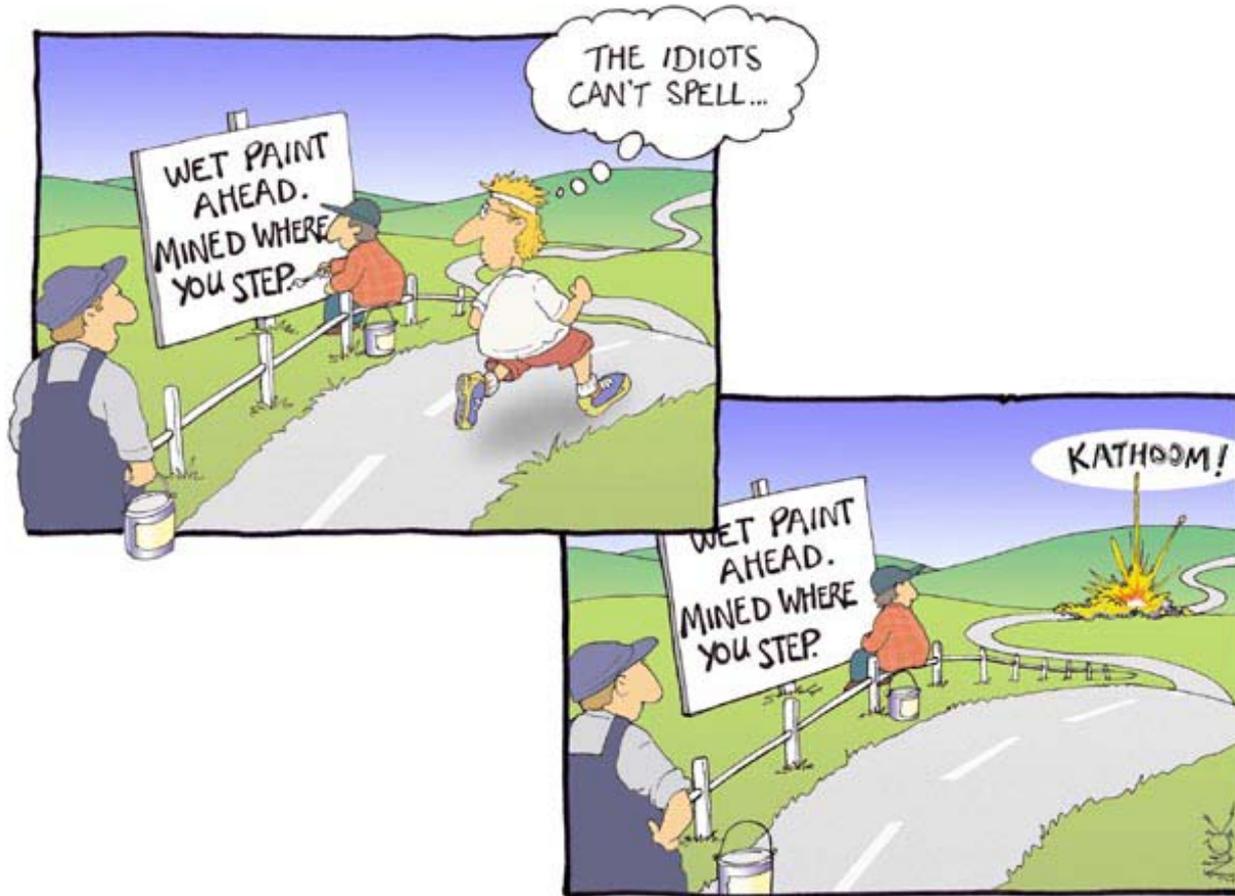
Balance your capability  
with others



"This is fantastic! Now that we can walk upright, just think of all the wonderful and constructive things we'll be able to do with our hands!"

# Proposal presentation

Make sure the proposal is written well - English, content and organization



# Be reasonable in your budget requests

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Know the total available funding in the program where you are going to submit the proposal and then plan budget accordingly (example 2010 LWRS)

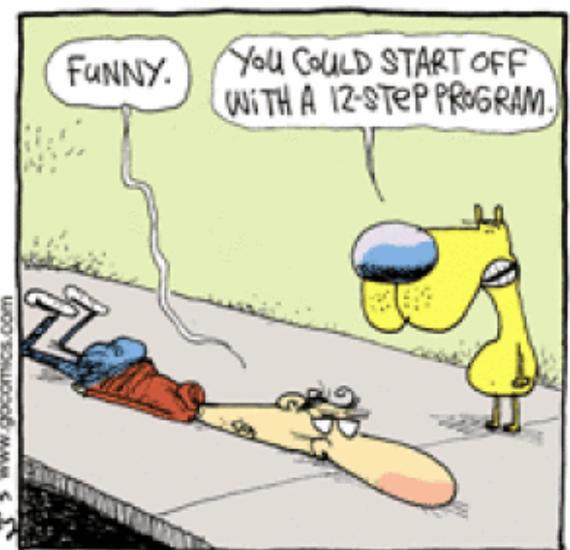
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**“We believe in paying our employees as much as they need.  
Since you’ll be at your desk 90 hours a week,  
you won’t need much.”**

# Self-evaluation

Start as early as possible, and perform a critical evaluation regularly



 GOCOMICS.

**GET A LAUGH!**

# Self-evaluation

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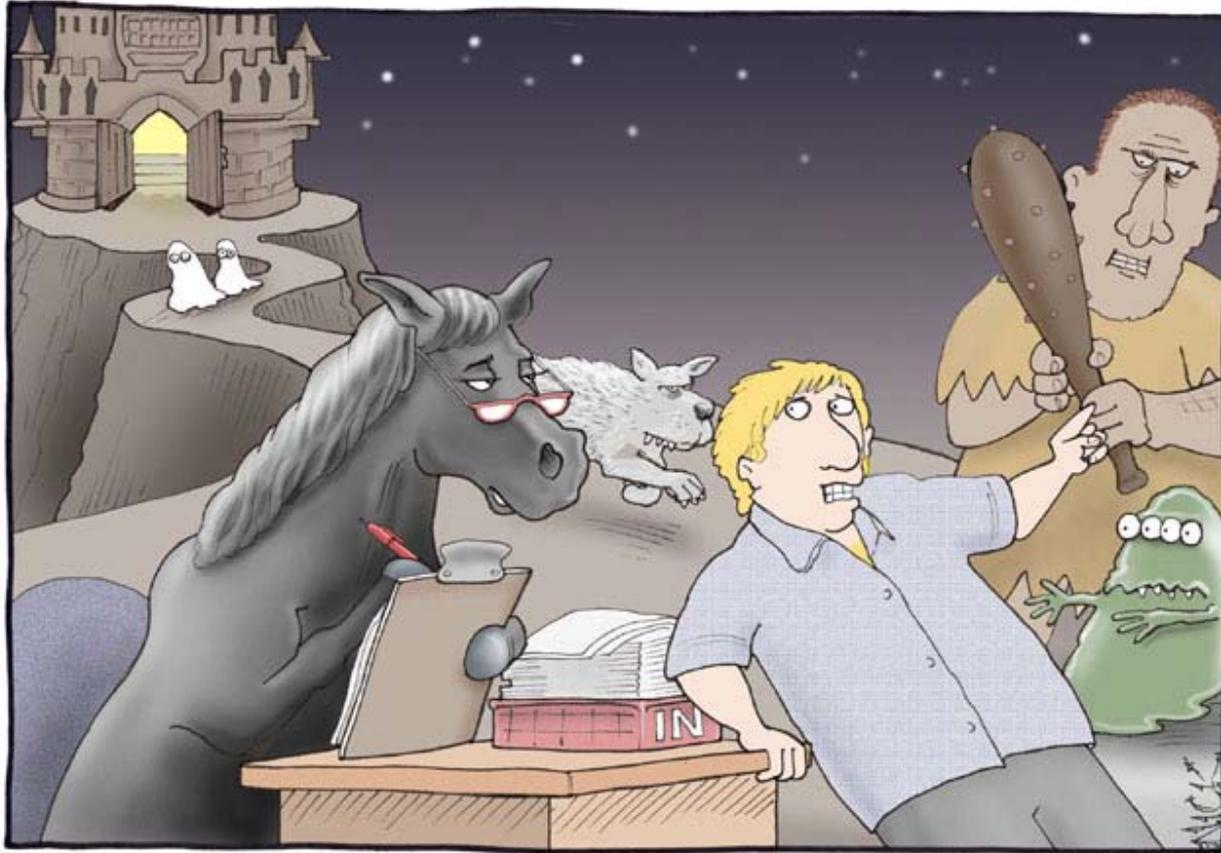
Read your proposal carefully to make sure it says what you want



# Be ready if you are successful

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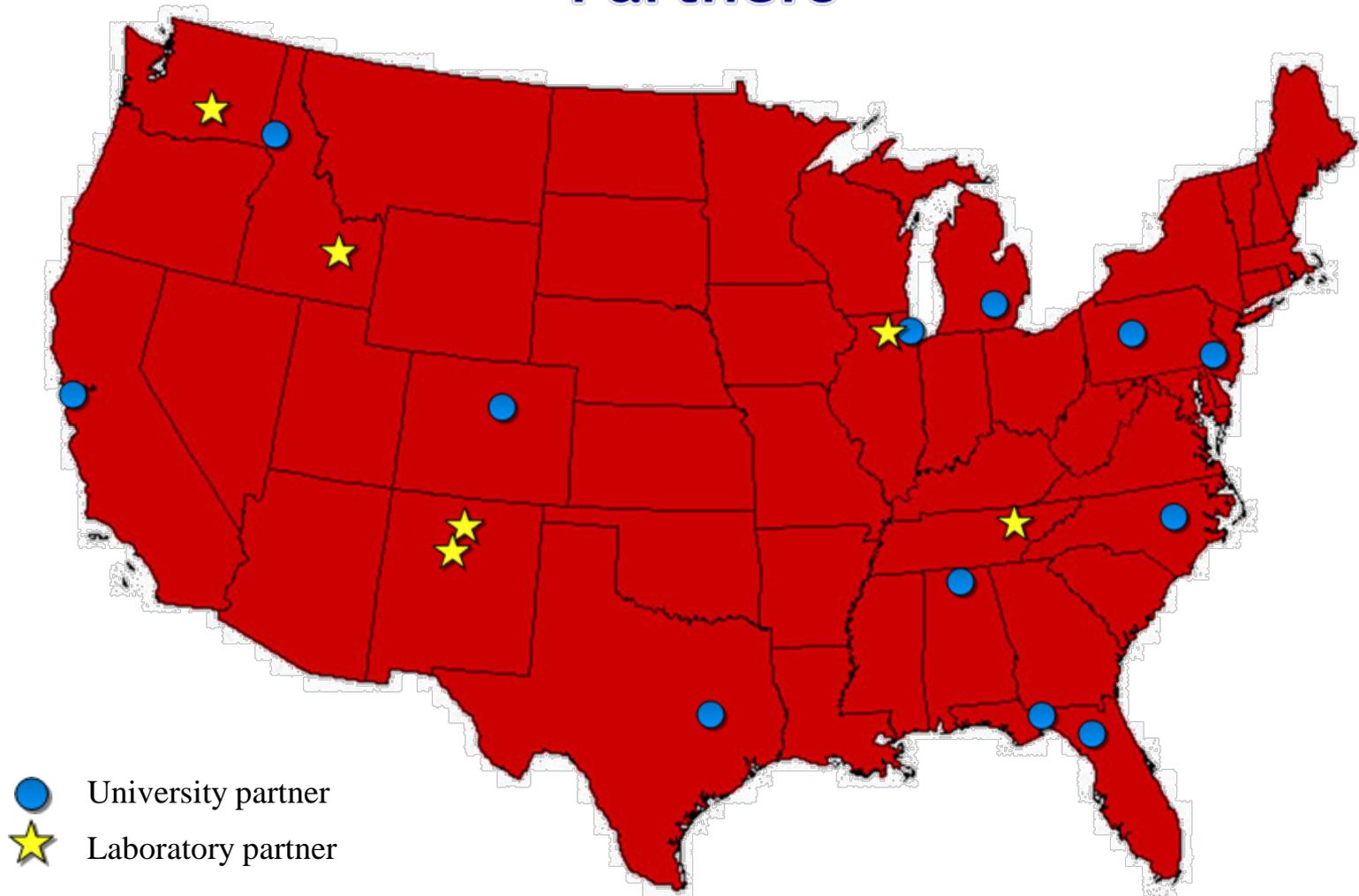
Hire someone to put up with all the paper-work before and after the award



Just as Dirk was about to escape on horseback, the magician's final spell turned his swift black steed into the legendary Bureaucratic Night Mare.

# Map of Partnership

## UW-Madison's NEUP Project Partners



# I hope this has helped

## GET FUZZY.



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