Preliminary Letter of Inquiry to a Foundation

(Going Fishing for Money)

Many foundations will describe how to apply for grants on their web page. Others will simply indicate a willingness to accept a letter of inquiry which introduces your project idea. This homework assignment is aimed at the latter group and may be used to "go fishing" in the foundation world for a potential sponsor. This format might also help you describe your idea to others.

HOMEWORK: Write a one-page preliminary letter of inquiry to a foundation. This letter will use the 3-paragraph framework outlined below:

Introduction (what) – an opening statement about why you are writing and briefly describing your "big hairy audacious idea."

So what – the rationale for your project (why they should fund you). It is not necessary to mention how much money you desire yet.

Now what - a brief statement indicating a desire to have a follow-up conversation.

In addition, you should use a standard business format for correspondence (as outlined on the attached page).

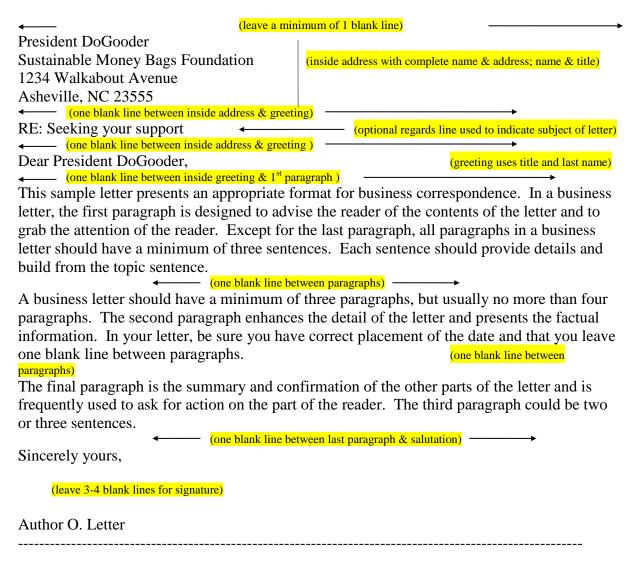
You are writing to:

The Sustainable Money Bags Foundation

The Sustainable Money Bags Foundation is a family foundation. The President, Mrs. Amanda DoGooder, likes to support young people and her only requirement is that you present a "big hairy audacious idea" that will help your local community become more sustainable. She likes food and farming related projects but will consider other ideas. She hates reading long proposals and will toss your letter out if it is longer than one page.

The foundation receives hundreds of letters each year and her secretary passes a few along to Mrs. DoGooder for consideration. If she likes your idea and your presentation, she will pay your travel costs to visit her in Asheville, NC to talk about your idea

Your name Your address Your organization (if any) Your phone number Your email address February 7, 2013



Note: this is the full block style. You may also use a modified block style if you prefer with address and salutation on the left side of page. For help see:

http://www.savvy-business-correspondence.com/FormatofBusinessLetters.html