Common Pitfalls in Seeking Funding and Writing Grant Applications

1. **Chasing the money.** Don't write a grant to start a new project you don't really need or want just to bring funding ($$) into your agency

2. **Requesting money to offset a deficit.** No one wants to fund your poor planning or agency shortfall.

3. **Going to Macy's to buy groceries.** Do your research first—make sure you're going to the right funder for the right project. Match-up is important.

4. **Failing to understand it's a competitive process.** Unless funding is a sure bet (e.g., based on formula/ entitlement), always assume demand is higher than supply.

5. **Downloading the wrong grant application.** Similar-sounding grant applications could be issued simultaneously by the same funder. Or an out-of-date application might also still be on the Web site.

6. **Not reading the grant application thoroughly.** Highlight the most important parts (like due dates and required documents). Mark anything you don't understand or where you need to find answers.

7. **Not reading the grant application early enough.** Don't delay—leaving yourself too little time to make important contacts, gather important data, calculate costs accurately, find a grant writer...can be disastrous!

8. **Assuming the funder knows you/your agency.** Even if you are the grant-award poster child, don't assume proposal readers will mentally fill in the missing information. Don't depend on prior knowledge or past relation-ships.