

Write, Edit, and Proof Like a Pro

- **Start with an outline.** Makes it easier to develop topic sentences and order your paragraphs effectively.

PARAGRAPHS:

- Paragraphs have two functions: they collect information point by point and they break up the page, creating white space:
- **Make only one point in each paragraph, stating it clearly as a topic sentence.** This is key for your reviewers to be able to read or scan your application. So bold any topic sentence. If done effectively, you can read JUST the subheadings and bolded sentences and know what the grant is about.
- **Keep paragraphs short.** Start with basic ideas and progress to more complex ones.
- **Use short sentences with a basic structure:** subject, verb, and object. Break up long, involved sentences; avoid introductory phrases longer than six words. Keep sentences to roughly 20 words or less.
- **Use strong, active verbs. No passive writing.** For example, write "*We will develop a cell line,*" not "*A cell line will be developed.*" Positive and Active.
- **Use verbs instead of abstract nouns.** Turn dull abstract nouns ending in "-ion" and "-ment" into verbs. For example, say "*creating the assay leads to...*" rather than "*the creation of the assay leads to...*"