

- Unknowns: Problem(s) that need to be addressed.
- Frame the Problem: The problem points to that critical need that serves as the driving force for the proposal. Conclude with WHY the lack of a solution is an issue for this funding agency.

Part 2: The “What, Why, Whom” Paragraph

- Long-Range Goal (broad): Principal Investigator’s career goal, which should match the funding agency.
- Objective of the Application (narrow): The purpose of the project described to meet the critical need; must have a well-defined endpoint.
- Central Hypothesis (most narrow).
- Rationale: What will be possible after completion of the aims that is not possible now? What is the underlying reason to complete the project as it relates to the agency’s mission?
- Well-Prepared: Collective basis for the competitive advantage of your group. Convince the reviewers that you and your team have the solution to this critical need.

Part 3: The Aims

- Aims Paragraphs: Provide a logical, step-by-step development of key hypotheses and activities through which you will fulfill the objectives to address the critical need or problem.
- Each paragraph should collectively address the objectives; be conceptual, but not descriptive; and avoid aims that are dependent on the outcome of other aims. A formatting suggestion is provided below:

Specific Aim 1—Brief, focused statement

× subtext with more details, including measurements and comparisons

Specific Aim 2—Brief, focused statement

× subtext with more details, including measurements and comparisons

Specific Aim 3—Brief, focused statement

× subtext with more details, including measurements and comparisons

Part 4: The Payoff Paragraph (the Impact)

- Innovative/Transformative Statement: Should directly follow the aims/goals/objectives and build advocacy for the project.
- Expectations: Make sure these are specific and credible.
- Impact: How these outcomes will meet the identified need.
- Inspirational: How will this “change the world?”

After completion of the entire research strategy and Specific Aims page, it may be beneficial to go back and ensure that the following questions are answered:

- What experimental outcomes (at least 1 important outcome per aim) do you expect?
- Collectively, how do they achieve the overall objective stated in the hypothesis?

- What are the impacts of your expected success—what will be the subject that was [not possible/not known] that will be [possible/known] with respect to the following:
 - Knowledge benefiting human health and disease; and
 - Advancement of your field of research?

After reviewing your answers to these questions, determine if they were well communicated in the Aims page so that the reviewer can locate these outcomes with ease.

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UP YOUR EFFICIENCY GAME (WITH PERIPHERALS)

Speaker

Kate McKiernan, MA, Medical Writer/Editor, IMPACT Clinical, San Diego, CA

By Kelly Schrank, MA, ELS

Kate McKiernan has a unique perspective on peripherals, comparing how you interact with a video game through controllers to how you interact with Word through your mouse and keyboard. Her credentials for creating this session, she explained, included 28 years of video game experience. Her big question is how can we interact with computers better? Her goals include increasing how much money she makes, getting a return on the time and energy investment, having a better quality of life, and decreasing error and interaction cost.

She sets the stage with the following picture of her work area:



Shown above are USB cables, dual monitors with monitor arms, a separate number pad, and a gaming mouse.

Five Essential Peripherals

The first peripheral is helpful for those who have multiple

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laptops (for instance, when different clients provide laptops to connect to their networks securely). A hub with USB-C cables allows you to have 1 set of peripherals connect to multiple laptops, saving space on the desktop, saving precious brain power not having to adjust to different laptops or peripherals, and saving time in not having to connect to/disconnect from different laptops. Estimated cost: \$15.

The second peripheral enhances the convenience of dual monitors, something many medical communicators already have, but McKiernan takes this a couple of steps further by pivoting the monitors on monitor arms, so they can be repositioned quickly and easily as needed for different tasks. Her default mode has both monitors in portrait mode, which allows you to see more words at a time in Word documents and PDFs. Monitor arms can be clamped on the end of the desk or screwed into wood. Estimated cost: \$200.

The third peripheral ensures productivity in a different way by protecting your Internet router with an uninterruptible power supply (UPS). When your power goes out, you usually lose Internet because your Internet router needs electricity, too. If you plug the router into the UPS, the router can stay on for another couple of hours. Kate McKiernan recommends not connecting everything to it, as that same UPS with “everything” on it will only last about 15 minutes. Estimated cost: not provided, as the prices can vary widely.

The fourth peripheral is a separate number pad. Her personal layout has the number pad on the left, with the keyboard in the middle and the mouse on the right. With this layout, the distance from keyboard to mouse is reduced, making you more efficient, and the numeric keypad, which has limited usability on a day-to-day basis, is out of the way unless you need it. Estimated cost: \$10.

The fifth peripheral, which McKiernan says was actually her first and best change, is the gaming mouse, which “changes multibutton inputs into one button.” For example, Word lets you assign keyboard shortcuts, then the gaming mouse lets you execute multiple keystrokes with one button. She broke the process down into 3 steps: pick a common task, give the task a keyboard command (in Word), and assign the keyboard command (in the mouse). For example, assign a shortcut key to insert common symbols, apply styles, and change numbers to subscript or superscript or assign a keyboard shortcut to a macro. Estimated cost: \$50.

Caveats to Gaming Mouse

- Administrator access needed
- For right-hand use only
- Wired only

Advice for Adapting to Gaming Mouse

- Choose tasks that are simple, done frequently, easily noticed when done, and easily undone
- Assign tasks to correct template (or Normal.dotm)
- Learn a new button 1 at a time
- Assign buttons logically
- Have the mouse controller layout on screen or printed out when getting up to speed
- Group buttons together by function, type of job, or whatever makes sense for your workflow
- EndNote has its own keyboard shortcuts; combine with the mouse

The [session materials](#) have more details on how to set up Word and the gaming mouse.

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PREDATORY PUBLISHING: ISSUES AND ADVICE

Speakers

Barbara Gastel, MD, MPH, Professor, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

Barbara C. Good, PhD, Director, Scientific Publications, NSABP Foundation, Pittsburgh, PA

Mary Kemper, BS, Medical Writer/Yoga Instructor, Mayfield Clinic/Glia Media, Cincinnati, OH

Moderator

Kirby Snell, MFA, Copyediting Client Manager, J&J Editorial, Cary, NC

By Kirby Snell, MFA

This session on predatory publishing highlighted (1) some techniques used by predatory publishers to take advantage of authors, (2) strategies for identifying potential predators, and (3) how to respond. The panelists also touched on the larger impact and threat that predatory publishers can pose for academic and scientific publishing.

What Is Predatory Publishing?

A predatory publisher is an opportunistic venue that exploits the academic need to publish but offers little reward.