

**DISSERTATION
PROPOSAL
GUIDEBOOK**

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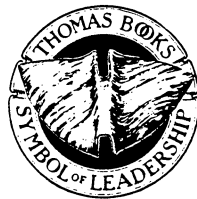
How to Prepare a Research Proposal
and Get It Accepted

By

DAVID C. GARDNER

and

GRACE JOELY BEATTY



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He served as the Principal Investigator and Director of several large Federally-funded projects on curriculum modification for handicapped students in vocational training programs 1975-1979. He is a member of the Board of Directors, National Association for Career Education (past president) and a founding officer and former Board Member of the Eastern Educational Research Association. Doctor Gardner is a member of the National Ethics Committee of the American Association on Mental Deficiency and was recently nominated for a Division Vice Presidency. He is a member of the Research Committee, Division on Career Development, Council for Exceptional Children. He recently received the Professional Award, American Association on Mental Deficiency, Region X and was selected for *Who's Who in Education* (1979).

DR. GRACE JOELY BEATTY is currently Managing Director of American Training and Research Associates, Inc. Doctor Beatty has national work experience in both education and industry covering an eleven year period of rapid professional growth. She has served as the Director of a major Federally-funded project at Boston University and held Senior Research Associate and Visiting Lecturer appointments at the University for several years. The author of numerous publications and a data analysis specialist, she has extensive experience in working individually with doctoral students.

She is a member of the Board of Directors of American Training and Research Associates, Inc., and has held a number of offices in national and regional professional organizations. Doctor Beatty was elected an “Outstanding Young Woman of America” in 1978.

PREFACE

THE need for a guidebook on dissertation proposal writing became evident while the authors planned for and conducted workshops on proposal writing through a program sponsored by American Training and Research Associates, Inc. of Methuen, Massachusetts. The training manual developed for these workshops is currently being used in research seminars at Boston University. Based on comments from our students, the training manual evolved into this guidebook.

This is not a complete work on how to write a dissertation, nor is it intended to be one. The scope of such a work would indeed be formidable! Rather, this work is a *guidebook*, a collection of models to be used by the graduate student who is developing his/her first major work — the dissertation or thesis. This is *not* a book on design or statistics, and it assumes that the student has had some coursework in those areas. It is quite literally a “cookbook” full of examples and tips. We expect that this first edition will be altered many times over the coming years as we receive feedback from our readers and students.

D.C.G.
G.J.B.

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**DISSERTATION
PROPOSAL
GUIDEBOOK**

Section I

Organizing the Dissertation

*There is no substitute for
hard work and persever-
ance.*

This section is designed to get you started. Your first goal is to *organize yourself* so that you can begin writing your dissertation proposal.

Chapter 1

GETTING YOUR ACT TOGETHER

SOME COMMON PROBLEMS

Laziness

“**I** WORKED hard at school/college/job today. I’m really beat. I’ll wait until tomorrow. Besides, it is Monday Night Football/Tuesday Night at the Movies/Time Magazine night, etc.”

Writing is an incredibly difficult and absorbing job. It requires self discipline. Find a place and a time where you can work. For some people, a rented room in a motel for two weeks does the trick. For others, regularly scheduled hours four mornings a week from 4 AM to 8 AM is sufficient. We all have our needs and methods, but the methods should include daily, weekly, and monthly goals. (For those of you who have short attention spans, try hourly goals.) You must choose the method that is best for *you*. Try anything; but for heaven’s sake, work. If you don’t work at it, you will never get the job done!

Money

Money is one of the most common excuses for not doing the dissertation given by the graduate school dropout. “But I have to feed my family. I have to work.” Nonsense, *all* of us who have finished had problems. The vision of starving children just won’t work. The senior author lived in a slum. His endodontist lived in a cold-water basement apartment in Montreal. The junior author went into debt for thousands of dollars. The senior author has had a doctoral student who managed to complete the residency with eight children, another who managed to run a large university in his spare time, etc. The lack of money excuse is worthless. If you want to finish, you will “delay gratification for larger future rewards.” (Note: this