Tips for a Strong Application

1. **Have a well prepared Non-Confidential Technology Project Summary and Business Plan Executive Summary**. Although these are the last written sections of your application, they are the most important in quickly capturing the readers' attention.

2. **Polish the overall look and feel.** The physical look should be inviting.
   - Stick to standard fonts in an easily readable size (10 - 12 points).
   - Use bullet points to help detail multiple elements.
   - Use white space liberally. Include decent margins all around.
   - Spell-check.
   - Proofread. Even if you spell-check, proofread the document to be sure you're not using a properly spelled incorrect word.

3. **Don't use long complicated words or sentences.** Enable comprehension to a wide audience.

4. **Avoid buzzwords, jargon and acronyms (or at least explain them).** You may think that NIH means National Institute of Health but others are sure it means "not invented here".

5. **Avoid business clichés. Do NOT say:**
   - We have no competition/technical risk, etc.
   - Our numbers are conservative
   - Our greatest challenge is that we will grow too fast

6. **Use pictures, diagrams, and tables effectively.** Pictures, diagrams, and tables can effectively communicate a point, but too many diminish the overall look and feel.

Business Plan templates available for reference:
- **http://www.score.org/resources/score-business-plan-template**
- **Maine Center for Entrepreneurial Development**