

FUNDRAISING FORUM

THE HIDDEN KILLER: A simple misunderstanding



Most donor communications do not achieve anything like the desired results, thanks to an error that's as common as salt in sea water. Tom Ahern reports.

Adapted from
**Tom Ahern's
E-newsletter**

10.3 February 2011
Visit

www.AhernComm.com

INSIDE INFORMATION

Workshop news	2
Philanthropy in focus	3
The new keys to success in fundraising today	4
Five fears that keep you from asking	5
Response to Japan disaster slower than in other recent catastrophes	6
To succeed philanthropy needs to be rooted in deep personal beliefs	7

There's a 90% chance (at a minimum) that the communications you're sending out right now in an attempt to 'steward' your 'relationship' with donors, are saying ... wait for it ... exactly the wrong things. Bombshell.

And I know this why? Because I look at a lot of stuff. Not tens of pieces of donor communications. Nor dozens. Nor scores. But in the hundreds, annually.

I've noticed something: most non-profits apparently do not realise that there is a critical difference between 'corporate' communications and 'donor' communications.

Please note: Corporate communications and donor communications are separate pursuits with dissimilar goals.

Corporate communications are soft-sell public relations activities, meant to improve image and reputation.

Corporate communications obsessively talk about how effective the organisation is, intending to impress. The emotion they are most likely to invoke? Respect.

The all-time favourite pronoun of corporate communications is 'we'. We are the best. We are ground breaking. We are innovative. We are exciting.

You

The favourite pronoun of donor communications, on the other hand, is 'you'. As in, 'You, the beloved donor ...'

(corporate communications)

I feel very fortunate because in my travels I am able to meet the people that we have helped.

(donor communications)

I feel very fortunate because in my travels I am able to meet the people that you have helped.

(Above examples, adapted from a direct mail appeal written by Sean Triner/Pareto.)

If you're looking for a quick litmus test of your stuff, the 'you test' will do quite nicely. It's fast. And it's 100% accurate. Donor communications love the word 'you'. They use it every chance they can. Corporate communications don't.

So, here's what you do. Right now: look at your website's home page. Go on. Do it. Open it in a new window. Are there a lot of you's? No? Then I guarantee you that your home page is not donor-ready or donor-appropriate. It's that simple. Same for your

newsletters. Same for your annual reports. Same for your appeals.

By now you might be thinking, 'Okay, maybe I am doing corporate communications rather than true donor communications. Who cares? Why does any of this matter.'

Bombshell number two

Here's why this particular distinction does make a difference: because corporate communications are lousy at fundraising.

Corporate communications can only snag the lowest of low-hanging fruit. They don't have the emotional hooks to climb into the loftier branches. So a lot of philanthropic fruit is left on the tree, unharvested, just waiting for the right kind of communication to come along.

Who knows how much philanthropy is beyond reach of the corporate communications issued by many, if not most, non-profits: 10%? 20%? Personally, I think it's closer to 50%; and I'll give you two examples.

I know intimately two cases, where major charities abruptly switched from doing corporate-style communications to doing donor-appropriate communications instead.

In one case, giving to a hospital newsletter soared 1 000% after the change, to R340 000 per issue.

In the other, an international group saw gifts triggered by its revised newsletter swell to R3.4 million annually, thanks to just three far-from-perfect issues sent to just 10 000 selected donors. That's income of R340 per address on the list, for a per address cost of probably no more than R6,80. Not a bad ROI.

Fantasise just for a second: multiply every address on your mailing list by R340 in additional income, above and beyond your usual appeals. It's a juicy sum, I'm guessing.

Donor-appropriate communications are: Unabashedly personal; unabashedly emotional and unabashedly appreciative.

The front-page headline of the Gillette Children's Foundation donor newsletter that prompted R337 000 in gifts:

Zawadi Says, 'Thank You!'

You Helped a Tanzanian Girl Stand Tall on Her Own Two Feet

The corporate version would have read

Continued on page 8

Digital Fundraising Workshop: Getting to grips with digital media to raise more money

Charities benefit profoundly from social media channels – not least because social networks invariably target a younger demographic, both as people that can benefit from your services, and as potential donors.

Right now, an entire generation's growing up knowing more about social media advertising than they do about radio and/or TV. They're the donors and supporters of tomorrow – and if you aren't relevant to them now, you'll soon have a serious challenge when it comes to finding new donors and supporters.

Conversations with supporters now happen via Facebook, SMS, Twitter, MXit or blogs. More donors are turning to e-commerce as a way to support the causes they believe in and they're also engaging with causes in a more intimate way.

People are living more digital lives – there's no getting away from it. Yet for some charities, digital, mobile and social media is an afterthought. They get added to the mix right at the end. And while some charities are all too well aware of the channels, they still don't know how to use them effectively.

Social media

Charity is a social activity – it's all about community, meaningful interaction, storytelling and having an impact on society.

How many of your team are active bloggers, familiar with Twitter or on LinkedIn?

While social media may offer enormous potential for charities, sadly there's currently a lack of expertise within many South African charities. The only platform that everyone seems to know about is Facebook – and that's definitely not social media. It's also true that not many know what a Fan Page (which arguably represents a charity's most powerful marketing tool of all) is.

Mobile

Experts agree – we're at the beginning of a new wireless era. By 2013 (according to a recent report by Gartner Inc) consumers will be accessing the Internet less through PCs and more through iPhones, BlackBerrys, Nokia's and other Smartphones. This means there's more opportunity for you to create online offerings for your audiences because they've got more ways to interact with your charity via digital platforms. But how and where do you invest?

Digital workshop

So with all this activity happening online, how do you ensure you remain relevant to your supporters? How do you target them within these digital spaces as well as complement their experience with print, PR and direct marketing?

Downes Murray International and Digital4Good are hosting three workshops in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban with the aim of giving you the tools and

know-how to get to grips with this exciting space and integrate your campaigns more effectively.

Structure of the workshop

Digital Media For Charities is a morning workshop for charities looking to utilise the tremendous power of digital media.

You'll receive a comprehensive

understanding of the options

available and the key factors for your charity's success. And you'll also get to meet and share ideas with colleagues from your industry.

What we'll cover:

- What are the digital trends affecting charities today? We explore the fuss and hype and discuss how and what you need to look out for.
- Who are your audiences? Understand your audiences better and choose the channels that suit them.
- The key pillars of digital fundraising Facebook, LinkedIn, RSS, Blogs, Twitter, mobile etc.
- Integrating success with other channels, plan better and use the relevant channels effectively.
- Automating to save time – how can you work quicker and more effectively in this space? What free tools are out there for you to use?
- Build your supporter community – create a passionate and thriving online community of supporters and advocates, who'll spread your message, donate and support you even more.
- Case Studies and strategies – what have local and international charities achieved in this space? How can you do the same?

For more information:

Visit <http://digital4good.com/workshop/> for pre-bookings and to sign up for news alerts.

More about Downes Murray International and Digital4Good

Digital4Good has solid experience working with international and local charities to raise money online, with good case studies to share.

Over the years, Downes Murray International has worked with more than a hundred different South African non-profits, covering virtually every cause. ■



MILESTONE THINKING

On-target observations in brief



The Chronicle of Philanthropy

Rather than focus on your organisation's needs throughout the cultivation solicitation process, be mindful to focus on the needs of and benefits to the prospective donor. Approach the relationship as a partnership and your style will take on a more mutually beneficial character.

With acknowledgement to
Successful Fund Raising
 May 2011, Volume XIX, No.5

In good times and bad, we know that people give because you meet needs, not because you have needs.

Kay Grace

If philanthropy is to help solve a greater share of the world's vast and complex problems – and reach its potential in its next century of giving – then the way it is commonly practiced must change.

With acknowledgement to
The Chronicle of Philanthropy
 7 April 2011

Multichannel giving has become popular for fundraisers as a way to build constituent support. But, the large majority of donors on file give through only one channel and use only direct mail as their vehicle for donations. The only donors who do significant multichannel giving are new donors acquired online, who switch to direct mail giving in subsequent years.

With acknowledgement to
www.nptimes.com



Interface KZN offers children and adults with little or no functional speech a new lease on life with Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC).

‘Just because we can't speak doesn't mean we have nothing to say'

Interface KZN is committed to supporting children and adults with little or no functional speech arising from disability or disease.

Established in 1997, Interface KZN actively promotes Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) - techniques, devices and strategies that support or replace speech.

This includes speech generating devices, computers, gestures, manual signing, eye blink codes, or picture and alphabet boards. A combination of techniques is often used to suit individual capabilities and communication needs.

For people whose voices cannot be heard, the journey can be painful. But Interface KZN offers invaluable comfort through their practical programmes, which ease the frustration of being locked in a sometimes-silent world.

A fully equipped AAC resource centre means Interface KZN can evaluate children and adults in a family-centered professional environment that's sensitive to their unique communication needs.

To enhance the outcome of AAC, specialised training is offered to parents, caregivers, teachers and therapists who have loved ones in their care. School teachers are also given special training to help children who require AAC at schools and learning centers.

For Interface KZN there's no greater reward than seeing children and adults with little or no functional speech, living full and rewarding lives at school and in their communities and taking up their rightful place in society.

Visit www.interface-kzn.co.za or contact Gail Ngcobo on 031 708 4237. ■

(Readers are invited to submit photographs, together with a brief overview of their organisation's work, for inclusion in this regular feature.)

FUNDRAISING FORUM

Fundraising Forum is a regular newsletter dedicated to the enhancement of management, fundraising techniques and the promotion of community service, welfare and not-for-profit organisations of all kinds.

It is published by Downes Murray International and circulated, free of charge, to anyone with an interest in the growth and improvement of the non-profit sector and those served by it. In addition to regular features written by Downes Murray International staff, there are extracts from international fundraising publications which are reprinted with acknowledgement to the publishers.

We welcome submissions for publication from all writers involved in not-for-profit work. Visit www.dmi.co.za

The new keys to success in fundraising today: donor choice

In recent months, I've been developing a new perspective on fundraising, born of the increasing frustration I've felt trying to understand today's fundraising environment through the lens of yesterday's truths. Here is part of a long article I've drafted to begin laying out my new approach.
By Mal Warwick.

I'll take a look first at the principle of choice. Now, why is this important? If you think about it for a minute, you'll understand.

Yesterday's donors – my generation, and the generations before me – placed an enormous amount of trust in established institutions, including non-profit organisations.

We simply sent them our gifts and trusted them to use the money as they saw fit.

But in the 1960s, 70s, and beyond, people encountered what was originally called the 'credibility gap,' starting with the government but gradually extending to all of society's major institutions.

People growing up against that backdrop learned to distrust established institutions.

Now, add to that the tendency we've all seen in increasing numbers of donors wanting a say in how we use their money. That's true of people today in practically every age group up to age 60 or so. And that's why donor choice is so important today.

The Four Dimensions of Donor Choice

Now, in thinking about choice, it's convenient to consider the four main dimensions that may enter into your donors' or prospects' decision-making: programme, location, channel, and intermediary. I'll explain each in turn now.

Programme

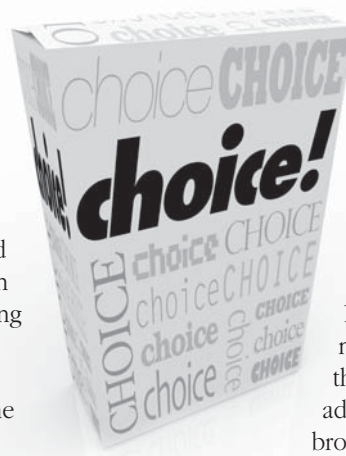
When people talk about donor choice, they often mean choice of programme. Most non-profits resist offering choices of this sort because of the inefficiencies and possible accounting and reporting problems caused by earmarking funds for specific programmes.

However, my colleagues and I have consistently found over the years that about 70% of donors will elect to leave the choice to you if you offer that general option. Perhaps that will make programme choice a little easier for your CEO to swallow!

Location

But donors are at least equally concerned, and probably more concerned, about where their funds are used. In fact, many donors will only support local charities. Their concept of philanthropy is to give back to their communities.

If your organisation is regional or national and has both a central office and satellite offices or chapters, you'll probably receive at least a little bit better response if



you solicit gifts that will go to the donor's nearest local office.

And that response may be much better if the money will stay in-country rather than go outside the borders.

However, at the same time, there are donors who are concerned above all with the Big Picture. They're looking for nationwide or global impact, so they tend to seek out causes that address the biggest issues in the broadest ways.

Channel

More and more these days, donors are developing new communications patterns as technology continues to evolve.

A donor you recruited by mail 10 years ago might now insist on communicating – and giving – only online. Another one who has been a supporter only through your Website might only become a responsive donor when you start to send her old-fashioned mail or call her on the phone.

The bottom line is that most of your donors today have incorporated many channels into their day-to-day lives – email, telephone landlines, and mobile phones, at a minimum.

And they use more than one channel to connect with your organisation – or want to do so. Some prefer one channel, others another.

You've got to start learning what those preferences are, and offer them choices that will maximise the likelihood of getting the gifts you need.

Intermediary

Now, I hope you know that practically none of your donors think they're supporting your organisation.

The gifts they send you are intended to support the people you're helping. You're just a conduit to them, as far as your donors are concerned. Your job is connecting donors with beneficiaries – and don't ever forget it!

And do I have to tell you that your organisation isn't the only charity on the block? In the United States, there are, by various counts, between one and one-and-a-half million non-profits.

If your mission is truly unique, your organisation is truly exceptional. But that's unlikely. Chances are, lots of others are doing more or less the same work.

And if they're doing a better job of meeting donors' needs than you are, your donor file is going to shrink. Guaranteed. ■

Adapted from
Mal Warwick's
E-newsletter
November 2010
Visit
www.malwarwick.com

Five fears that keep you from asking

My favourite quotation, after nearly 40 years in this fundraising business, is the one that goes: Money is not given; it has to be raised. Money is not offered; it has to be asked for. Money does not 'come in'; it must be 'gone after'.

Nothing could be closer to the truth, for fundraising is often a numbers game and the more 'asks' you make, the more success you're likely to achieve.

Unfortunately, asking for money is something that often creates fear and trembling in the most successful and confident business person. Yet it is one of the most satisfying and rewarding tasks in fundraising.

So why are people fearful of asking?

Firstly, they see it as begging. Yet begging is when you are holding out your hand and asking for something for yourself, and not for a worthy cause or project that will benefit so many others.

Rejection

Then there is the fear of rejection. Sure you are going to encounter potential donors who say 'no'. But if you listen carefully and give them the opportunity to tell you why they are refusing to help, you will learn a lot and you will often be able to come back with something that they are willing to support.

The third fear is the one of being asked by the potential donor (especially if he or she is a peer group business person or colleague), 'What have you done for the cause?'

The simple answer to this one is: make sure that you have set an example and made your own monetary contribution before you go out asking. And don't rely on the fact that you have given your time.

Remember the old trio of 'Time, Talent and Treasure' – if you are committed to the cause, be it as a volunteer committee member or a board member – you should be prepared to give your time, your expertise and your financial support, as an

example to others who may not be as close as you are to the organisation.

Fear number four is mentioning the amount of money you are seeking.

Once you have made a convincing case for your organisation and its goal, and you have identified an interest from the prospective donor, the next logical question in his or her mind is, 'How much should I give?' And the danger here is to mention an amount which is not too small or too large. Your research should have told you what amounts your prospective donor has given previously to your and other causes, and this should guide your 'ask'.

The wording you use is the clue to dispelling the fear of this asking situation. Try saying something like, 'We hoped that you might consider a gift of R...', then wait for a reaction and be ready to offer the option of a gift spread over three, four or five years, if your prospective donor indicates that the amount is too much for a once-off donation.

Be ready, too, to talk about tax deductibility of donations (if this is applicable). And remember that it's always better to pitch your ask at a higher rather than lower level.

The prospective donor is often flattered that you considered them capable of making a commitment at the higher level – and you can always come down in the amount you request, whilst you can never go up.

Finally, there is the fear of silence.

In an asking situation there is a point when it is imperative that you sit still and keep your mouth firmly closed – and that is the moment after you have made the 'ask'.

As your prospective donor is considering what you have just asked them for, you should not say one more word.

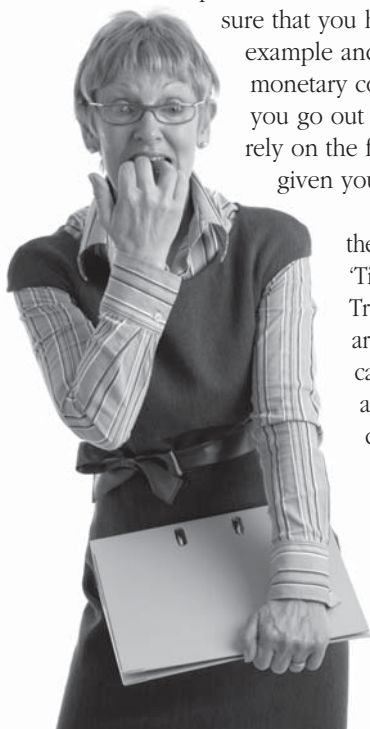
Keep quiet

No matter how much you feel compelled to fill the often awkward silence, keep absolutely quiet. The temptation is to rush into the gap with phrases like, 'Of course, if that's too much you can always give less ...' or, 'I know business is tough at the moment, so anything you can contribute will help' – anything to fill the void of silence.

But don't do it! Resist the temptation and you so often will have the pleasant surprise of a 'yes' answer or, at worst, a qualified 'yes.'

So use these simple rules to overcome your fears and you'll not only reap the benefits of greater income for your cause, but you'll also begin to realise the satisfaction of seeing the pleasure and rewards of giving on the faces of your donors. ■

This article first appeared in Fundraising Forum in December 2001.



Reprinted from **The Art of Asking: 60+ Fundraising Tips and Trends** by Terry Murray

Response to Japan disaster slower than in other recent catastrophes

In the first days after the devastating earthquake and tsunami in Japan, giving was strong. But the rate of donations was slower than after last year's earthquake in Haiti and after Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Some disaster experts worry, however, that nonprofit groups might be raising too much money too soon. Nicole Wallace reports

Five days after the March 11 catastrophe in Japan, American donors had contributed more than \$64 million to 24 charities for relief efforts.

In comparison, six days after the earthquake in Haiti, donors had contributed more than \$210 million, and six days after Hurricane Katrina they had given more than \$457 million.

Non profit officials say the difference in fund raising for the disaster in Japan compared with the response to the crisis in Haiti, for example, is to be expected given the very different contexts.

'With Japan you have an industrialised country with a very strong, respected government with all of the structures and systems and the ability to take the lead,' said Caryl M. Stern, chief executive of U.S. Fund for Unicef, in New York.

Resources

Because Japan had resources, she said, her group could step back and conduct an assessment to figure out what role it could best play in relief efforts. As a result, the U.S. Fund for Unicef did not start raising money until four days after the disaster.

The earthquake in Haiti was a very different situation, said Ms. Stern. Because of the country's grinding poverty and the damage its government sustained, the needs were clear from the beginning and aid groups had to jump in.

One hour after the earthquake in Haiti, the U.S. Fund for Unicef had raised \$3 million from large donors. In comparison, the organisation raised \$700,000 over the first day it started raising money for the disaster in Japan.

Still, some observers worry that non-profit groups are getting ahead of themselves when it comes to seeking donations.

'A lot of non-profits are raising funds before they know for sure they're going to be allowed to operate in Japan or if they're going to find a partnering organisation to give the money to,' said Sandra Schimmelpfennig, a former aid worker who writes the blog Good Intentions Are Not Enough. She noted that Japan has an extremely good disaster-response system and that the

government has turned down many offers of assistance.

Charities are scrambling to raise money because the donor response is highest in the first week or two after a disaster, said Ms. Schimmelpfennig. But if groups raise money they can't spend – or can't spend well – they risk eroding donor's trust.

Determining Needs

More than a dozen relief groups *The Chronicle* contacted last week said they were not actively raising money for relief efforts in Japan.

Some organisations, such as CARE USA and Oxfam America, reported that they were still determining whether and how they would respond to the disaster.

Other charities, such as American Jewish World Service, said they were not responding because they only work in developing countries.

Doctors Without Borders was not accepting donations designated for the disaster in Japan. The organisation had sent assessment teams to the region but paid for those efforts with unrestricted funds.

Five days after the earthquake and tsunami, the American Red Cross had received \$47 million in donations.

The organisation said it would use some of the money to pay for setting up emergency shelters in Hawaii and on the West Coast, at a cost expected to be less than \$100,000, and would retain 9% of donations for administrative costs and send the rest of the money to the Japanese Red Cross Society. It sent the first \$10 million distribution four days after the disaster.

Large international companies responded quickly to the crisis. Those that have offices and workers in Japan have a different tie to this disaster than they did to the earthquake in Haiti, said Moira C. Hess, an international campaign officer at the American Red Cross.

'We're having our corporate partners work with us both to make a gift but also as a way to get resources to ensure their employees are safe and well and are receiving the resources that they need to begin to recover,' she said.

Caroline Preston contributed to this article. ■



With acknowledgment to **The Chronicle of Philanthropy** 24 March 2011

To succeed philanthropy needs to be rooted in deep personal beliefs

Giving money away – writing cheques, making payout requirements – is relatively simple; using money to produce real results for society is agonisingly hard.

A commitment to pursue results is a choice to wrestle with fundamental questions like ‘What is success and how will it be achieved?’, ‘What am I accountable for?’, and the most essential question of all: ‘What are my values and beliefs?’

That last question is deeply relevant for donors, their families, and even their foundation executives. In making philanthropic decisions, the heart is always connected to the head.

Thus almost every philanthropic effort contains a huge dose of ‘me,’ driven by the values and passions of the donor. When donors are clear about their beliefs and concentrate their giving in areas of deep personal interest, they are most likely to mobilise and motivate others to ask the tough questions that lead to results.

Philanthropy comes in a variety of forms, with a world of possibilities from which to choose. This absolute freedom may be philanthropy’s great strength, allowing donors to express their individuality and creating room for innovation across a world of possibilities.

But when a donor’s efforts are not anchored in explicit personal beliefs, that freedom can become an Achilles’ heel. Ambiguity about one’s values and beliefs is the enemy of impact. It will waste resources, confuse strategic decisions, and muddle implementation.

Ambiguity will also confound family members, trustees, and foundation leaders working to support the donor’s intentions.

Personal Perspectives

The more one leaves values and beliefs open to interpretation, the more others will fill that gap by inserting their own personal perspectives. This is evident across foundations in which new chief executives and programme officers routinely alter priorities based on what they think is right, all within the context of ‘donor intent’.

The early history of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, one of the largest in the United States, provides a cautionary example of what can happen when a donor isn’t explicit about his or her values and beliefs.

When John MacArthur set up the foundation in 1978, he purposely gave its small board no instruction about how the foundation should be organised or what it should do.

‘I know of a number of foundations where the donors tried to run them from their graves,’ he explained. ‘I have guaranteed the trustees that when I am gone, they can run the show.’

Mr. MacArthur died just as his foundation

was beginning its work, and the trustees did indeed run the show, though not in the ways he might have imagined.

Dispute

Almost immediately, a dispute erupted over its directions. On one side were Mr MacArthur’s former associates, self-described ‘Midwestern businessmen devoted to free enterprise and opposed to more government controls’; on the other Mr. MacArthur’s son, Roderick, who ‘declared that foundations had to be on the cutting edge of social change,’ according to *The Golden Donors*, a philanthropy history by Waldemar A. Nielsen.

The following year, the board enlarged itself to 15 members to help resolve the disputes. Although individual trustees initiated some excellent programmes, including the MacArthur Fellows Program, the wrangling continued.

Roderick’s death in 1984 quieted the tumult, but it took another 15 years before problems with the foundation’s direction were entirely resolved.

Ambiguity may lead to open conflict, as with the MacArthur Foundation. More often, philanthropic decision makers split the difference, creating potpourri of values that blends multiple perspectives and agendas.

A typical manifestation of this phenomenon is that money is spread over more and more recipients, which makes it tough to stay strategically focused. The foundation leaders may feel good about what they are doing, but that does not mean they’re actually doing good.

Clarifying values and beliefs allows one to give intelligently and deliver results. Look at what John V.N. Dorr and his wife, Nell, accomplished.

Mr. Dorr, a metallurgist, chemical engineer and protégé of Thomas Edison, founded an engineering firm that made him wealthy enough to establish the Dorr Foundation in 1940.

The foundation initially financed a wide range of small projects.

Then Nell Dorr pointed out that after dark, especially in bad weather, headlight glare from oncoming traffic made drivers either hug the center line of the highway or swerve away from that line onto the soft shoulder of the road – sometimes with tragic consequences.

Thinking about the problem, Mr Dorr became convinced that painting a white stripe on the far right side of the road to demarcate the outside edge of the pavement would not only minimise the threat to drivers but also make pedestrians safer. In a test of the stripes on New York’s Hutchinson River Parkway in the 1950s, accidents and injuries dropped 55% over seven months.

Great philanthropy is distinguished not by the sheer size of a gift or grant but by what it accomplishes. This article is drawn from Give Smart; Philanthropy That Gets Results, by Thomas Tierney and Joel Fleishman, which is available at amazon.com

Continued on page 8

Adapted from
The Chronicle of Philanthropy
24 February 2011

The hidden killer: A simple misunderstanding

Continued from page 1

(and produced 1/10th the giving):

At Gillette, Medical Pioneers Set the Standards for Correcting Feet

Another shining distinction between corporate communications and donor communications is the value placed on the reader's time and interests.

Good donor communications treat the reader as sacred – and a squirmy beast, eager to escape.

Corporate communications treat the reader as a foregone conclusion, like students in a college classroom. Corporate communications like to lecture. They make points. They explain at length. They unashamedly use 'insider' language (a.k.a., jargon that insiders understand and outsiders can only guess at).

'All fundraising copy should sound like

someone talking,' says George Smith. The admirable Mr. Smith is among the UK's most celebrated fundraising writers. His advice is not limited to direct mail, either. It applies to all communications meant for donor prospects and donors.

Writing for those audiences must (at a minimum): entertain them; interest them, gratify them emotionally; exalt them (what donor-centricity is all about); make easy-to-spot and -understand offers, and exhort people to act now – and make action quick and easy.

That last is key. The worst and first enemy in donor communications is inertia.

Getting anyone to do anything is hard, even when they are predisposed.

The only safe attitude I know is this: assume no one will respond to your communications; now what can you do to improve on that? ■

To succeed philanthropy needs to be deep rooted

Continued from page 7

Because the Dorrs were committed to learning what works for a cause they cared about, they invested their money and their time over years to achieve the results they desired. By the early 1960s, as a result of the Foundation's focus and investment and Mr Dorr's relentless lobbying, the highway shoulder line had gained near-universal acceptance, and thousands of lives were saved.

Pierre Omidyar, the founder of eBay, and his wife, Pam, offer a more contemporary illustration of translating values into action.

They believe deeply in the power of the individual to drive change, especially when enabled by technology. Hence their active support for Ushahidi, a Web platform that gathers data from individual e-mails and text messages and represents them in a visual format (such as a map or timeline) that can inform people and galvanize them to act.

First used to chart post-election violence in Kenya, the Ushahidi platform has been used by citizens and organisations around the world to publicise – and spark – real-time responses to events like the earthquake in Haiti and the Israeli invasion of Gaza.

Though generations apart, what is similar about these donors is that clarity about their values and beliefs determined how they decided to use their philanthropic resources to make very specific differences in the world.

This may sound like the most common of common denominators. After all, you would be hard-pressed to find a philanthropist who doesn't hope to make a difference, let alone one who would knowingly set out to waste hard-earned money.

But aspiring to do 'good' isn't enough. Effective philanthropy is fundamentally personal. Philanthropists accomplish far more when they pursue results driven by who they are and what they care about most. ■

FUNDRAISING FORUM is edited by Richard Solomon and published by Downes Murray International Views expressed are not necessarily those of the publisher.

DOWNES MURRAY
INTERNATIONAL

Downes Murray International are fundraising consultants, working with non-profit and non-government organisations of all kinds, to increase their fundraising effectiveness.

We offer feasibility studies, strategic planning workshops, direct mail fundraising, mail/phone, corporate and capital fundraising campaigns, Internet fundraising and website design, church fundraising and bequest promotion programmes.

In addition, Downes Murray International has close links with a number of fundraising consultancies across the globe, and represents DVA Navion International Consultancy in Africa, enabling us to keep a finger on the pulse of international trends and techniques. For more information, contact us:

Durban
Tel. 031 584-5000
Website
www.dmi.co.za
E-mail
info@dmi.co.za

If you would like additional copies of **Fundraising Forum** or would like to add names to our mailing list please e-mail: Page.Sanders@dmi.co.za

"Reprinted with acknowledgement to ..."

Fundraising Forum prides itself on keeping South African fundraisers right up-to-date with developing attitudes, trends and techniques, both here and overseas. We are grateful to the following international publications, which are regularly quoted and highly recommended:

- **Successful Fund Raising**, PO Box 4528, Sioux City, Iowa, 51104, USA, (12 issues per annum \$159) website: www.stevensoninc.com
- **The NonProfit Times™**, 190 Tamarack Circle, Skillman, NJ08558, USA, (\$129 per annum) website: www.nptimes.com
- **The Chronicle of Philanthropy**, PO Box 1989, Marion, Ohio, 43306, USA, (24 issues – per annum at \$95) website: <http://philanthropy.com>
- **Successful Direct Mail, Telephone and Online Fundraising**. Subscribe for free at <http://malwarwicknews.com>
- **Ahern E-News**. Subscribe for free at www.AhernComm.com