FUNDRAISING FORUM™

What nonprofits should start doing now: Advice from experts

In this outlook for 2014, The Chronicle of Philanthropy *highlights five areas charities should consider focussing on this year.*

Keep an eye on the numbers: To improve performance, nonprofits should pick out key pieces of data from each of their departments and review them regularly.

Looking at important data regularly, helps organisations stop making decisions based on hunches and identify potential problems early.

Experiment with raising money from the crowd

Campaigns to raise money for specific projects on sites like Indiegogo and Kickstarter are a great way for nonprofits to attract young donors, says Alia McKee, a principal at Sea Change Strategies, a fundraising consulting company.

The opportunity to contribute to an individual project, she says, is particularly enticing to millennial and Generation X donors who want to know exactly how their contributions will be spent and the impact they will have. Charities, on the other hand, are reluctant to let supporters direct their gifts because they need unrestricted funds, which, she says, younger donors are often unwilling to give.

'Organisations are going to really need to play with this,' says Ms. McKee, 'maybe using a restricted-giving campaign to then start the conversation about unrestricted institutional giving'.

Step up efforts to show impact

Too often donor stewardship is an afterthought, and it shows. Nonprofits need to start thinking, when they are planning their fundraising campaigns, about how they will thank donors and show them the impact of their gifts, says Theresa Pesch, president of Children's Foundation, which is the fundraising arm of Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota.

Her group's fundraisers develop individual plans for how the institution will thank major donors and show them the difference their gifts have made, and stewardship activities are discussed at weekly meetings.

For example: Less than a day after a couple made a donation to pay for a powerful new laser, the parents of a young patient with a brain tumor wrote the donors a letter telling them what laser surgery would mean for their son and what he hoped to dress up as for Halloween after he recovered.

Says Ms. Pesch: 'We mobilise quickly'.

Think about the second gift

Instead of putting so much time and energy into winning new donors, charities need to do a better job getting gifts from the supporters they already have, says Farra Trompeter, vice president of Big Duck, a communications-consulting company that works with nonprofits.

She recommends that nonprofits start by reviewing exactly what happens after someone makes a first gift, to determine areas that need improvement. Organisations should then seek to personalise the way they thank donors and better report on the impact of their gifts.

The goal, says Ms. Trompeter, is for donors to think, 'Wow, I feel part of this organisation. I'm not just this random person that's disconnected and the organisation just sees me as a credit card or a chequebook. They see me as a partner'.

Take visuals seriously

Making a good impression is critical, so charities need to get more professional about the way they present themselves visually, say nonprofit communications experts.

Instead of using stock photos, experts recommend that nonprofits train employees to take photographs of their programmes in action. Groups should also consider working with graphic artists and designers when possible.

And once organisations determine the key messages, colours, and typefaces they want people to associate with them, groups need to stick with them, says Ms. Trompeter.

'As soon as things start getting boring for you – ugh, everything's pink, everything's blue, everything always says the same thing,' that's when the look has started to become familiar to supporters, she says.

With acknowledgement to The Chronicle of Philanthropy, *16 January 2014.*

INSIDE INFORMATION

Are you ready for the PoPI Act?

Open any newspaper or news website, and the chances are that you will find a report on someone's right to personal privacy being infringed, or yet another intrusion through an organisation's security systems with credit card or other financial information being stolen. The Protection of Personal Information Act aims to put a stop to these illegal activities.

With the rise of the free flow of information over the internet, the popularity of social media, increasing identity theft and other intrusions on the privacy of individuals, governments world-wide have become increasingly concerned with the purposes for which organisations collect personal information, why they keep it, and how they protect it.

The position in South Africa is no different, and consumers in South Africa should be welcoming the impending Protection of Personal Information Bill (PoPI or the Bill).

The challenge for organisations, is that complying with the requirements of the PoPI Bill is going to have a significant impact on the way they do business. In our discussions with our PwC subject matter experts on privacy in different jurisdictions, the opinion throughout has been that the PoPI Bill is the most comprehensive piece of privacy legislation in the world at the moment, and the burden of complying with it is going to be a difficult one, particularly for small to medium businesses. For organisations with complex business processes who gather multiple types of personal information, the road to compliance is going to be much longer and more challenging. Regardless of the size of the organisation, boards and management need to regard becoming compliant with the Bill as being high on their agendas, and they should be starting their privacy programmes as soon as possible.

Rampant developments in information and communication technologies, globalisation, and the pursuance of electronic trade across the world have afforded information a strategic value.

Moreover, information that is able to profile or identify a person or their interests offers added strategic value as organisations compete for the attention of consumers. Over time, individual rights of privacy and confidentiality have become more and more neglected, giving way to less than acceptable information management practices and rising identity theft, fraud, and other harm stemming from the unauthorised use of an individual's personal information.

The constitutional right to privacy in section 14 of the Bill of Rights of the South African Constitution has to date been a largely inaccessible right.

The PoPI Bill is aimed at giving effect to South African citizens' constitutional right to privacy. The Bill achieves this through:

- Providing for the rights of data subjects with regard to their ability to protect their personal information as it is processed by public or private bodies, as well as giving data subjects remedies they can use should those rights be infringed.
- Providing a framework that sets out the minimum conditions that must be met when personal information is processed by organisations, whether they are public or private.
- Establishing an Information Protection Regulator, whose primary purposes will be to promote awareness of the rights of data subjects when it comes to protecting their personal information, as well as enforcing the requirements of the Bill.

The Bill arises from international developments with regard to data protection regulation around the globe. For South Africa to continue trading effectively with other countries, regulation such as this is essential. Consequently, the purpose of the legislation is two-fold, enhancing local privacy regulation as well as prescribing data protection practices in South Africa that are harmonised with international practices.

Drawing from the detail in the Bill, it emerges that the Bill is cognisant of two stark realities of privacy – while privacy is a theme that permeates global society and business endeavour, at the same time variations in industry data protection practices must be accommodated in the regulation of privacy. As a result, the Bill includes conditions for how personal information is shared with third parties (both within South Africa and outside its borders).

It also gives authority to industry codes of conduct that will expand and clarify the data protection landscape of unique industries, taking into account the sometimes unique requirements of industries such as healthcare or financial services.

Finally, the Bill pursues a balanced approach to the protection of personal information, mandating due regard for the justifiable limitations of the right to privacy, the need to secure the interests of free flow of information, and managing the tensions between the rights of access to information and protection of personal information.

Many organisations face a long journey to becoming compliant with the Bill's requirements. Some of the larger financial institutions and telecommunications organisations have begun with their privacy programmes and a few are relatively advanced, but even these organisations are concerned that they may not be able to complete their programmes in time for the deadline for compliance. The lack of readiness is a major concern, and those organisations who have yet to begin their journey are likely to find themselves facing some unexpected obstacles in the road. The key message for all organisations is that you need to start your compliance process immediately. ∎

MILESTONE THINKING

On-target observations in brief

Wealth is not to feed our egos, but to feed the hungry and to help people help themselves.
Andrew Carnegie

Tell your potential donor about the opportunity to be a hero by making (whatever) possible.
With acknowledgement to
The NonProfit Times
15 April 2012
Visit www.thenonprofittimes.com

Make building and maintaining good relationships with donors a greater priority than asking for money. First gauge a potential donor's interests, and when it's clear that the interests of the donor and the charity overlap, don't be timid about asking for support.
With acknowledgement to
The Chronicle of Philanthropy
24 October 2013
Visit http://philanthropy.com

The only campaigns and programmes which I have seen fail to reach their goals are those where the trustees or board members have unfortunately shown a combination of ignorance and arrogance.
With acknowledgement to
**the late Terry Murray in
The Art of Asking + 60 More
Fundraising Tips and Trends**

Volunteers want to be needed, useful, and asked for input, which makes them feel far more recognised than an annual certificate.
With acknowledgement to
The NonProfit Times
1 May 2012
Visit www.thenonprofittimes.com

All relevant information, even bad news, needs to flow to the board. Trustees should be clear about what they need, what level of detail they want, and how much context is appropriate.
With acknowledgement to
The Chronicle of Philanthropy
16 January 2014
Visit http://philanthropy.com

Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.
William James

Pupils at the Jan Kriel School are given the chance to be their very best, both on the sports field and in the classroom.

Excellence in learning since 1937

The Jan Kriel School, in Kuilsriver in the western Cape, was started as a home for children with epilepsy.

At the time no such facilities or medical treatment existed. Moved by the death as result of epilepsy of a young boy – Jan Kriel – a committee of caring community members joined forces to remedy the situation.

In 1942 the Dutch Reformed Church took over the Jan Kriel enterprise and started a vital partnership between the Department of Education and the Jan Kriel Institute. This led to the steady development of infrastructure and the best teaching environment to provide opportunities for these youngsters.

There are currently 588 children from Grade 0 to Grade 12 in the school. These learners experience barriers to development and learning including: specific learning disability, physical disability, learning problems complicated by attention deficit disorder and/or hyperactivity, visual or auditory sensory impairments, hearing impairment with verbal communication, cerebral palsy, epilepsy and high functioning learners on the autistic spectrum.

Since inception – and with the help of compassionate supporters – the school's vision has been to give each learner the chance to develop their individual potential, despite the obstacles they face. Today the school prides itself on a 97.5% average success rate.

Donors support the multi–disciplinary team of teachers, therapists and psychologists, social workers, medical staff and hostel staff, who work together to provide specialised and individual tuition and care for each learner.

Visit their website at www.jankriel.org.za or www.jankriel.co.za

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**

Cleaning up a messy donor database can boost fundraising results

Experts suggest starting with big-donor records, breaking the project into manageable chunks, storing it all in a central place, and thinking about who should have access to what information. Sarah Frostenson reports.

When Amanda Zambrano started her new fundraising job in January 2013, she inherited a database of information about donors that was in utter disarray.

The data was inconsistent, a jumble of duplicate and blank records, some containing arbitrary dollar amounts.

'I'd come across a lump gift of $5,000 that in reality might be 40 gifts spread over the course of 10 years,' says Ms. Zambrano, director of advancement at Grace Village Retirement Community, in Indiana, who was the fourth person in five years to oversee the charity's donor records.

Haphazard databases are common at nonprofits, and the problem is an expensive one, experts say, because a bad database can hobble fundraising efforts.

When Ms. Zambrano started her job, she was new to the group and didn't know a single donor. As a one-woman development office, without a database of reliable donor information to draw from, she was at a loss as to how to start because she had so few clues about who had been asked and who had given.

In a lot of cases, fundraisers enter information haphazardly, experts say.

'Databases become these oral-history, patchwork projects,' says Maya Gasuk, a senior consultant at West Wind Consulting Strategies in Fund Raising in the United States. 'People adapt things on the fly, without first really learning how to use them.'

Following are some tips from charity officials and consultants on how to manage and clean up messy records so that they can be used to help an organisation raise money and better meet the needs of its clients:

Think about how the data will be exported

This will help determine how the information should be entered in the first place. For instance, Ms. Gasuk suggests standardising how biographical data about a donor is formatted.

Break up a donor's name into multiple fields (title, salutation, first name, last name), which makes it easier to work with for different uses than one long string of text.

Most important, Ms. Gasuk recommends creating a unique identifier, such as a number, for each donor record if it is not automatically generated by the database software. This helps fundraisers accurately modify records and oversee large imports and exports of data.

See what exported data looks like

Export the data into a spreadsheet and make sure it's clear what the information tells the reader, says Jane Van Ingen, a development officer at the Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen, in New York.

'Some of the headings may make sense to the database inputter, but not to the person you are giving the information to,' she cautions.

She also recommends regularly searching for duplicate records across the entire database to see possible problems. 'It'll only tell you the most obvious errors, but it's a start and will give you a sense of where problems are if you want to dig through,' says Ms. Van Ingen.

Clean up the records of the biggest donors first

Focus on the supporters who give the most money, says Dave Paek, a fundraising database consultant at Nonprofit Management Systems. From there, he says, work your way down to cleaning up the records of people who have given less – and perhaps cull those who have never given.

'This way, the people who do a lot for your organisations will be cleaned up,' he says. 'You should know what gifts they've made and how to address them if you were to mail something to them.'

But don't go back more than three years, he says. In most instances, records older than that will be too messy, and it's not worth the time.

Craft consistent definitions

For instance, everyone in the fundraising office should know what it means when a donor record indicates that the charity has had a 'visit' with that donor – whether the contact was by phone or in person. Confusion over such terms means the data won't be entered consistently.

When Sara Beinert's staff at the Center for Constitutional Rights was cleaning up its database, the employees set aside some time every Friday morning to go over a printout of all the fields and codes they used.

During those meetings, says Ms. Beinert, the center's associate director of development for individual giving, her team hashed out the purpose of the database fields and streamlined categories.

'It was important for the three of us, who were primary users, to decide how codes were going to be used, devise new codes, and document everything we did,' she says. 'We could really enforce the rules of (data) entry.'

Decide whether the database needs overall changes or updating of individual records

Uniformly changing the entire database can save time, but may introduce new errors, say experts. Records for big donors, for instance, might require a more personalised approach, says Mr. Paek.

Carol Lukemeyer, founder of the fundraising consultancy Data Sense, says that when a fundraiser makes a sweeping change, he or she

Continued from page 4.

should ask another person at the organisation to monitor the results.

The other person will get valuable training and help reduce mistakes in cleaning up the data.

Also, think about the repercussions of any overall changes made to a database for people who will use those records in the future, advises Ms. Beinert.

When her predecessor moved her organisation's gifts records to a new database, for example, it was decided to lump together each donor's giving as one large gift.

But now, as Ms. Beinert and her colleagues prepare to celebrate their organisation's 50th anniversary, they are unable to generate accurate gift reports for longtime donors.

Get some help

Interns or volunteers can help with database cleanup. But Mr. Paek advises limiting their access so they can't accidentally delete a major gift or an important donor's record.

'Task them with only one thing,' he says. As a quality-control measure, he encourages frequent reporting and queries to see what updates have been made to the database while it's being cleaned up.

Choose interns or volunteers for these clean-up tasks who are genuinely interested in databases, Ms. Van Ingen suggests, because they will be more personally invested in the assignment.

'It's a lot of grunt work,' she says. 'It can be tedious and might not seem that important, but it is.'

Store data in one central location

Some fundraising staff turn over frequently. Keeping all of an organisation's institutional knowledge about donors or clients in one place can help improve not only fundraising efforts but also mission-related work, say experts.

At Homes for Our Troops, the charity is using a centralised donor database to manage every aspect of the organisation.

The charity builds specially adapted homes for severely injured military veterans, so the group has a lot of sensitive information about clients' health and valuable information such as deeds to land. Rose Dixon, the group's manager of annual giving and donor relations, is helping to expand the capacity of the group's database so it can be used by people in every department.

'Every cheque and note that comes in the door is information that we can use,' Ms. Dixon says. 'We have to have a place to store that information that is easily accessible. Having it sit in one place is very useful to us.'

The shared database will allow the organisation to send out automatic reminders and action items to specific individuals and teams. 'With two to three events every weekend throughout the year, it was important for us to have a system that notifies the various people when their piece of the project kicks off,' says Ms. Dixon.

Limit access to data entry

Though the entire 40-member staff of Homes for Our Troops will be able to view information in the database, Ms. Dixon serves as its 'gatekeeper' and other employees will have more limited access. Every database needs someone to play that watchdog role, say experts.

'You need one person who makes the changes and oversees the database and who has ultimate responsibility for how the database is used,' says Ms. Lukemeyer. 'Only a very small number of people should have administrative rights. You don't want everybody to be able to make a new field.'

Clean up data frequently

Scouring all the records once a year is too labour-intensive and inefficient, experts say. Instead, schedule data cleanups and checks that coincide with major events in your organisation's calendar, suggests Ms. Gasuk.

'If you're going to do a phone-a-thon, do a phone (number) cleaning before then,' she says.

'Or update salutations and mailing addresses right before the start of a big campaign. Structure it so it makes sense to do it and has value as an investment.'

Generating weekly reports can help manage all of the incoming and outgoing data, says Mr. Paek, and help spot inconsistencies.

Document everything

Though Ms. Zambrano had to untangle the database she inherited at Grace Village Retirement Community, she was relieved to discover that her predecessors consistently made lots of notes.

'Instead of using a fund or campaign code, they left all these comments,' she says. As a result, she now encourages people who work with databases to do the same; if a piece of data is missing, for example, leave a note about why it's missing.

Putting together a database manual can also help future users, says Ms. Gasuk. And, she adds, it can be done gradually: 'When you do a process, just take 10 minutes to take notes about this process. Type it up, name it, and put in a folder.'

Ms. Zambrano says that although it's easy to forget to document everything amid many other tasks, it's important to think ahead. 'I always try to do what's most helpful for the organisation in five to 10 years instead of what's easy for me today.' ∎

Four decades of observations

As you reflect back over your nonprofit experience, you probably cannot remember a year in which there was not a significant scandal within one of our sister organisations.

You cringe each time, knowing that public attention focused on misconduct within one public charity adds to skepticism and mistrust about all charities.

Nothing is more important in building and maintaining public trust than good governance. Assuming that the allegations and accusations are true, by its very nature, there has been a failure in governance.

Once in that deep hole, how does an organisation crawl out? It doesn't re-establish trust and credibility by being average. It's not enough to just adhere to best practices, but in many instances they must be exceeded. The organisation is being held to a higher standard of ethical conduct.

Most instances of governance failure occur because the board and senior staff don't know what they don't know. They don't draw on resources of groups for the basic tools to put solid infrastructure in place.

Examples include such things as policies covering conflict of interest; nepotism; whistleblowing; fraternisation, as well as bylaws with term limits for officers and directors; strong audit committee charter with members with actual audit expertise; and provisions for an independent governance/nominating committee.

You would be surprised how many organisations don't have these basic fundamentals in place, thus putting the organisations at risk. Ensuring that this infrastructure is in place, however, doesn't go far enough.

Recruit new directors

Moving on a simultaneous path, you need a strategy to correct the governance failures of the past. Recruit new directors who were not a part of the past and ensure that they are a majority of the restructured board. Why is this decision so critically important? It is important because simply strengthening infrastructure doesn't change the organisational culture.

Changing an organisation's culture is the most formidable challenge and the old culture that got the organisation in trouble is not always obvious. Culture eats strategy every day and can undermine and circumvent policies and safeguards.

Even if the past board members helped correct and bring attention to the wrongdoings, they still carry a part of the old organisational DNA with them and may fail to see potential problems without an outside set of new eyes.

For example, the board might be ready to bid out a lucrative contract and one of the directors wants to resign from the board to bid on the business. The old culture might not recognise that this is inappropriate and it must avoid even a perception of a conflict of interest.

Perhaps an audit committee member who doesn't serve on the board wants to resign so their firm can bid on conducting the organisation's audit. This is also highly inappropriate. Building a healthy culture doesn't happen by accident.

Critical steps

Other critical pieces of improving governance coming out of a scandal:

- Elect one of the new directors as Chair of the Board. Leadership of the past is no longer sufficient to restore trust and establish a new culture.

- The board should number not fewer than 10 members under these circumstances and should represent a diversity of competence, geography, ethnicity and thought. Smaller numbers make it easier for a dominant board chair to control members. A board of four or five reeks of the good old boys network, particularly if they are all from the same geographical area.

- The CEO should have an agreed-upon set of annual performance objectives and must be evaluated accordingly. This strategy is also a part of basic infrastructure.

- The board provides the checks and balances for the CEO, but only the board can provide checks and balances for itself. To do so, it needs good protocols and a healthy culture.

- Six months after the restructured board is in place, conduct an evaluation of board member effectiveness to ensure independence, full participation, open discussion and lack of dominance by any one person or subgroup. Repeat the evaluation six months later.

In conclusion, a public charity that is in extraordinary circumstances must take extraordinary steps to restore public trust. It has an obligation to itself and to the charitable sector as a whole.

Cass Wheeler is the former chief executive officer of the American Heart Association. He currently resides in Texas, where he manages his consulting practice and offers counsel to organisations needing board re-structuring, guidance on reputation management and nonprofit best practice.

Collaboration can bring big payoffs when it's done right

Today the nonprofit world is abuzz about collaboration as organisations and communities attempt to build networks, work together to take action, or catalyse social movements.

But collaboration is often much tougher than it looks. While many nonprofits have succeeded, too often attempts by organisations to join forces result in false starts, damaged relationships, and little to no progress on the issues.

The problem: Many of the standard principles for managing strong nonprofit organisations can actually inhibit successful collaborations.

In fact, one bottleneck that is often overlooked is the critical importance of relationships among people and organisations, which take time and patience to develop. All too often, the best strategies fail because power imbalances, competition, mistrust, and ego get in the way. But some pioneering charities and grant makers that seek to multiply their impact are achieving better results by adopting a collaborative approach. Here's how they're doing it: Building trust.

Collaborations are most successful when participants have the time and space to build the relationships and trust needed to share control with others.

When Yousry Makar, director of Habitat for Humanity Egypt, laid out an ambitious 25-year plan that sought to serve 10 percent of the country's 20 million poor residents, he recognised that his organisation had money and programme expertise but lacked the local knowledge, staffing, and resources to propel this work forward.

Mr. Makar and his organisation went from building 30 houses a year to building 2 000 by weaving a network of local community-development organisations and yielding control of programme operations to them.

In addition to a tremendous increase in the construction of homes, Habit for Humanity Egypt achieved among the highest housing loan-repayment rates of any country in which Habitat operates by working in this way. People who had taken out housing loans held each other accountable for repayment to a far greater degree than Habitat ever could.

Grant makers can help build a foundation of trust by allowing relationships and collaborations to grow organically, rather than forcing grantees to work together, and providing significant resources, such as unrestricted support, so nonprofits have the organisational slack they need to invest in building relationships.

Practicing humility

Nonprofit leaders are used to promoting their programme models, building their brands, and striving to become recognised as leaders in their field – and many of their boards support this vision. Yet the individuals and charities that are most effective at collaborating are those that are able to work alongside their peers as equals, are willing to take a back seat when someone else is in a better position to lead, and understand that attracting attention to the issues is more important than getting recognition for the individual organisation.

At the Nature Conservancy, part of working with humility means joining with sometimes unexpected partners, such as corporations, in finding solutions, rather than shutting them out.

'Some of the best learning comes from working with people you don't share goals with,' said Mark Burget, executive vice president. 'This takes us into uncomfortable terrain, but it opens up new opportunities. Maybe there is room to collaborate with people who we once thought of as "doing bad."'

In January 2011, the Nature Conservancy announced a breakthrough collaboration with the Dow Chemical Company.

Over the course of five years, scientists from the Nature Conservancy and Dow will work together at three pilot sites to validate and test ways to make more sustainable business decisions at Dow. By working together, Dow and the Conservancy can use what they are learning to transfer knowledge globally and influence more companies to make more environmentally sound decisions.

This collaboration is an example of how companies and organisations can work together to make change happen and, in this case, increase investments in protecting the planet's natural systems and the services they provide.

Collaboration can bring big payoffs when it's done right (Continued)

Continued from page 7.

Charity leaders and grant makers who want to encourage greater humility across the nonprofit world must first look critically at their own attitudes and practices. They should ask themselves: To what extent does our organisation seek to understand the perspective of others in our community and learn from them? How open are we about sharing our resources and knowledge, including lessons learned from missteps?

Using mission as a motivator

In many cases, a nonprofit can't create widespread, lasting change all by itself. Collaborations succeed when participants work to achieve a unified goal rather than each focussing on its own group's mission. But joining forces can be tough for nonprofits that are, in many ways, competing for the same funds.

With an ambitious goal to give all children access to playgrounds, the leaders of KaBoom realise that their success depends on the success of other organisations committed to the same cause. Therefore, it works to help strengthen like-minded groups.

For example, KaBoom has shared resources with partners and allies – in one case redirecting a potential donor to another charity that was a better match, and in another case, providing a grant to keep an organisation afloat after it lost a major donor.

The decision to share resources in this way is not purely altruistic; KaBoom recognises that the loss of one ally is a loss to the network as a whole, and a stronger network means greater results. 'Convince complementary organisations to grow with you,' said Darell Hammond, the charity's CEO. 'You need more boats in the fleet, not to be the biggest boat in the fleet.'

Donors can help nonprofits work this way by covering the administrative costs or infrastructure for collaborations to thrive, connecting nonprofits that are working on the same issues, and making long-term investments in the cause rather than in just a single organisation.

Fostering strong relationships

For many nonprofits and grant makers, taking pains to build relationships and getting comfortable with ceding control to the group will take time and require some significant shifts. But staff members, board leaders, and grant makers can have a tremendous influence over how easily a nonprofit will be able to make these shifts.

Leaders and donors who want to see the nonprofits they care about engage effectively in collaboration, can start by reflecting on whether they are creating the conditions that support success.

They can start by asking these questions: To what extent are we encouraging a culture of collaboration that is grounded in strong relationships? What practices or policies might be working against this goal? What changes can we make to better support the organisations we care about?

The work is hard, but the payoff of effective collaboration can be tremendous. As one nonprofit leader put it: 'Mastering collaboration is the most important opportunity to close the gap between achieving pretty good performance and realising full potential.'

Lori Bartczak is director of programmes at Grantmakers for Effective Organisations.

Jane Wei-Skillern is adjunct associate professor, UC Berkeley Haas School of Business, and a lecturer at the Stanford Graduate School of Business. She is a co-author of *Cracking the Network Code: Four Principles for Grantmakers*, published by Grantmakers for Effective Organisations. ∎

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• **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 – one annum at $95) website: http://philanthropy.com
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