



Summer 2013

THE BONNER CONSULTING QUARTERLY

Growing Nonprofits, Teams, and Leaders

Greetings,

Welcome to the Summer of 2013 edition of our Quarterly Newsletter. Kate Sphar and I have been busy in the last quarter - especially facilitating strategic plans for Nonprofits. The article below addresses some of our continuous learning about what it takes to create a great and executable strategic plan.

In earlier newsletters we described our philosophy of the Iron Triangle for Nonprofit Sustainability. This sustainability triangle indicates that for a nonprofit to be sustainable a balance must be struck between the organization's mission or programs, the human capacity or talent, and the financial assets that are available. As one aspect grows, or shrinks, so should the others. For many nonprofits the financial assets are often secured through fundraising and development. We are pleased to include an article from guest writer Anna Doering. Anna is a seasoned fundraising and development professional with whom we plan to collaborate in our organizational assessments and in the due diligence phase of planning.. Her assessments of an organization's fundraising and development health will complement other areas that we assess, including board, leadership and staff, financial health, infrastructure and programs.

As always, thank you for reading, passing this along to others, and for your continued support in our growing consulting practice. For more information and insights we encourage you to subscribe to our blog.

Leslie Bonner

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Want more timely updates on strategy, teams, non-profits, leadership, and organizational health? Our blog is published about once a month.

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Upcoming Presentations

Is your organization or Professional Association looking for a speaker on a current nonprofit issue? We are highly rated presenters on a wide variety of topics.

Sept 9: Foundation Center @ Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

Leslie Bonner will be presenting **Creating a Strategic Plan that Works** (Oakland)

Sept. 26: 2:00 PM EST, John Wiley & Sons Webinar Leslie Bonner will be discussing **Nonprofit Leadership Development** (Online Event)

GROWING YOUR NONPROFIT

Good Strategy Requires Constraints, Controversy, and Dissent

We have been busy facilitating strategic plans and every time we do one I come away with a new appreciation of what it really takes (and how hard it is) to create a realistic and executable plan.

Last week we were meeting with an arts organization about their upcoming plan and the Director of the organization talked about how he finds it easier to be creative if he is given a set of constraints or boundaries within which to work. This resonated with me because I also come up with better solutions or strategies when I understand the parameters that constrain a particular project or task. The constraints actually jumpstart my creativity and ground my decisions in something practical. This is why most of the (nonprofit) strategic plans we do start with a clear understanding and discussion of the constraints imposed by the organization's current reality. No magic wands available or magical thinking allowed. For many nonprofit organizations the obvious constraints are either financial (having enough funding) and/or capacity (having enough staff or time). Most organizations' plans are also constrained (or should be) by their stated mission and core competencies - which dictate what types of services and programs they can and should offer.

It turns out that the wise and creative arts organization Director was stating something that has been well researched in the arts - constraints do improve creativity. As this article by Matthew May points out, research proves that "tough obstacles can prompt people to open their minds, look at the "big picture," and make connections between things that are not obviously connected. This is an ability called "global processing," which is the hallmark of creativity."

[CLICK HERE TO READ THE ARTICLE](#)

Oct. 8: Rehabilitation and Community Providers Association Annual Conference. Leslie Bonner will be presenting on the topic of [Nonprofit Succession Planning and Leadership Development](#) (Seven Springs)



GROWING YOUR NONPROFIT

Are You Ready to Plan and Succeed in Fundraising?

BY ANNA DOERING, AD CONSULTING

ARE WE READY? Your strategic plan says you need to put a new and future-focused emphasis on fundraising. You must raise more from a diverse revenue base and start thinking about a major fundraising campaign. Fundraising success requires a significant investment of resources - people, time, and money - so make sure that your next step is the right one.

Remember - an effective fundraising program isn't a "one-off". You don't want donors to give once and go away. You need a program that grows and succeeds each year because it's well-planned, sufficiently-resourced (Board, staff, volunteers and administration), well-executed, advances the organization's mission and supports important outcomes. It continually strengthens the base of support and furthers the goals of stability, sustainability and growth. Your program needs to meet immediate needs, create a culture of giving within and for your organization and helps to take the work of the organization to the next level.

Affirm your readiness, highlight and celebrate your strengths and identify areas of improvement (everyone has them!) by completing the [Fundraising Checklist](#). This helps to create an objective baseline assessment of your current fundraising program (i.e. internal systems, case for support, financial position, staff and volunteer leadership)..

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

GROWING ORGANIZATIONS AND LEADERS

Recent, relevant articles on Organizational, Leadership, and Personal Development

How to Engage (and Retain) Your Nonprofit Board Members | Bonner Consulting Blog

Recently I wrote an article that applied my past experience in Talent Acquisition (Recruiting) to the problem of recruiting nonprofit Board members. In this follow up I attempt to do the same to the problem of engaging (and retaining) nonprofit Board members. Again the similarities between Board and staff talent issues are striking - it just takes a slight twist to apply the research and learnings to the other group."

We all Need Friends At Work | Harvard Business Review Blog

Research shows that workers are happier in their jobs when they have friendships with co-workers. Employees report that when they have friends at work, their job is more fun, enjoyable, worthwhile, and satisfying. Gallup found that close work friendships boost employee satisfaction by 50% and people with a best friend at work are seven times more likely to engage fully in their work.

If You're Always Giving Orders, You're Not a Great Leader | Inc.

A giant step toward overcoming your delegation deficit. "The best leaders spend five times more time teaching with questions than telling people what to do. What's your ratio?"

We welcome your suggestions for future topics as well as your comments on this issue.

[Leslie Bonner](#) & [Kate Sphar](#)