HIDDEN AGENDAS

Stereotypes and Cultural Barriers to Corporate-Community Partnerships

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INTRODUCTION

For years, the best and brightest thinkers in America, from Michael E. Porter to Rosabeth Moss Kanter, have lauded the opportunities for corporate-community partnerships. Businesses, it was said, could find hidden gold in inner-city markets, and nonprofit organizations could enhance their sustainability and achieve their social objectives. So where's the beef? Business and nonprofit partners with common goals are more common than ever, government investment in such partnerships has increased, and still the number of partnerships has not reached critical mass.

Laufer Green Isaac believes the answer lies, in part, with an unexpected source: a unique combination of stereotypes and conflicting organizational cultures.

The Ford Foundation approached Laufer Green Isaac, a strategic marketing communications firm specializing in social-issue marketing and corporate communications, with the challenge of building awareness and interest in the practices of innovative corporations who were achieving competitive advantage through community investment.

The purpose of the Corporate Involvement Initiative (CII), as conceived by the Ford Foundation, was to marshal corporate operational resources to bring economic opportunities to the nation's disadvantaged communities. Distinctive from corporate philanthropy, the CII focused on harnessing the *operational* (not philanthropic) budgets of corporations to generate large-scale and durable improvements in income and wealth for low-income people and communities.

The potential for leveraging market forces is easily imagined. In 2000, total corporate philanthropy amounted to $10 billion, while spending with minority suppliers reached $50 billion— five times the available charitable resources.[1] Factor in other corporate spending in workforce development, site selection and real estate, product development for untapped markets, and other business strategies, and the social impact of corporate resources becomes clear.

Based on initial interviews with nonprofit participants in the CII, the LGI team identified a reported "disconnect" between the nonprofit organizations and the businesses attempting to partner with one another. Even the presence of common goals was not enough to create successful partnerships. The LGI team initiated a research project to determine the nature of the problem.

What the LGI researchers found was provocative and disturbing: Serious and distinct negative stereotypes held by both business executives and nonprofit leaders are a core reason behind the inability of these institutions to form and implement successful partnerships. The fact that these stereotypes are unconscious or unacknowledged provides a major hindrance to working together. And the different organizational cultures in which business and nonprofit executives operate unwittingly reinforce negative preconceptions.

Fortunately, the study also uncovered approaches that contribute to resolving these deep-seated conflicts.

The authors contend that these findings transcend the specific focus on corporate involvement in community economic development. The fundamental insights and recommendations are descriptive of (and applicable to) the disconnect among business and nonprofits generally. From arts to environmental organizations, from community organizations to nationally recognized foundations, the findings of this research continue to resonate with nonprofit leaders. The best news is that while deep-seated negative perceptions exist and culture clashes persist, those business and nonprofit executives with a vested interest in forging partnerships can proactively ameliorate these barriers through practical techniques and sensitivity training.

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[1] Michele Kahane, "Who We Are," WinWinPartner.com, September 2002. <http://www.winwinpartner.com/Who%20We%20Are/index.html> 14 July 2003.

Research Methodology:

Objectives and Design

The research discussed in this report was funded by the Ford Foundation's Corporate Involvement Initiative and conducted by Laufer Green Isaac, an award-winning strategic marketing communications firm specializing in social-issue marketing and headquartered in Los Angeles, California.

The objective of this research was simple: identify and understand the communications barriers and opportunities associated with corporate-community partnerships.

Companies targeted for participation in this study included those with large, recognizable regional or national brand names—including those companies with direct experience in corporate-community partnerships and those without. Participants included executives from such esteemed companies as Bank Boston, TJX, Nissan Motor Corporation, Sony Corporation, Edison, Bell Atlantic, Keebler Corporation, Exxon, Nation's Bank, Shell Oil, Bank One, Boston Consulting Group, and many others.

The nonprofit portion of this study was comprised of mature organizations with longstanding support from major funders, including national or regional organizations with interest and experience in corporate-community partnerships. Nonprofit organizations included universities and nonprofit trade organizations, as well as those working in the community on a regional basis.

The Research was conducted in three waves:

- Wave I: July 1998 in Los Angeles and Boston
- Wave II: September 1998 in Chicago and Houston
- Wave III: November 29, 2001 and May 8, 2002 in Los Angeles and Boston, respectively

The elapsed time between Waves II and III of the research is significant in that Wave III was conducted in a post-September 11th environment and a downward-trending economy. It is also worth noting that part of Wave III was conducted after the corporate accounting fraud scandals (e.g., Enron, Global Crossing, etc.) of early 2002. Wave III was designed, in fact, to monitor any changes in employer perceptions and beliefs about corporate-community partnerships (positive or negative) as a result of this changing environment.

Focus Groups

To provide a forum in which we could probe and understand the potentially complex communications issues associated with corporate-community partnerships, a qualitative research methodology (i.e., focus groups) was recommended by the Laufer Green Isaac research team. For decades, businesses, political campaigns, and academics have used focus groups to monitor attitudes, product usage trends, and beliefs among the population on a national basis. As the late political consultant Lee Atwater once said, the conversations in focus groups "give you a sense of what makes people tick and a sense of what is going on with people's minds and lives that you simply cannot get with survey data."[2]

A total of 10 two-hour focus groups were conducted across four geographically diverse locations: Boston, Chicago, Houston, and Los Angeles. Groups were segmented into Corporate Executives and Nonprofit Leaders.

Table 1:1 Focus Group Research Matrix

	Corporate Executives	Nonprofit Leaders
Wave I (Los Angeles, CA)	X	X
Wave I (Boston, MA)	X	X
Wave II (Chicago, IL)	X	X
Wave II (Houston, TX)	X	X
Wave III (Los Angeles, CA)	X	
Wave III (Boston, MA)	X	

Each group of Corporate Executives was composed of 8 to 10 senior-level business leaders (holding titles of "Vice President" level or higher) at large and medium-sized companies. They were screened to represent a variety of different industries (e.g., manufacturing, financial services, utilities, information technology, entertainment, energy, national corporate consulting, etc.). Respondents were selected to include participants with experience in corporate-community partnerships, as well as those without direct experience. A representative mix of men and women executives and ethnicity was attained.

Each group of Nonprofit Leaders was composed of 8 to 10 senior-level leaders (usually "Executive Director" level titles) from large local, regional, or national nonprofit organizations. These participants were screened to include a wide mix of organizations with interest in and/or experience with community economic development, financial literacy, etc.) for a variety of low-income and disadvantaged populations including various neighborhoods, regions, and ethnic groups.

[2] *"What are Focus Groups?"* American Statistical Association (1998).

A Unique Process

The result of this multi-disciplinary approach was a research method that combined "best of breed" practices from marketing, branding, linguistic analysis, and social psychology. The research method was designed specifically to do two things: (1) move respondents to articulate uncensored intellectual perceptions and emotional reactions to the concepts presented and (2) analyze respondent feedback based on innovative methods from social science.

To facilitate candid reactions, researchers created a "safe" environment of like-minded participants. Respondents were segmented into groups of their peers (e.g., corporate executives in groups of their corporate peers, and nonprofit leaders in groups comprised solely of representatives from other nonprofit organizations).

All focus group participants were led through a series of structured and unstructured exercises and projective techniques during the two-hour period. After a brief introduction and warm-up, an independent moderator led respondents through a predetermined discussion guide.

In Waves I and II of the research, parallel topics were covered with each segment. However, depending on the nature of the information sought, the details of the projective and role-play exercises designed for each segment varied. For example, although both groups were asked to describe a hypothetical corporate-community engagement to a third-party peer, corporate executives were asked to evaluate and recommend a decision about a corporate-community partnership using existing images. By contrast, nonprofit leaders were asked to draw the typical interaction between potential corporate and nonprofit partners and describe them for the group. Other exercises included a role-play with each group segment, wherein participants were asked to pretend to be representatives from the group that they were not a member of (e.g., nonprofit leaders conducted mock interactions in which they pretended to be business executives, and vice-versa). Some exercises (such as those involving specific descriptive terms and language) were conducted exactly the same way with both groups.

The discussion guide for Wave III of the research combined the use of projective and role-play exercises such as those used in Waves I and II, with new questions and exercises designed specifically to elicit self-selecting information on the changing context for partnerships in the new business atmosphere (e.g., the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the war in Afghanistan, corporate scandals, and the economic downturn).

A Unique Analysis

The LGI team conducted extensive analysis of the data collected during the focus groups. Team members observed each group on site and conducted extensive review and analysis of recordings of the proceedings. In addition to the standard and established methods of analysis for consumer research, the team employed several innovative techniques from social science.

Linguistics and the Frame

The field of cognitive linguistics shows that people form ideas and generate behaviors based on a "conceptual system." Simply put, a conceptual system is where a person is coming from, whether they are conscious of it or not. It represents a person's values, and it is how they understand a given situation. It is what motivates them during an encounter or dialogue.

The concepts of "frames" and "metaphors" are common tools of linguistic analysis and were used extensively when analyzing the transcripts of these focus groups. According to cognitive linguistics, people often unconsciously understand the world according to their conceptual "frames," and they express their worldview through "metaphors."

Frames are the hidden assumptions people use to form their conscious or unconscious agendas. Just as a window frames the view of the outside, so conceptual frames delineate what we see—and don't see—in others and the world.

Metaphors are words or concepts in which one idea is used in place of another so as to suggest a likeness between them. Humans often think or speak in metaphor without being aware of it. A tried and true example, "I can see the light at the end of the tunnel," is obviously not meant to indicate that the speaker is literally standing within an excavated roadway. Rather, it refers to the fact that, after a long physical and/or emotional journey, the speaker can imagine an end to the struggle. The World Wide Web is, in itself, a metaphor for the complex system of interconnected electronic information links provided by the Internet.

Most people (beyond those who are cognitive linguists) are familiar with the concept of a *stereotype*.
In common usage, stereotypes are primarily associated with being negative. As used in the field of linguistics, however, a stereotype is nothing more than an

automatic, often unconscious way of making a snap judgment, whether positive or negative. Unfortunately, stereotypes are unavoidable. Everyone has them. They are often irrational perceptions that can influence rational thoughts and deeds. Stereotypes can often be unfair to people, and encountering the stereotypes others harbor about you or your peers can be painful.

Cognitive linguist George Lakoff identifies a number of *cognitive constructions*, in addition to stereotypes, "used to perform a kind of reasoning."[3] A basic understanding of them will be useful to the reader in reviewing the verbatim comments of these focus group respondents and the insights and recommendations developed by the research team:

- The *typical prototype* – used to draw inferences about category members as a whole, unless made clear we are operating with a nontypical case
- The *ideal prototype* – defines a standard against which other sub-categories are measured
- The *anti-ideal prototype* – exemplifies the worst kind of standard. It defines a negative standard
- The *salient exemplar* – a single memorable example that is commonly used in making probability judgements or in drawing conclusions about what is typical of category members
- An *essential prototype* – a hypothesized collection of properties that, according to commonplace folk theory, characterizes what makes a thing the kind of thing it is, or what makes a person the kind of person he is.[4]

Throughout this report, a number of quotes from focus group respondents will be used to illustrate the broader trends observed by the research team.

Although qualitative research is inherently not statistically projectable, the scope of the research design and implementation, the rigor of the methodology, and the consistency of respondent comments over time support the research findings as viable trend information for use by a variety of concerned stakeholders.

3 George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: What Conservatives Know That Liberals Don't* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 9-10.

4 Ibid.

The Research Findings:

Executives and Nonprofit Leaders Harbor Serious Negative Stereotypes About One Another

Focus groups conducted for the *Hidden Agendas* study revealed deeply held negative perceptions by both business executives and nonprofit leaders.

"I think that work ethic was mentioned early on… a lot of the things that are typical to us are not typical to them [people on welfare]."
~ Executive, Los Angeles

"It's not about bottom line. It is about greed."
~ Nonprofit Leader, Los Angeles

Business Executives Harbor Negative Stereotypes of Low-Income People and Communities

Across all of the focus groups with executives, corporate leaders were observed to hold powerful negative stereotypes of low-income neighborhoods and communities:

- Executive respondents regarded them as excessively dangerous places, in terms of personal and property security, crime and safety.
- Executives were suspicious of the productivity of the workforce.
- Executives believed that the workforce lacked education and skills training.
- Executives believed that the workforce did not share the same work ethic as other labor pools.
- Executives assumed workers would change jobs often and not be loyal to the company.

These conclusions are based on observation and analyses of several exercises and facilitated discussions among executive respondents. For instance, examination of a role-play exercise provides insight regarding the source and depth of negative stereotypes.

Executives were asked to take five minutes to prepare a recommendation for the President of the company on the strengths and weakness associated with locating a plant or regional headquarters in Malaysia vs. downtown Oakland, California. In preparing this presentation, respondents were asked to use images from the photo gallery, previously hidden but now revealed, on the wall. A series of approximately 20 photographs, selected and screened for lack of bias and overt representation of the issues and concepts under discussion, were numbered 1-20 on the wall. Images included such benign and unrelated icons as a golden sink, a forest, a boat, etc. Images in the photo gallery were specifically screened to exclude any people and any photos that could be taken to literally represent either Malaysia or Oakland.

Executives then "presented" their analysis and recommendations, using the images from the gallery. The following are direct quotes from these role-play exercises:

"On the negative side…people think you are always in traffic… or it is just an asphalt nightmare over there [in Oakland]. In terms of quality of life—would I want to drive there or relocate there? That could certainly be an issue. The immediate reaction when you tell people who are not from that area…'hey guess what, we're going to have an office in the middle of Oakland'—especially people not from the neighborhood. The general public reaction, they would think 'there's just no way.' They would think that there might be some higher degree of crime or issues around personal security."

"From a crime point of view, certainly from a business owner's point of view or decision maker, I think one of the issues is vandalism. Vandalism of your facility and also not knowing whether you can trust your own workers...Having worked in inner-city facilities and knowing people who own them — I know a lot of people in that position are worried about having some of their inventory ... losing inventory to your own employees."

Overwhelmingly, most executives recommended Malaysia over Oakland.

Facts and Data Are Not Enough

The research also revealed that these negative stereotypes were so deeply held that a series of persuasive facts about the population and location of Oakland were not enough to make the executives reconsider their initial recommendations.

As a follow-up exercise to the above role-play, respondents were then provided with a sheet of favorable facts about Oakland, including education levels of the resident population, worker loyalty and turnover rates, access to transportation and infrastructure, crime reduction, square footage costs for leases, competitive profit increases, etc. All statistics were credited from "reliable" sources such as the Chamber of Commerce, local newspapers, government agencies, etc.

In the groups, the facts backfired: rather than be surprised or persuaded by the facts, the respondents used the statistics as reinforcement for their concerns and as justification for their recommendation of Malaysia:

"[The executive is] looking at it from the perspective of where they came from…no matter if crime is declining, it is still higher than where my CEO lives, and that is all he knows…"

"I read that and I'm Malaysia bound…they don't have that there!"

"It just reinforces all of the negatives…these are all of the answers you have to have when asked…but they're not the lead…"

"It's not as bad as you think? <u>That's</u> supposed to be my recommendation?"

"It doesn't say that when the riots take place they have these kinds of profit margins"

A Case of Transference

"For a lot of business executives, I think that they are really afraid of us! No really! I think it is violence. I think they are scared of us. I know that there are issues for African American men and Hispanic men…they can definitely frighten some business executives. If they raise their voice, if they stand, if they do things like that, they can definitely frighten them. When I was wrestling with him [as an executive in the role-play exercise], that was trying to see if he would go to an emotional front…because then I would have all the justification I need for not doing the deal."
~ Nonprofit Leader, Houston

The conceptual frameworks expressed by both nonprofits and executives during the focus groups are deeply rooted and disturbing. While it is acknowledged that not all nonprofit leaders or all executives maintain these frameworks, the results of the focus groups indicate that they are present in many leaders. Even among respondents, the degree and intensity of these frameworks varied. However, the research team observed some degree of these frameworks present in the vast majority of focus group participants.

> ***Transference****: e.g., redirection of feeling. The process in psychoanalysis or other psychotherapy whereby somebody unconsciously redirects feelings, fears, or emotions onto a new object, often the analyst therapist*[5]

Because of the nature and intensity of the conceptual frameworks held by executives about low-income populations, it is believed that some executives unfairly and unknowingly transfer the negative stereotypes described earlier to the nonprofit leaders who approach them for resources.

Contractual agreements between businesses and nonprofits are, in essence, partnerships. One of the essential elements of any partnership is trust. The negative stereotypes held by some executives about low-income neighborhoods and populations, as revealed in the focus group research, foster mistrust, disloyalty, lack of commitment and security, etc.

Many nonprofit leaders are products of the disadvantaged communities or populations they represent — people of color, women, etc. The presence of these stereotypes means that advocates and other nonprofit leaders may not completely understand the potential barriers they face when attempting to engage, negotiate, or implement a corporate-community partnership.

[5] Microsoft Encarta.

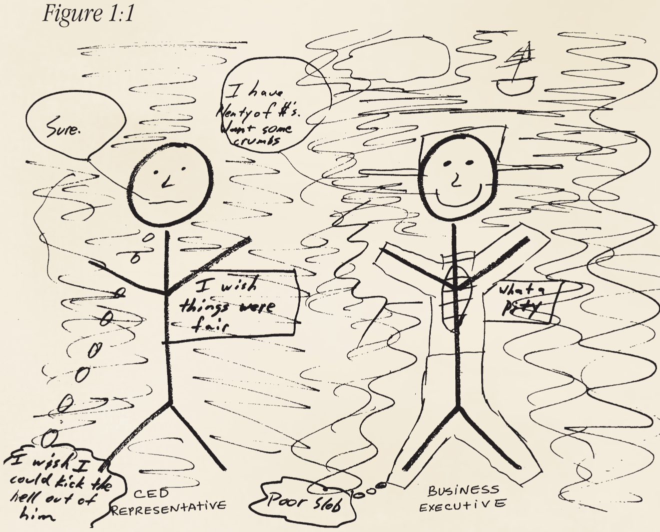
Nonprofit Executive Stereotypes About Business Executives

Focus group respondents from nonprofit organizations harbor negative stereotypes about business and business executives. Some nonprofit leaders view business executives as opportunistic and amoral. They described executives as being greedy, selfish, inhuman, unhappy, humorless, manipulative, hypocritical sell-outs.

Although some respondents proactively volunteered this point of view (e.g., *"On a good day, at some level, there is a human there…"*), respondents were more likely to reveal their perceptions and feelings of anger and frustration through a projective exercise that was designed to be parallel to the photo gallery exercise conducted with business executives.

In this exercise, nonprofit leaders were asked to draw the "typical" interaction between a nonprofit leader and a business executive. They were asked to draw the context for that interaction, as well as what the two parties were saying, thinking, and feeling. Respondents were then asked to describe their drawings for the other members of the group. The group dynamic of mutual trust and mission among these nonprofit peers enabled the researchers to use this technique to elicit candid expression. The drawings were extremely revealing. The following offers a representative sample of drawings and respondent descriptions:

Figure 1:1



As described by the respondent, the executive is surrounded by blue, a cloud, and a sailboat, representing "heaven." The nonprofit leader is surrounded by red because "when I look outside my window, it looks like hell."

The interaction begins with the executive taunting the nonprofit, "I have plenty of money, want some crumbs?" The nonprofit responds resignedly, "sure." The disparity between this seemingly civil discourse and the emotions of the participants is clearly represented by their thoughts and feelings: The executive is thinking "poor slob," and the nonprofit leader is feeling, "I wish things were fair" and thinking, "I wish I could kick the hell out of him."

This drawing, from a respondent in Chicago, clearly shows the place-based nature of the interaction and the confrontation. The respondent has drawn the executive downtown (with the John Hancock building in the background) and the nonprofit executive in the "neighborhood." The two figures are dressed in the attire of their respective neighborhoods: a suit for the executive, more casual clothes for the non profit leader.

When describing this interaction, the respondent was careful to inform the group that this was a real dialogue that he had experienced: "You need to think longer term," the nonprofit leader begins. The executive responds, "Wake up and smell the coffee." From their different conceptual frameworks, they label their counterparts by thinking of each other as either a "sell-out" or "loser." Meanwhile the nonprofit leader wonders, "How many years?" and the executive expresses fear, "This guy scares me."

The inherent conflict of this encounter is depicted in the drawing itself. Note that the expression on the nonprofit leader is clearly confrontational, while the executive is uncomfortable and looking away.

Figure 1:2

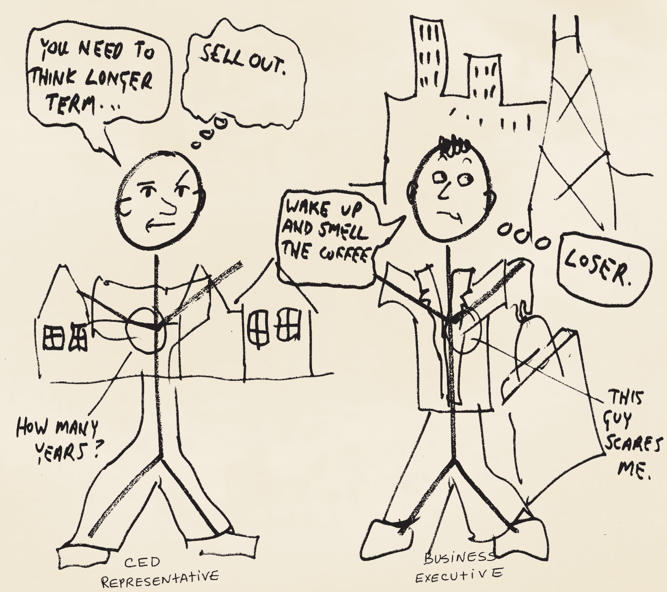
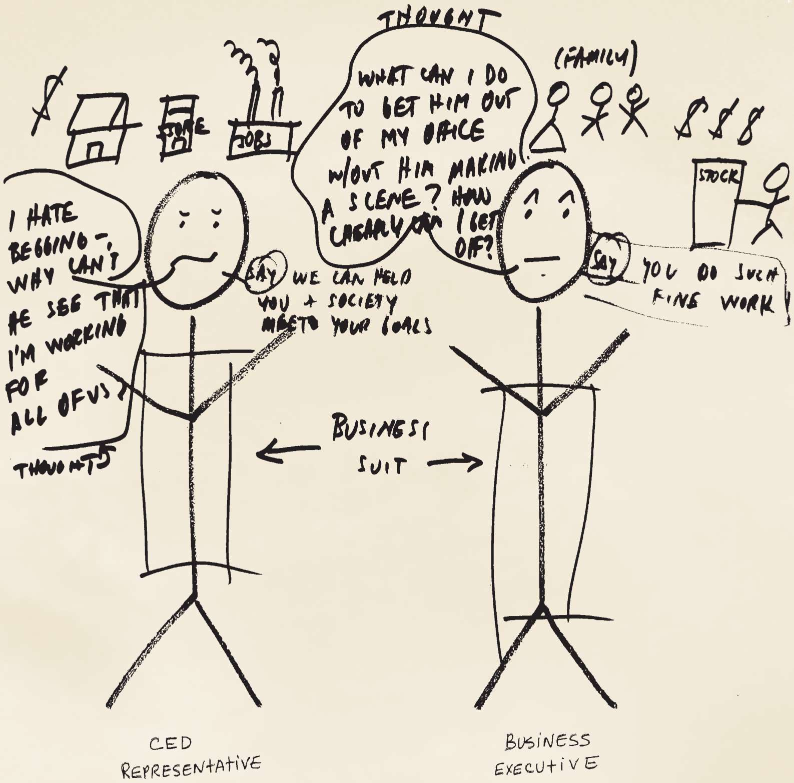


Figure 1:3

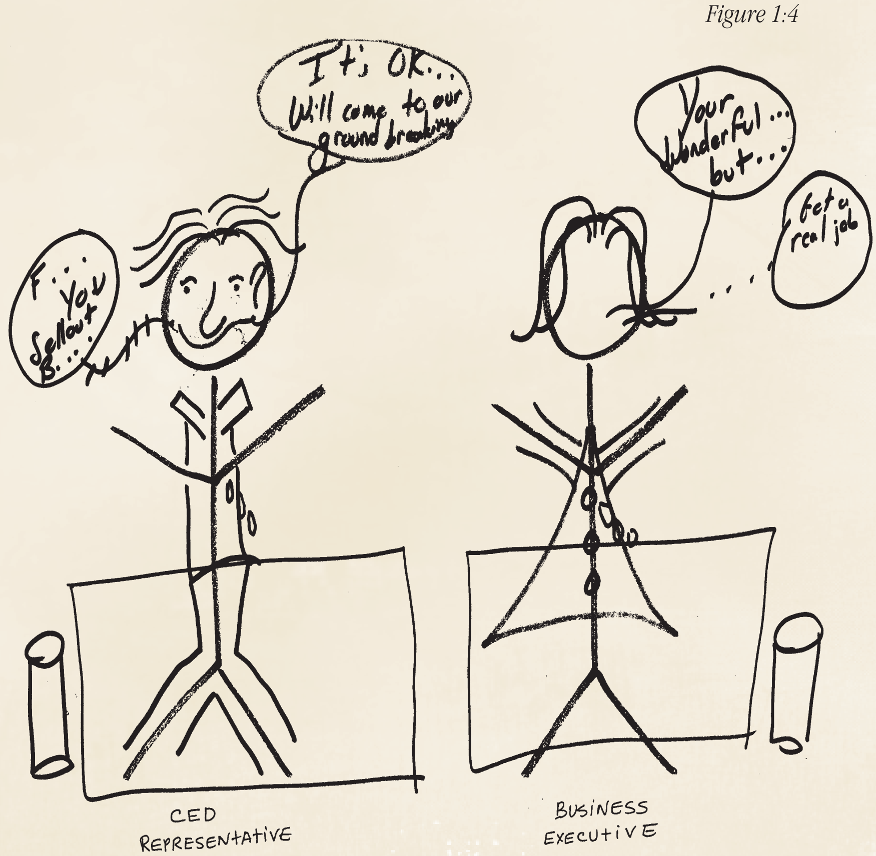


This drawing depicts the rift between outward appearance and internal. The drawing shows a level playing field in terms of dress: both parties are wearing suits. However, as described by the respondent, "each party is surrounded by the things that are important to him—the executive by his family, his money, and his stock portfolio. The nonprofit leader is surrounded by the things important to his neighborhood: retail, housing, and jobs."

The interaction begins with the nonprofit leader engaging the executive, "We can help you and society meet your goals." The executive responds, "You do such fine work." Underneath this civil discourse, the nonprofit leader is thinking, "I hate begging. Why can't he see that I'm working for all of us?" The executive responds, "What can I do to get him out of my office? How cheaply can I get off?" The executive feels irritated, and the nonprofit feels nervous, fearful, and angry.

As described by the respondent who drew it, this shows an office interaction between a nonprofit leader and a "faceless woman who is faceless because she is a token woman with no power in the company." Underneath polite conversation about the fine work of the nonprofit organization and the invitation to a local groundbreaking, the emotions run deep and clear: the executive condescendingly judges the nonprofit representative with "Get a real job," and the nonprofit leader aggressively thinks, "F--- you, you sell-out b-----."

Figure 1:4



The Pathology of Begging

A number of common themes can be seen in these examples and those of the other respondents. First, the interactions are drawn as inherently confrontational. Sometimes this is overtly expressed, other times well hidden beneath the surface interactions. Some of these encounters are clearly passive aggressive in nature. Second, the drawings very clearly depict the different identities of executive and nonprofit leaders as the nonprofits experience them: different values, morals, and priorities which lead to judgments about each other and their different value systems. Third, emotions among nonprofit leaders run the gamut from anger to frustration and sadness.

Last, the drawings clearly depict the eroding self-worth and self-esteem that comes from constantly asking for money. The majority of the drawings show the nonprofit in the supplicant position. The nonprofit leader's repeated "asks" for monetary and/or other support are often met with rejection—eroding the confidence, but not the passion, of the nonprofit leader. This "pathology of begging" is demoralizing for the nonprofit leader and contributes to a dysfunctional backdrop for corporate-community partnerships.

The following verbatim comments from nonprofit respondents of the focus groups help round out the picture:

"[The executive is thinking] 'there are too many of them to save…I'm taking care of my own…'"

"They don't understand…the attitudes…they're driven by profit. Unless there can be a benefit to the company, they can't get involved."

A ROLE-PLAY EXERCISE ☛

In the focus groups, nonprofit participants were asked to enact a hypothetical role-play between a corporate executive and a nonprofit leader. The following excerpt details the interaction between one set of respondents. "Tina" plays the role of the business executive and "Harold" the nonprofit leader who seeks to engage her. ■

Tina: Harold...Harold!

Harold: Tina, how are you today?

Tina: (impatiently) Fine. Fine, what can I do for you? Have a seat.

Harold: I sent you a proposal last week, and we talked about it on Monday, and you invited me in here to come and discuss it, so I'd like to-

Tina: In a nutshell, Harold, what do you want?

Harold: I take it, you've read the proposal and...,

Tina: (interrupting) I've read over the proposal, Harold. What do you want?

Harold: I'd like to have a half million dollars.

Tina: (loud sigh) That proposal doesn't justify a half million dollars. Harold, what could you be thinking?

Harold: Well, maybe we need to go over the proposal again.

Tina: Well, maybe we do. And get to it, please (looking at watch and drinking coffee).

Harold: Uh…here is a proposal we are looking to do. Ah…Your company…if you turn to page 6 you'll see the benefit to your company if you turn to page 6….

Tina: (rising from her desk) I have a problem. I don't understand the assumptions you could have made.

Harold: Well…assumption number one is that there is a population of 147,000 people in this neighborhood…there's been no growth…

Tina: (interrupting) Who told you that?

Harold: Statistics.

Tina: You know we have…you know about our company, right?

Harold: Yes I do.

Tina: You know how limited our dollars are. You know we have people coming in this door all the time asking for money. You come in this door asking for things like your proposal asks for…you're asking me for a half million dollars. I don't know how you can expect us to do that. Who told you there's no economic growth here… should call the Chamber of Commerce, the Better Business Bureau….

Harold: Tina, I think you're crossing the tracks here. Ah. I think the point I'm trying to make here is that there is economic growth here and that's why your company should be involved in this neighborhood. With 147,000 people and a spending capacity of $2.5 million a week in grocery spending alone, that means that your company is going to be able to make back the $500,000 plus up to $50 million in the next 10 years.

Tina: Hmmm. Hmmm. How soon can you get started?

The Differences Between Nonprofit and For-Profit Cultures

Deeply rooted and pre-conceived ideas about each other serve as a dysfunctional backdrop for engagement and interaction between business and nonprofits. Based on the research findings, however, this is only half the story. The profoundly different organizational cultures of nonprofits and business often inadvertently reinforce the negative perceptions and expectations of both parties—thereby undermining the trust necessary for partnership.

The focus groups revealed a number of these cultural differences between the two groups. Four of these differences are outlined here: 1) The Salesperson vs. The Educator; 2) Differing Values Assigned to Time, Brevity, and Productivity; 3) Optimization vs. Equality; 4) Linguistic Polarization. The following describes these differences, their potential validation of the stereotypes held by each party, and their inter-connected nature.

Differing Expectations for Meetings: The Salesperson vs. The Educator

As depicted in the drawing exercises, most meetings between nonprofit and executive leaders take place at the businessperson's office. This firmly establishes the context of the meeting as the executive's "turf"—framing executive's expectations about the meeting in accordance with the "typical" interaction he or she experiences there. Often, business executives encounter a "salesperson" in this context. A salesperson may literally be a supplier, a colleague, or an underling seeking buy-in or approval of a product, service, or course of action. Based on this "frame" or expectation, therefore, business executives tend to view nonprofit leaders as salespeople and to evaluate their presentations accordingly.

In the focus groups, executive respondents repeatedly indicated they expect to be "pitched" by representatives of nonprofit organizations:

"It is astonishing…the people [nonprofit leaders] who don't seem to know anything about me, anything about what I do, anything about my problems or my business. It is astonishing the lack of homework. And you know what? They're dead after five minutes. It tells me they don't care."

"They'll be community groups pitching a cause—they know everything about themselves and nothing about me."

"What that tells me is that they are not trying to create a win-win. They are trying to create a WIN. I can't allocate resources based solely on someone else's winning…we have to get something out of it. That's a reality we face."

In contrast to this expectation, nearly all the nonprofit leaders participating in the groups positioned themselves as educators of corporate executives. Linguistically, they spoke of the need to "advocate," "educate," and "evangelize." Many respondents also used language commonly associated with religion to describe their roles:

"[Educators, advocates, evangelists] you're all of them"

"I've got to convert them to being advocates for affordable housing."

Even among the nonprofit leaders who acknowledged their role as "salespeople," many did so with varying degrees of ownership. Many expressed an unusual idea of what being a salesperson was, the need to "act" the role rather than live it, or the inability to do it properly due to time pressures:

"A good salesperson has to educate the person about their product"

"Every salesman has a gimmick…it's like that lawyer on Ally McBeal…the one who takes 'a moment'…that's his gimmick with the jury."

"You've got to come in with the right props…"

"You are being tested. You have to have all of your 'i's dotted and your 't's crossed."

"I know I've got this presentation at X corporation. While I'm dealing with all hell breaking loose, I've got to stop and figure out how I can appeal to [them]. Yet…I've got to keep this thing running…"

As these verbatim comments show, nonprofit respondents metaphorically liken the role of salesperson to professions noted for their chicanery (e.g., lawyers and magicians). The concept of salesperson as "problem solver" is not readily understood by nonprofit leaders.

Many respondents cited their use of a morality play to affect participation among executives. Clearly, this runs counter to the expectations of most executives who may expect a sales pitch but instead receive a lecture or a guilt trip. Even among those respondents who verbally acknowledged that "leading with the business case" was the most effective way to engage executives in corporate community partnerships, role plays with the most experienced and sophisticated representatives demonstrated that nonprofit leaders often do not actualize that behavior. Many lead with the community benefit without even realizing it.

Differing Values Assigned to Time, Brevity, and Productivity

Another example of the difference between the for-profit and nonprofit cultures is the differing values assigned to time, brevity, and productivity.

Several executive respondents in the groups expressed the idea that "time is money." Arriving late for meetings, conducting long meetings and engaging in long, complex communications were perceived as a "waste of time."

Such behaviors were commonly experienced by or associated with nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit leaders and executives alike were candid about their experiences:

"We blew the deal…we sent someone... they were an hour late…"

During the research process, the research team also gained unintended insights from participant behavior. In each group, executive respondents arrived on time and excused themselves to leave on time if the discussion groups ran long. In contrast, at least one of the nonprofit respondents arrived late for each group—with some participants up to an hour late for a two-hour meeting. The contrast between these two behaviors is startling and potentially reinforces the negative stereotypes held by some executives associated with laziness or lack of commitment.

Business is a Culture of Optimization; Nonprofits are a Culture of Equality

Participants in the business executive groups consistently expressed concern with "winning" or the optimization of perceived opportunity. This is likely rooted in the individual reward system for business executives that is often tied to maximization or optimization of assets. Executive bonuses are often tied to such indicators as maximizing profits, maximizing return on investment (ROI), minimizing cost, etc. Such achievements are reinforced through rewards such as recognition or promotion.

Nonprofit respondents, on the other hand, tended to focus on equilibrium—the restoration of balance and equality, particularly with respect to the disadvantaged communities they served. The research team believes this to be rooted in formative personal experiences of those who become advocates. When asked what motivated them to do this kind of work, many related stories of personal or cultural injustice. Examples of such experiences included physical abuse, racism, educational deprivation, and unfair housing practices.

"I got involved more out of anger than anything else. My mom was in an interracial relationship. At the end of this conversation about Jesse Jackson, this white guy says 'that's all you do…is give speeches.' And that really affected me…we got…we got ten guys together, we stood in front of the rock house and videotaped the customers (most of whom were white), and we got those guys out of there within two months…"

"Many of us had an event like that…mine was being a scholarship student at USC and having my apartment knocked down. The first time it happened it was great; I got money. The second time it happened, I thought I'd better find out how you stop this sort of thing."

The business and nonprofit cultures are at odds with one another. They foster contrasting decision-making systems that can be difficult for outsiders to understand or participate in. The business culture of optimization often elects hierarchical forms of power and/or autocratic decision-making processes for efficiency. To foster equality and participation, the nonprofit culture often seeks to engage all potential stakeholders, requiring the reconciliation of multiple viewpoints and creating a protracted process for decision-making.

Linguistic Differences Between the Two Cultures Are Polarizing

The focus group research shows that nonprofit and business leaders are often literally talking about the same thing but don't even know it. Such miscommunication falls into three primary categories: jargon, style, and framing differences.

Jargon

Business culture and nonprofit culture have their own unique set of jargon. Although CDC may mean "community development corporation" to nonprofit leaders, executives are likely to equate it with the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta.

Likewise, business generally, and individual industries specifically, have their own jargon. Individual companies often have their own set of common terms that may be a mystery to those outside the walls of the corporation—Jargon is, by its nature, exclusionary and distancing.

Alternatively, proper usage of jargon is shorthand and can be a vehicle for establishing trust and camaraderie among colleagues. One of the most potent and prevalent examples of the exclusionary effects of jargon is the terminology used by information technology workers. Even a brief conversation with a tech support person, auto mechanic, bank manager, or housing developer can leave the average person confused and intimidated. Acronyms, which are especially prevalent among government and policy makers, present a particular problem because they often give the listener no hint of their true meaning.

Style

The second linguistic difference between business and nonprofit culture is communications style. Business executives tend towards the use of simple words and phrases in their written communications, while nonprofits tend towards lengthy prose and complex sentence structures.

Such differences were exemplified in the focus groups when each group was asked to write down the information necessary to interest a senior-level business executive in a corporate-community partnership. The stylistic differences were dramatic. Business executives quickly listed a few words or at most, a few bullet-pointed sentences. Nonprofit respondents, on the other hand, wrote long paragraphs of prose (usually multiple pages) absorbing 10-15 minutes of focus group time.

Framing

The third important linguistic difference between business and nonprofit culture is directly related to the differences in conceptual frameworks. Simply put, the same exact words or terms can be interpreted differently by people with different conceptual frameworks.

In the focus groups, both nonprofit and executive participants were exposed to the same series of words and terms. Respondents reacted differently to the terms, depending upon their perspectives—imbuing them with positive or negative connotations.

For example, the research team exposed both types of respondents to the term "urban ethnic market." For the nonprofit organizations, the term was generally regarded as a positive and productive way of referring to their communities and inner cities. Business executives, on the other hand, immediately categorized the term as "jargon" or "code for ghetto." Obviously, nonprofit communications that used the term "urban ethnic markets" could unknowingly create a negative subtext and a barrier to the engagement of employers. The following chart shows select examples of how specific terms and language were received by the two groups.

Another example of this polarization is the term "mutually-beneficial partnership." Research showed the term to be polarizing, and that polarization can be directly attributed to the differences in the culture of optimization vs. equality discussed above. Nonprofits found the term to be positive, connoting equality for all through "mutual benefit." Business executives, in contrast, viewed the term as meaning they were "giving up more than they were getting." Executives reacted negatively—such perceived risk and sacrifice was not in line with a culture of optimization.

One of the few examples of language that was compelling for both audiences was the term "win-win." This term resonated with both audiences for the same reasons that "mutually-beneficial partnership" did not. Nonprofit leaders believed the term stood for "equality" as evidenced by the symmetry of the words around the dash. Business executives also found the term persuasive based on previous experience with win-win situations where they had received more in exchange than they had given.

The term "partnership" was generally regarded as positive by both groups. The term was viewed as descriptive of a kind of "ideal relationship between the two groups."

The focus groups also tested reactions to the term "social responsibility" and "corporate social responsibility." Despite its increasing usage, executives had a negative reaction to the term, feeling that it implied that business was otherwise "irresponsible." For business executives, the term implies a moral judgment about their business practices and, ergo, them as people.

"One of the few examples of language that was compelling for both audiences was the term "win-win.""

Polarizing Between Audiences	Positive for Both Audiences	Negative for Both Audiences	Neutral for Both Audiences
Mutually Beneficial Partnership	Partnership	Public/Private Partnerships	Enterprise
Urban Ethnic Markets	Win-Win	Intermediary Organizations	Corporate Citizenship
Consultants	Emerging Markets		
Partnership Capacity Building	Best Practices		
	Community Investment		

Speaking the Language of Business

In the focus groups, business executive respondents expressed virtually no desire to learn a new "language" relative to corporate-community partnerships.
Respondents were clear: such partnerships must mesh with "business as usual" both with their communications style and practice. Representative comments from executive respondents:

"These are all like a separate vocabulary…why not just use the existing vocabulary which is the language of business. Which is about competitiveness, advantage, profit, and shareholder values?"

"You've got five minutes. If you tell me you're gonna talk about 'partnership capacity building' at four... minutes when the clock is running, I still don't know what you're talking about…I'm outta there."

"I'm not going to go on the radio and say 'community capitalism'… to hell with that…"

Although advocates and other nonprofit leaders may expect business executives to learn their language or "meet them halfway," business leaders expressed no willingness to do so. In the short term, executives do not see sufficient value in spending the time to learn another language or culture. Understanding this in the "time is money" metaphor as one aspect of a culture of optimization, the logic and reasoning for this position becomes clear. In the short term, therefore, the burden is clearly on the advocates to learn to speak the language of business if nonprofit leaders wish to engage executives in corporate-community partnerships.

> "…business executive respondents expressed virtually no desire to learn a new "language" relative to corporate-community partnerships."

Among the language tested with nonprofit leaders and executives, the term "win-win strategies" demonstrated particular promise. Part of common business parlance and compelling to nonprofit leaders, the term was selected by the research team to facilitate communications between corporate executives and nonprofit leaders.

Conceptual Frameworks in Action: Business as Usual

Across all focus groups with executives, respondents identified the business case as the most compelling argument for corporate-community partnerships. That business case includes short and long-term optimization, reputation management, and opportunity cost. The following comments were heard from executive respondents after their exposure to real-world examples of successful corporate-community partnerships by large companies with recognizable names and products:

"You have to make the case that it is cost-effective, based on the business model. It's going to be cost-effective in the short or long term…or that there is an identifiable cost of not doing it…"

"At the end of the day, even the socially responsible executive has to make money."

"You pitch it in the econometric model that solves his business problem, with a nod to the PR value"

"There are tremendous resources available in a diverse workforce, but you've got to show management models that make money…"

"There's a punch line. And the punch line is the benefit to the community."

"This company is focusing on minority business development. Is there a reason? What is the business reason behind it? There had to be something in it for them."

"There are varying degrees of self-interest in each of these examples…"

Based on respondent feedback, a clearly articulated business benefit is key to engaging executives in corporate-community partnerships. As these comments clearly articulate, among executives, the quantifiable bottom-line business benefit is of higher priority and is more persuasive than the less quantifiable benefits of reputation or public relations. The community benefit, while important, takes a back seat to how these programs might fit within the confines of "business as usual."

Becoming the Enemy

In focus group dialogue between nonprofit respondents, some advocates expressed a concern that appealing to the business benefit, using business language, or adopting business etiquette would require that they "become the enemy":

"At what point are you pimping yourself and your community?"

"Everyone has to decide for themselves, at what point the end justifies the means."

These respondents equated behavior change with a more fundamental transformation of personal values and identity. Some nonprofit respondents even verbally characterized it as some form of "prostitution."
Such comments again speak to the importance of a person's conceptual framework in their psychological identity and the power of frame and metaphor in revealing perceptual barriers.

The Impact of Global Events on Fundamental Perceptions and Cultural Differences

"It's not any different than the last tanking economy… only now you have to wait longer at the airport…"
~ Business Executive, Boston

In early 2002, the Laufer Green Isaac research team returned to the field to test the fundamentals of the framing and language of "win-win strategies," given the terrorist attacks of September 11th, corporate accounting scandals, and the economic downturn.

The results of the supplemental research were consistent with previous data on the conceptual frameworks and cultural differences between the two constituencies: although advocates may feel that the events of 9/11 and the corporate scandals should have made companies more interested in community and reputation management, the economic downturn overrides both of these factors as an influencer of business attitudes and behaviors.

In fact, with corporate giving down and higher scrutiny of financial dealings, making the business case proved more important than ever.

A Climate of Uncertainty and the Risk Mitigation Frame

The net effect of the global events of 2001 and 2002 was to increase uncertainty among business executives. Executive respondents characterized their mindset as "reactive" vs. "proactive." Respondents expressed greater concern about issues like overhead reduction, security, and revenue generation than in previous groups. Executives expressed less interest in taking risks and more interest in identifying them.

In contrast to previous focus groups, business executive respondents were observed to be in "survival mode" and expressed themselves in survival language. As one respondent described it, "We are more interested in dealing with the impending recession…these companies are hemorrhaging right now…we're focused on stopping the bleeding."

As professionals trained in risk mitigation and functioning within a culture of optimization, executives and companies were observed by researchers to turn inward—to protect themselves, their organizations, their employees, and their families. Risk-reduction became paramount. Corporate-community partnerships were newly scrutinized for their risk/reward potential. Based on an enhanced risk-mitigation frame, the short- and medium-term business benefits of such partnerships became more important than ever.

When exposed to examples of successful corporate-community partnerships by major corporations, executives in the focus groups responded with greater skepticism than before:

"These are still new programs…they look great on the front end but they fall through in five years…"

"The jury is still out on whether these programs have produced benefits at a cost that is commensurate. We haven't seen the complete vetting over a long period of time—there is no track record."

"My stakeholders are frightened. Frightened about money…There's not a lot of patience for anything that diverts operational resources away from immediate returns."

Respondents also articulated a new potential barrier: public exposure to failure. In a post-Enron environment, several executives described a new form of risk: public exposure or linkage to an organization that is not credible.

Executives voiced a very personal aspect of the new risk-mitigation frame as well: increased personal and professional risk. With downsizing looming and a general pessimism about the economy, executives indicated that participation in failed corporate-community partnerships could result in loss of personal reputation or even one's job.

Based on the heightened risk-mitigation frame described above, executive respondents in the focus groups demonstrated that making an effective business case was now more important than ever. Quantitative data, short-term ROI, and length of company commitment were cited as key factors. "Win-win" language continued to resonate with the executives as well–with respondents using the term spontaneously in role-play exercises and discussion. Additionally, the differentiation of such strategies from philanthropic endeavors was also more important than ever (e.g., "charity is for boom times…").

When compared with the comments of Waves I and II of the focus group research, the following representative comments from the 2002-03 groups indicate a remarkable amount of consistency in the conceptual frameworks of executives over time:

"Given the economic environment, the benefit has to be quantifiable and the ammunition clear."

"In my experience, I'm normally hit with 'you have a social responsibility,' and my experience is that they don't get to the bottom line quickly enough."

"Know my demographics, know the skill sets of the workers I need, know the operating costs…know the things that push my buttons."

"Sell the social good as a tangential effect. People are fundamentally fiscally accountable, not socially accountable, in a for-profit entity."

"Give 'em credit for the 1,200 people I employ and the $22 million I pay in taxes...you're implying that I'm socially irresponsible..."

Implications of the Research:

Approaching the Problem as a Cross-Cultural Issue

From the evidence presented by this research, it is clear that the existence of negative stereotypes, combined with deep-seated cultural differences, make partnerships between nonprofit and for-profit enterprises difficult. Within each of these cultures, the day-to-day activities and work habits can unknowingly undermine the trust necessary for the establishment and implementation of partnerships.

The cultural differences between these groups make individuals from each of these constituencies foreigners in a foreign land when they cross over into one another's territory, and thinking about these differences in these terms can be a powerful means of understanding and navigating them successfully.

American travelers to foreign lands often find that widely accepted practices and norms from the United States are interpreted negatively in other cultures. In Thailand, for example, the head is recognized as the most precious part of the body. One must never touch an individual on the head (including a child). Based on this cultural difference, it is easy to see how the affectionate gesture towards a Thai child by an uninformed traveler could have precisely the opposite effect. Likewise, in Nigeria, it is considered rude to pass food or any item with one's left or "unclean" hand. In some cultures, even the most universal gestures can be misleading. Americans are accustomed to using the up and down nod of the head to mean "yes" and the side to side nod of the head to mean "no." However, for Bulgarians, the nods are reversed in meaning.

In the 1980s, many Americans saw opportunities in the booming Japanese market and sought to do business in Japan. Americans found Japanese business practices and politics to be very different from their American counterparts. Before long, Americans who successfully engaged the Japanese were exchanging gifts at meetings and printing two-sided business cards in Japanese as was the custom there. Similar practices are now being applied in China, Taiwan, and other countries where cultural practices differ. Such business etiquette ranges from the simple to the complex. In Singapore, it is customary to present business cards with both hands, not just one. In China, it is important never to criticize or contradict anyone in public. To complain that a Chinese businessman is late for an appointment, for example, may cause them to "lose face" and thereby disrupt the course of business.

Awareness of cultural differences is the first step toward understanding their nature. The knowledge of other cultures helps ease the way for outsiders to operate within them. This study indicates that nonprofits that wish to be successful in building win-win partnerships with business must learn to function within the "foreign" culture of business much the same as they would in a foreign country—with respect and without judgment.

The Good News: Seven Steps to Effective Business Meetings for Nonprofits

- *Nonprofit executives must lead with the business case.*

  To be successful in engaging business executives, nonprofit leaders must lead with the business benefit and follow with the "community" or social benefit. Advocates should not attempt to educate or lead with a morality play, as this will be counterproductive—often short-circuiting the dialogue and squandering opportunities for partnership. Initially framing opportunities in terms of minimizing risk and optimizing return on investment will be most persuasive and will ensure that the nonprofit leader engages the executive in dialogue and provide follow-up opportunities for sharing important information about the community.

- *Nonprofit executives must learn to speak the language of business.*

  As with any language, business parlance can be learned and refined with practice, becoming second nature. Both in verbal and written forms of communications, nonprofit leaders should learn to discipline themselves by avoiding alienating terms, properly understanding and using financial terms, and eliminating nonprofit jargon and acronyms from their communications. Combined with leading with the business benefit, adopting a business lexicon can be a powerful tool for the engagement and preservation of partnerships with businesses. Adopting and using "win-win" language can greatly enhance communications.

- *Nonprofit executives can benefit from shortening communications.*

  In addition to modifying their vocabulary, nonprofit leaders may also need to hone their skills in brief, concise communications. Developing the "elevator speech" is key. The elevator speech gets its name from the amount of time an executive may have to successfully communicate his or her idea during a chance encounter with senior management on a ride between floors in the elevator. Honing key messages to a compelling two minutes or three key bullet points is critical to engaging business executives. Long pages of prose may be appropriate for funders, advocate peers, or academic encounters, but they will not be effective with business leaders. The generally accepted length of an "executive summary" is one page. Persuasive communication is often at odds with comprehensive communication. By setting realistic objectives for each communication activity, nonprofit leaders can also better identify the key messages they need to communicate. The realistic goal of a five minute meeting may be to get a 30-minute meeting with the same executive—rather than pack 30 minutes of information into five minutes and lose the executive's interest.

- *Nonprofit leaders must "do their homework."*

  Despite the ongoing time and resource challenges of managing and maintaining a nonprofit organization, nonprofit leaders should recognize the importance of learning about the needs of the businesses they approach, before they approach them. While the research results indicate that some leaders may try to combine this function with initial meetings with executives, this behavior can be counter-productive. Being prepared for the meeting is as important as having the meeting, if successful engagement and partnership is the goal.

- *Nonprofit executives should focus on outcomes, not process, to be effective.*

  When it comes to business, process is good, but outcomes are better. Executives are used to being brought in only during critical decision-making activities. Although collaboration and capturing a wide variety of stakeholder viewpoints may be important to the successful outcomes, keep executives informed but limit involvement to a "critical path" of activity.

- *Learned behavioral changes require reinforcement and practice to be effective.*

  Like any cultivated skill, framing and language must be learned and applied regularly. Like the old joke that asks "How do I get to Carnegie Hall?" (the answer: "Practice, practice, practice"), it is realistic to expect that even learned behaviors of the types discussed above require time and practice in the real world. Simply reading a book about piano playing will not transform even the most interested reader into a musician. And like any foreign language skill, one can become "rusty" at speaking the language of business without practice.

- *Behavior changes do not necessitate value changes.*

  When viewed as a cross-cultural exchange, some advocates and other nonprofit leaders who fear losing their own values and belief systems by engaging business executives with different values and belief systems can rest easy. Cultural etiquette does not require cultural transformation. By respecting a Chinese person's refined sense of public image, an individual does not become Chinese. Nor does learning to speak Hebrew make someone Jewish.

By implementing these recommendations, nonprofit leaders will, over time, engage in enough successful interactions to reinforce the new behaviors and to create perceptions that counter negative stereotypes. Over time, successful partnerships will begin to build the cross-cultural understanding and mutual respect necessary for successful corporate-community partnerships.

Based on the research findings, through the long-term successful creation of and exposure to corporate-community partnerships, business executives will come to recognize the benefits of engagement. Only then will executives be willing to meet their advocate partners "half way" in the cross-cultural exchange.

With increasing scrutiny on the inefficiencies associated with nonprofit operating expenses, the behavioral comparison between for-profit and nonprofit cultures has a special resonance. This study has wide-reaching implications for nonprofit leaders who may have little interest in engaging business as a partner, but who seek to reform their organizational culture or enhance sustainability through fee-for-service revenue streams. These leaders may encounter unexplained resistance to operational changes that mirror those of the for-profit world. *Hidden Agendas* may well explain much of this resistance.

The combination of disturbing stereotypes and cultural barriers exposed by this research are not easily reconciled. Many of the negative stereotypes revealed here have thinly disguised roots in racism. While great strides have been made in America in civil rights, tolerance, and cultural diversity, these research results clearly show that racism is an insidious bias that can infiltrate the modern personal and social subconsciousness. *In a broader sense, the findings show that negative preconceived ideas among all people can unknowingly undermine the objectives of a civil society.*

While the insights obtained in this research and the resultant recommendations cannot debilitate racism, we can see how being aware of negative perceptions and the cultural differences between stakeholder groups can lead to behavior modification that begins to bridge the gap between different groups and affect real change.

Recently, national nonprofit and business organizations have hosted presentations of the preliminary findings of the *Hidden Agendas* research, including the National Meeting of the Council on Foundations, The Conference Board, the Ford Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Goodwill Industries International, Public/Private Ventures, National Congress of Community Economic Development, The Aspen Institute, and many others.

For many exposed to the results of this research, the lessons of *Hidden Agendas* have implications beyond their application to communications in corporate-community partnerships. Stakeholders in all types of cross-cultural partnerships as well as other markets (e.g., healthcare, environmental, the arts, etc.) have shared the relevance and importance of these findings for the success of their work. Others have used the findings to explain and guide transitions in leadership and the ripple effects on staff and organizational culture.

Ultimately, communications should be a facilitator for the adoption and diffusion of innovative ideas, not a barrier to them. Only by understanding the stereotypes and cultural distinctions that can create disconnects between potential partners, can stakeholders effectively leverage strategic communications to affect the desired behavioral change.

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ABOUT LAUFER GREEN ISAAC

Laufer Green Isaac (LGI) is an award-winning, strategic marketing communications firm, specializing in social-issue marketing and global corporate social responsibility. We believe passionately in the role that strategic communications can play in advancing social issues and motivating positive change in civil society. So strong is our belief that it is the sole focus of our work.

The **LGI team** has extensive experience in designing and implementing successful, high-impact strategic marketing communications programs for its clients: major foundations, national nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and enlightened corporations.

To address the urgent issues disclosed in the study, the *Hidden Agendas* researchers developed several communications and training manuals to close the gap between nonprofit and business leaders. *Speaking the Language of Business: A Manual on Business Communications for Leaders in Community Economic Development* contains concrete lessons and materials suitable across the nonprofit spectrum.

Win-Win Approaches to Working with the Media: A Guide for Effectively Communicating Your Message is a practical guide for nonprofit leaders to develop media relations and favorable coverage. And *Success Stories: Innovative Strategies from America's Leading Businesses, Profiles of Win-Win Business & Community Partnerships* provides cases from every industry and region in the country.

Laufer Green Isaac also conducts customized training sessions for nonprofit leaders and business executives interested in honing and refining their communications skills in cross-cultural issues and leveraging opportunities for partnership. Additional information is available at www.lgicommunications.com or by calling (310) 575-9200.

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