



GLOBALWA

Getting to Scale: How Networked Nonprofits Succeed Case Study Workshop

Participant Notebook

CASE "Guide Dogs for the Blind Association"

DISCUSSION LEADER

Jane Wei-Skillern, Ph.D., University of California at Berkeley

DATE

Tuesday, September 20, 2016

9 am – 12 pm

Smart Buildings Center

Pacific Tower, 1200 12th Avenue S, Suite 110

Seattle, WA 98144

A joint presentation by HDC and Global WA

Housing Development Consortium
1402 Third Avenue, Suite 1230
Seattle, WA 98104
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Global Washington
500 Union Street, Suite 801
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The Networked Nonprofit with Jane Wei-Skillern

September 2016

We are delighted and honored that you are taking part in this important program. Whether you are a nonprofit executive, staff member, board member, funder or consultant, connecting in interactive conversations about a real, complex business situation is a relevant and enormously fun way to learn.

We promise that you will leave your session energized and eager to try new approaches. There is a time and a place for a lecture, but a case study session is not that place. A good case study discussion relies on the active, honest participation of each person in the room. No one person, even your discussion leader, has "the right answer." Disagreement is welcomed and mutual respect is a must.

Unlike a lecture, the quality of your experience depends on your preparation. You will spend a few hours reading and thinking about this case. Skim it over once, marking areas that strike you as particularly interesting. Then, go back and re-read the case, and this time, dig into it! Jot notes in the margin where you have strong reactions and questions. We have included some reflection questions in this packet: please make sure you have thought about them before you arrive.

When you arrive on September 20, Jane Wei-Skillern will lead our case study discussion, to be followed by a presentation of Jane's research findings and core lessons. Converge for Impact partners David Ehrlichman and David Sawyer will then conduct small group exercises and discussion to equip participants with critical skills for applying a networked approach to their work, to conclude the day.

By the end of our discussion, participants of this workshop should be able to articulate key principles and values that are proven essential for great nonprofit networks; evaluate board and executive leadership styles and perspectives essential to success; reflect on his/her organization's experiences and identify opportunities for growth and change; communicate critical elements of success to funders who can influence the successful implementation of networks; and formulate tactics for implementation for engaging in future networks.

We're thrilled to have your participation, and hope you walk away from this experience with the tools you need to implement these counterintuitive principles into your own work and into the culture of your organization. Thank you!

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HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR CASE STUDY SESSION

Preparation

- ✓Case discussion participants report that their enjoyment and learning from a case corresponds directly to their level of preparation. Preparing a case for the first time will take 2-3 hours, though not necessarily at one sitting.
- ✓Read the introduction to your case and the reflection questions provided in your participant packet. Then read through the case rather quickly, circling and underlining things that catch your attention but not spending lots of time thinking about things in depth.
- ✓Go back and read the case carefully, engaging deeply in areas that caught your eye beforehand. Always be asking yourself, "If I don't like the approach they took, what would I have done differently, and what would the pros and cons of that be relative to their choice?"
- ✓Develop a point of view for each of the reflection questions provided in your packet. Which data from the case (and your own work, where appropriate) help you answer each one?
- ✓Play devil's advocate. One of the goals of a case discussion is to get participants to weigh the pros and cons of a variety of alternatives, realizing that there is rarely a single 'right' decision. It's helpful to force yourself to advocate for a position you don't agree with: what are the pros and cons of each position, and why might someone justifiably choose the alternative you don't agree with?"
- ✓Confine your analysis to the facts as presented in the case, at the time of the case. Bringing outside research or specialized in-depth knowledge into play is tempting, but ultimately works against the group's learning.

During the session

- ✓Be unflinchingly respectful of others, but don't be shy. A great case discussion requires its participants to take risks and support each other as they do so. In fact, if the group seems to be totally in agreement much of the time, be bold: adopt the devil's advocate position! A case discussion is not a 'test' to see if you espouse 'the right' approach. It's a time for folks to grapple with the real-life complexity and compromises in a safe environment. Challenge folks to consider both the strengths of unpopular positions and the weaknesses of their favorite position.
- ✓Take the time you need to formulate a point before you raise your hand; crisply make and support it; then leave space for others to disagree with it, build on it, or move the discussion in other directions. Never interrupt others, and do your part to ensure that everyone gets a chance to weigh in.

Remember the unique goals of a case discussion; making it 'relevant' is up to you

A case study session has fundamentally different learning goals than a session in which a specific work situation is selected and dealt with. The ultimate product is the discussion itself and the deeper understanding and enhanced skills that each participant takes away from it. Studying the case of another organization fosters the objectivity and safety that are crucial to a rich, open and productive dialogue. In this workshop, our facilitator Jane, along with Global Washington and HDC, will end the session by encouraging participants to reflect on and share with each other ways that the case is relevant to their work, and things they might do to apply the learnings. Just remember: a single case discussion can never fully address all the issues raised by the case, and a good discussion will often raise as many new questions as it answers.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS
Networked Nonprofit Case Study Workshop

Case: **Guide Dogs for the Blind Association**

Reflection Questions:

1. What is your assessment of the hotel and holiday partnerships?
2. What are the critical elements of the Guide Dogs Mobility Service (GMDS) partnership? What is your assessment of this partnership?
3. In order for the umbrella organization to succeed, what top priorities would you address? What role should GDBA play in the visually impaired sector's umbrella organization?
4. What aspects of Geraldine Peacock's leadership style helped and/or hindered the formation and success of the partnerships or networks *Guide Dogs* utilized?

share

Refined stories, experiences, realities and challenges I face in my work...

Item 1:

Item 2:

Item 3:

Item 4:

change

Action steps I will take as I do my work.

Item 1:

Item 2:

Item 3:

Item 4:
