



My Mission

A new nonprofit funding model is emerging. How do I know this? Because of the startling economic events in 2008? Actually, little by little over the years, the old ways have become less and less effective. I work from a new paradigm developing for the nonprofit system and you can help develop this new paradigm in your organization.

Old Paradigm	New Paradigm
Exclusiveness	Inclusiveness
I win: you lose	Win-win-win
Leadership as command & control	Facilitation & cooperation
Biggest gift = best gift	Passion + loyalty = sustainability
Executive knows all	Solution is in the network.
Competition	Strength in collaboration
Nonprofits' timetable	Donor's vision
Leveraging one gift against another	Emphasizing meaning & impact
Fundraising pyramid	Non-sequential, non-hierarchical giving
Internal vs. external (us vs. them)	Stakeholders co-create
Compartmentalization	Creating core knowledge base

In a rapidly and constantly changing world, three important concepts are learning, collaboration, and intricacy. They are the new building blocks of the nonprofit system, and they overlap:

Learning means creating an environment that supports a natural curiosity, exploration, and routine evaluation of how things in the nonprofit organizations are done. It is a non-personal questioning of what is going on and why within the organization. It begins with the board and staff evaluating together, as stakeholders of the organization. Learning includes letting go of what is no longer effective, without laying blame, and trying new things. To survive in a rapidly changing environment, failure must be re-defined to mean closed-mindedness to the ideas of others, lack of shared risk-taking, lack of a willingness to experiment, and continuing to stick with anything simply because it is familiar. Learning lays the foundation for resilience and expansion.

Collaboration, or interdependence, is survival. In nature, wolves travel in packs in order to survive in harsh climates. Taking that cue, nonprofits that form partnerships and interlocking networks are set to generate and share resources for service and growth. The biggest organization is not necessarily the strongest and most resilient. What matters is adaptability, resourcefulness, creativity and how these qualities mix to produce effective results. Smaller organizations may indeed be the saving grace within communities, if they are structured to maximize what they have and work from strengths.



Intricacy describes the density of networks and collaborative partnerships. It means vast networks of interconnected relationships woven tightly together for strength and resilience. An example from nature is a spider web that is strung between two posts. If one anchor breaks, the web remains intact swinging in the breeze. Ever walked into a spider web in the woods and tried to peel it off your face? It's not easy. Its intricate weave holds it intact. How does one build organizational intricacy? Figure out how to help one another – that's intricacy.

In her book, *After the Clockwork Universe*, author and scientist Sally Goerner says “intricacy is encouraged by education, empowerment, infrastructure, support networks, liberation and love.” She explains intricacy as values-based requiring shared ideals such as justice, compassion, and equality.

For the last twenty-five years or so, nonprofits have benefitted from an economy that enabled consistent revenues from philanthropic-minded corporations, foundations, and individuals. Many donors supported more than one charity, sometimes four or five at year-end. In some communities it was a race to see which nonprofit could be first to recruit the top-ranked corporate executive to its board and insure financial support and credibility. Hiring one development professional to “handle all the fundraising” was the goal of many nonprofits. A vast array of resources to support fundraising is available and much of it is based on an old paradigm.

What's changing?

The funding paradigm in the nonprofit world is not changing only because charitable gifts slowed down in 2008. Financial structures of the nonprofit system are changing because civilization at-large is undergoing big change, evolutionary, in how it works together to overcome challenges and in how it adapts to rapid and constant change, and our survival depends on it. Nonprofit leaders and visionaries are part of a worldwide transformative shift and they are uniquely positioned to lead. Resulting from massive and global changes converging all at once: interactive economies, global warming, peak oil, food supplies, world health and wellness, and an incredible level of interconnectedness, the emergent new funding model must be malleable to fuel the changing needs, on-going demands, inspirations and visions of nonprofits in the communities they serve. The good news is that the nonprofit sector has the capacity to evolve and fill gaps. Old systems are failing. What do we do as new systems form? We become a highly adaptive and learning ecosystem.

The bar is raised for nonprofit leaders. Is your nonprofit prepared? Are you asking the right questions? What's possible?

"During periods of discontinuous, abrupt change, the essence of adaptation involves a keen sensitivity to what should be abandoned — not what should be changed or introduced. A willingness to depart from the familiar has distinct survival value." Peter F. Drucker.