

EDITORIAL

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ness world in embracing technology — and in understanding that integrating technology into an organization is neither a one-time expense nor simply a matter buying a computer.

Funders, however, have failed to come to terms with technology and the enormous opportunity it represents for nonprofits. And because funders control the dollars, instead of developing solid technology plans and grant proposals, nonprofits cook up funding requests that feed funders' current grant-

making tastes.

A more business-like and practical approach would be for nonprofits to assert ourselves, preparing grant proposals that meet our needs — and, in turn, those of the people we serve. And by being honest about what we really need, we can help educate funders about what they should be supporting.

Our problems in America are too serious for us to waste time dancing to pipers who don't get it.

The business of the nonprofit world is to heal and repair our communities. To get that big job done, the nonprofit world needs to think and act like we mean business.

CHANGE

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support and work in the nonprofit world.

Technology and the pressures that all nonprofits face to survive in an increasingly competitive world have helped drive our change. We've looked for ways to put technology to work to better fulfill our mission. And we've looked for partners with whom we can work to meet the needs of nonprofits.

By its nature, change can be unsettling and at times frightening. But in the nonprofit world, it's simply part of doing business.

Managing change is one of the toughest challenges nonprofits face. Fortunately, people working in the nonprofit sector have remarkable resources to draw on as we struggle to heal and repair our communities and make them better places to live and work.

The Philanthropy News Network aims to serve and help connect people working in the nonprofit world. Please let us know how we can do a better job.

Todd Cohen

O'TOOLE

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Carnegie thought it idiotic to give money directly to the poor, and I would guess that the vast majority of Americans still share his view. (Who would work? is the first of many good questions that come to mind.) And yet money is the thing the poor need most. So what's a concerned, humane philanthropist to do?

Whatever causes a philanthropist chooses to fund, I think that everyone with money and influence should become a passionate advocate of the living wage.

Employers are fond of saying that they pay competitive wages, but competitive wages are not always living wages. A few cities — Oakland, Calif., and St. Paul, Minn., among them — have passed living-wage measures requiring employers who receive municipal tax breaks to pay their employees enough so that they can afford decent housing and the other basics of civilized life in that particular community.

Paying living wages is only a matter of enlightened self-interest: these workers are in a position to contribute more to the economy through their consumer spending, saving, investment in education, and the increased likelihood that they will be able to weather economic setbacks.

I also believe there is a serious need for a recommitment to the fight against discrimination in employment.

Affirmative action seems to have come and

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gone, but discrimination has not. All the numbers show that women and minorities still make up a disproportionate share of the people at the bottom. Only 7 percent of white men and 10 percent of white women are poor, but the poverty rate among African-Americans and Latinos is about 30 percent. Women who work full-time earn only 80 percent as much as their male counterparts.

Closing the wage gap between men and women, ending job discrimination, and paying all workers a living wage would go a long way toward reducing poverty. If we look the other way and allow the gap between top and bottom to continue to widen, I think we're in serious danger of becoming a society rigidly divided into rich and poor, with less and less opportunity for upward mobility.

The reason our economic arrangements have worked so well for so long is that the American dream of working hard and getting ahead has come true for so many. Diminish the chances for realizing the dream, and we strangle the goose that lays our golden egg.



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