
A Great Foundation

Posted by Ivye Allen - 2008/03/10 14:34

Michael Edwards challenges the field of Philanthropy to address the ongoing question of how much business modeling is needed to ensure effective and efficient philanthropy. I spent my early career in several business positions and organizations. I would argue there is a place for business applications while also doing social good. I truly appreciate some of those experiences and lessons learned as I lead my organization. The reality is that all business models and principles are not appropriate and one must know when to recognize that fact. Social change is very complex and cannot be solved by simply setting targets and measures. It requires an appreciation of what has been done, what is being done, and what needs to be done. It also requires the engagement of many voices in the solution. Transformation efforts cannot and will not be successful or sustainable if inclusion of the beneficiaries is not a priority. Dollars alone will not result in social justice transformation.

Philanthrocapitalism has value in addressing social concerns but is not the only approach. Edwards has challenged us to think about the situations where this approach will be useful while being mindful that this approach might not work in other situations. He raises the question and challenges the philanthropic community to continue a constructive dialogue on a form of philanthropy that will not be going away anytime soon. The proposed principles provide a great foundation to continue the discourse and institute policies and practice that will make society stronger in the end. I know that is the right thing for the philanthropy and the communities that it serves. Congratulations to Mr. Edwards on this thoughtful body of work.

=====

Re:A Great Foundation

Posted by Richard Aston - 2008/03/11 02:33

I too came from a business background to non profits. My business background have been invaluable in helping me make our non profit the growing success that is, a good understanding of marketing is just one example. It has been a challenge however to learn to hold a balance between "pure" business thinking and non profit thinking there is a fundamental gulf between the two worlds, well in the underlying philosophies at least.

=====