

Building Organizational Credibility in Uncertain Times

Summary Notes for Remarks
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1. To be credible...

...is to be known and trusted by the people who matter to you.

2. Some factors affecting efforts to build credibility

- Declining levels of trust in institutions and leaders
- Nature (and shrinkage) of nonprofit funding market
- Focus on outcomes
- Changing patterns of personal involvement

3. Impact of these trends on credibility conversation

- Declining trust: created a tinderbox, and increased tendency of nonprofits to see credibility as preventing scandal
- Funding climate: ratcheted up already fierce and competitive drive for visibility
- Focus on outcomes: has changed the drivers of credibility, seeming to favor large over small, hard over soft, strategic over community connected, and metrics over relationships.
- Changing patterns of involvement: are beginning to erode nonprofit organization and sector positioning as the gatekeeper and beneficiary of involvement.

4. A confusing and difficult set of crosscurrents

- Nonprofits vulnerable on overhead, use of funds for public benefit.
- The yearning for "visibility" causes both sector and individual organizations to fixate on publicity.

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- The outcomes conversation, driven by metrics and strategic action, makes it hard for many to compete and creates a backlash for some who do.

- Nonprofits are suddenly competing with a whole new alternative infrastructure – where people don't pay dues, become members, see themselves as institution builders, recognize distinction between profit and not – but do feel instantly and appropriately connected

5. Achieving credibility

More important than ever before: Building direct personal relationships with stakeholders that:

Bond them to our organizations
Build trust
Make them partners in effectiveness

6. Teaser for the workshop

- It's more about organization-building than image-building.
- The people you need to reach are closer than you think.

Relationships Built Around:

Performance + Engagement + Immediacy

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