



Summer 2013

Don't Forget to Hydrate!

WELCOME!

You are reading the latest edition of the Common Ground Email News. From time to time, we'll send you a quick email to let you know about new resources, training events, and special opportunities related to your work and ours. We hope you'll relax and take a few minutes to enjoy the update.

Never Postpone Joy!



I celebrated one of those milestone birthdays this year and it's caused me to do a lot of reflecting about time. As I lean into whatever life brings next, I've promised myself that I will celebrate every new

Greetings!

Every few months, we like to take time to share with you some of what we're learning while working with so many terrific people and organizations. The reflection is good for us as well, in that it helps us see trends, frame those trends and then focus on creating new and timely resources for the social profit sector.

Lately, it seems that almost all of our clients have been dealing with issues of capacity and sustainability, so we've included some resources in this issue that speak to those concerns. We've also developed a new NGO Sustainability Self-Assessment Tool (NGO SSAT) to help you strengthen the commitment and capacity of your organization.

We've designed it to help you take stock of your strengths and weaknesses and as a way of creating an aspirational framework for defining future organizational investments. [Please contact us if you're interested in using this tool with your organization.](#)

At Common Ground, we engage with inspiring organizations who share a common mission: *to improve the lives of people and strengthen the local communities in which they live.*

I hope we can work together soon.

**Efficiency is doing things right.
Effectiveness is doing the right things.** - Peter Drucker

As a consulting firm that focuses on helping organizations become both efficient and effective, we've been very excited to see the country's three leading sources of information on nonprofits--GuideStar, Charity Navigator, and BBB Wise Giving Alliance--denouncing the "overhead ratio" as a valid indicator of nonprofit performance.

In fact, they've [launched a campaign](#) to "correct the common *misconception* that the percentage of a charity's expenses that go to administrative and fundraising costs--commonly referred to as "overhead"--is, on its own, an appropriate metric to evaluate when assessing a charity's worthiness and efficiency."

day, stop making excuses, and get on with living life on the edges of my comfort zone--even if that means taking my shirt off at the beach this summer!

THE OVERHEAD MYTH

THANK YOU!

"Craig is the most talented management consultant and coach I have ever worked with. He is perceptive and personable. He works with each organization, and adapts to their needs. He is genuine, and does not rely on management consultant-speak and generic tools. I highly recommend Craig and Common Ground Consulting."

Melinda Hanson,
former Senior
Program Associate,
ClimateWorks
Foundation,
San Francisco, CA

What We're Reading Online This Month

[9 Things Happy
People Do to Stress
Less](#)

[8 Steps to Mastering
Time Management](#)

[Appraising the
Performance of
Performance
Appraisals](#)

[Good Charities
Spend More on
Administration Than
Less Good Charities](#)

For way too long, we've been seeing organizations short-change critical, necessary investments in capacity to keep their overhead rate as low as possible so as not to scare away donors. In fact, this issue has come up in almost all of Common Ground's recent organizational change engagements. In framing a set of key recommendations for one of our multi-national clients last year, we wrote this:

"... Your negative perception of overhead expenses as waste or inefficiency, rather than as an investment in people and in organizational resilience, is another holdover of [the organization's] evolution that is inhibiting your next stage of growth."

This TED talk from Dan Pallotta focuses on fundraising in our sector, looking specifically at issues around overhead.

Pallotta was crucified in the media when his AIDS Rides and Breast Cancer Rides came under fire for their fundraising and marketing expenses. I was in that conversation ten years ago and my thinking has really evolved as more and more of our work looks at management and capacity issues with our own clients.

[Dan Pallotta: The Way We Think About Charity is Dead Wrong](#)

Pallotta: The Way We Think About Charity is Dead Wrong

At Common Ground, we spend a lot of time working with our clients on fund development, capacity building and sustainability. [Let's discuss ways we can help you.](#)

Live Your Dreams!

I'm blessed to be able to spend so many of my days working with amazing people all around the world. Their passion inspires me. Their wisdom teaches me. And their creativity allows me to see the world differently with every new experience.

Over the past few years, in keynote addresses, workshops and seminars, I've shared countless videos to help inspire thousands of people. This video from the Holstee company is one of my favorites.

The words align with our own values and are "a call to action to live a life full of intention, creativity, passion and community." And the LifeCycle Film brings life to the words "through a celebration of gatherings, of diversity, of life, and of the beauty of shared experience."

[The Holstee Manifesto: Lifecycle Video](#)

[Giving USA 2013
Report Highlights
\(Free Download\)](#)

[The Geographic
Footprints of the
World's Biggest
Bike-Share
Networks](#)

[Twenty Pies to Make
This Summer](#)

Please Share!

More than 90% of all of our work the past few years has come from your direct referrals and for that, we are overwhelmed with gratitude.

If you have a colleague who could benefit from knowing about our work and our free social profit resources, please feel free to forward them this email (Please click "Forward this email" below).

If they are interested, they'll be able to sign-up, otherwise, we'll leave them alone. We promise!

We can't wait for you to get involved in our online community! For two decades, Common Ground Consulting LLC has been providing mission-critical consulting services to social profit organizations. We look forward to strengthening our relationship with you.

[Quick Links](#)

[Our Website](#)

[Our Blog](#)

[Our Availability](#)

Please Join Us

If you haven't visited Common Ground's website yet, we hope you'll also [check it out](#). When you get to our site, go to the login area under "Members" on the left, and enter the email address where you are receiving this note and then create a password.

After that simple step, you'll have access to dozens of fully downloadable resources to help you in your work. You'll also be able to view our snapshots gallery; and we'll be able to involve you directly in our work around the world.

In Community,



Craig A. Bowman
Common Ground Consulting LLC



**What Our Clients
Are Saying**

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