

# *Change the World of* **NOT-FOR-PROFITS**

By Tom Suddes



## Change the World of Not-For-Profits

Author's note: I think Gandhi got it very right when he said:

“Be the **Change** you want to see in the world.”

Some of us can actually change THE world. All of us can change OUR world.

20 MILLION	Volunteer Leaders/Board Members
10 MILLION	Employees/Staff
1.6 MILLION	Not-For-Profit 501(c)(3) Organizations

I believe that almost every successful parent, business or community leader, entrepreneur, et al, is involved in some kind of NOT-FOR-PROFIT activity. This is not hyperbole. It's also **not** about charity or small social service agencies.

The NOT-FOR-PROFIT world is BIG BUSINESS. Check out these startling financial statistics on what is known as the THIRD SECTOR.

\$100+ TRILLION	Transfer of Wealth in the next 30 years
\$800 BILLION	Goods & Services purchased annually
\$300 BILLION	'Donated' by 50 Million People in the US
\$45+ BILLION	Spent to raise the \$300 Billion (15%)
\$100 BILLION	Opportunity for Greater Impact (McKinsey Report)
\$25 BILLION	'Wasted' on Fundraising Costs (McKinsey Report)
100 MILLION	Volunteers in the US alone
50 MILLION	Investors (aka Donors) last year

## Change

I'm assuming if you're trying to CHANGE THE WORLD...you're kind of busy.

I've tried to SIMPLIFY and ORGANIZE some ideas, nuggets and catchphrases in a way that will help you and your respective organization SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE YOUR IMPACT.

Having presented this MESSAGE to thousands of community leaders, board members and volunteer leaders, it is also clear that the message and guiding principles are applicable to ALL organizations.

Let's just take a quick look at these 3 numbers:

**100 Million:** The number of VOLUNTEERS and INVESTORS ...who give a GAZILLION HOURS and... invest \$300 Billion (annually) to CAUSES and CASES in which they BELIEVE!!!

**\$100 Billion:** The OPPORTUNITY for greater IMPACT that was cited in Bill Bradley's & McKinsey's study of 200 of the largest NOT-FOR-PROFITS. Their article in the Harvard Business Review asked the question: "Imagine what an extra \$100 BILLION a year could do for philanthropic and other nonprofit institutions."

*Note:* The first of the five recommendations was to REDUCE FUNDING COSTS! Duh?! Their point was reducing the cost of raising and distributing funds from 18% (average) to between 5% and 10% would mean an annual savings of up to \$25 Billion or more!

**\$100 Trillion:** The TRANSFER of WEALTH over the next 30 years. This is how much money (give or take \$30 Trillion) that will be passed on as boomers pass away.

*Note:* Paul Zane Pilzer is a world-renowned economist, multi-millionaire, entrepreneur, college professor and author. He has another take on the \$100 Trillion. He says U.S. household WEALTH quadrupled from \$13 Trillion in 1991 to \$52 Trillion in 2005. Over the next ten years, that wealth will double again to a \$100 Trillion, including at least another 10 million new millionaires (1 million a year)!!!

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN?

It means there are plenty of PEOPLE and plenty of SUPPORT to help organizations DREAM... TRANSFORM...and IMPACT!!!

**Change the Way You Think, Operate and Fund.**

This is the CHALLENGE. In order to help you with this, I would encourage you to read, relate and assimilate the following quotes on CHANGE (sidebar).

*“EVERY ORGANIZATION has to prepare for the ABANDONMENT of almost EVERYTHING it does.”*

*~Peter Drucker (1910–2005)*

## Point of View

Here is my POINT OF VIEW distilled into three simple declarative statements. (These were literally St. Paul–knocked–off–his–horse epiphanies...at least to me.

### 1. NO MORE NOT-FOR-PROFITS.

We must stop defining ourselves in the NEGATIVE. Instead of focusing on what we're NOT ... let's focus on what we're FOR...IMPACT!!!

Note: No one involved in a 'NOT-FOR-PROFIT' ORGANIZATION wakes up in the morning and shouts *“YEE HAW! We don't get to make any money today!”*

### 2. YOUR IMPACT DRIVES YOUR INCOME.

Therefore, the goal of the organization is not 'FUNDRAISING'.

The only LIMIT to the SIZE and SCOPE of your INCOME is the SIZE and SCOPE of your IMPACT.

With all due respect, NO ONE (reading this) is involved with an organization whose INCOME matches their IMPACT. Covey says, “No money. No mission.” I would add this corollary, *“No mission. (IMPACT) No money. (INCOME)”*

### 3. JUST ASK.

This is my ANSWER to EVERYTHING. It's Guiding Principle #9. It will be a stand-alone book. It soon could become a major motion picture. I cannot emphasize the power of this ACTION STATEMENT enough. It literally encompasses the entire SOLUTION to FUNDING YOUR VISION.

## Attitude

The 'For Impact' Point of View, Ideas, Nuggets and Guiding Principles are also meant to help us with our ATTITUDE.

Victor Frankl wrote what has universally been praised as one of the BEST 10 BOOKS ever written. In *MAN'S SEARCH FOR MEANING* (set in a World War II Death Camp), he states the book's message as follows:

*"When all the familiar goals in life are snatched away... what alone remains is the last of human freedoms: the ability to choose one's ATTITUDE in a given set of circumstances."*

It is critical and incumbent upon you as a LEADER to help any organization with whom you are working create an ATTITUDE (culture) of CHANGE.

### *3 Challenges & 9 Guiding Principles*

One definition of a MANIFESTO is a *"PUBLIC DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES ... which are clear and evident"*. The following 3 Challenges and 9 Guiding Principles seem CLEAR and EVIDENT, at least to me. (And, to the thousands of leaders we've been working with over the last few years.)

I believe it really helps to have a simple set of guiding principles to use as a framework for action ... for decisions ... for direction. Perhaps not so surprisingly, these 9 guiding principles seem to resonate extremely well with business leaders and entrepreneurs as much as they do with not-for-profit (for impact) leaders. See what you think.

Remember Mr. Drucker's "EVERY ... ABANDON ... EVERYTHING"?

*“EVERY ORGANIZATION is PERFECTLY DESIGNED to get the RESULTS they are getting.”*

*~Tim Kight*

Or my good friend Tim Kight’s *“Every organization is perfectly designed to get the results they are getting.”*

Or, perhaps you need to be reminded of Big Al’s (Einstein) definition of INSANITY: *“Doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.”*

I want to CHALLENGE you and your organization to:

**CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK.**

**CHANGE THE WAY YOU OPERATE.**

**CHANGE THE WAY YOU FUND.**

## **The 9 Guiding Principles**

**CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK.**

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1**—CHANGE your VOCABULARY.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2**—THINK BIG.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3**—BUILD SIMPLE.

**CHANGE THE WAY YOU OPERATE.**

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4**—ACT NOW!

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 5**—DISCOVER TALENT N’ TEAMS!

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 6**—FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIPS!!!

**CHANGE THE WAY YOU FUND.**

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 7**—COMMIT TO SALES!

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 8**—DO the MATH!

**GUIDING PRINCIPLE 9**—JUST ASK!!

**CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK**

Earl Nightengale simplified this entire challenge in his incredibly popular recording of THE STRANGEST SECRET.

*“We are what we think about.”*

*If all we think about is survival, cuts in staffing, can't make payroll, 5% budget increases, etc. ... then that's what we get.*

*If, however, we think about our VISION, our IMPACT, our MESSAGE, our MEANING, our PURPOSE ... then it literally becomes a SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY.*

I hope these 3 Guiding Principles can help with this challenge.

## 1. Change Your Vocabulary

When we change the way we TALK, it changes the way we THINK and ACT. Tony Robbins and many others made a pretty big deal around NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming). Their bottom line is simple: Your self-talk impacts the way you ACT!

Here is a sampler of vocabulary changes for the NOT-FOR-PROFIT world.

OLD WORDS	NEW WORDS
Not-For-Profit	For Impact
Charity	Cause
Mission Statement	Message
Survival	Vision
Inform	Involve
On the Board	On Board
Competition	Collaboration
Donor (Donation)	Investor (Investment)
'Warm Fuzzies'	Return on Investment
Transactions	Relationships
Ask for Money	Present the Opportunity

*"RE-IMAGINE." (EVERYTHING)*

*~Tom Peters*

## 2. Think Big

Steve Jobs of Apple, Next and Pixar fame says it this way, “Let’s make a dent in the universe.” Tom Peters adds, *“I don’t understand in the least ... anyone ... who doesn’t ... aim to change the world.”*

In my humble opinion, and from a ton of experience with both For-Profit and Not-For-Profit organizations, it is a much stronger and more compelling case when we THINK BIG than when we are merely trying to SURVIVE. Think QUANTUM LEAP ... not a KAIZEN TWEAK.

## 3. Build Simple

Good old Thoreau said, “Simplify. Simplify. Always simplify.”

I’m in my seventh decade. I’ve experienced a lot of failure and success. ONE BIG THING that I know is SIMPLE = SUCCESS (whatever your definition).

Simplicity is power. Simplicity is clarity. Simplicity should be a way of life for great For Impact organizations.

### **CHANGE THE WAY YOU OPERATE**

This challenge is about RE-IMAGINING ... RE-INVENTING ... RE-DESIGNING your Business Model, your Organizational Structure, your Funding/Sales Plan and more.

I love (and believe) Tom Peters’ comment about *“Crazy times call for crazy organizations.”*

Following are 3 Guiding Principles that may help Change the Way You Operate:

## 4. Act Now

This Guiding Principle completes my favorite entrepreneurial mantra:

### **THINK BIG. BUILD SIMPLE. ACT NOW.**

There are hundreds, even thousands, of great quotes from deep thinkers about the importance of ACTION. Here are 3 that might help you get going.

*“My dreams are worthless. My plans are dust. My goals are impossible. All are of no value ... unless followed by action. I will ACT NOW!” Og Mandino laid this out in his incredible best seller, *The Greatest Salesman in the World*. It’s a powerful mantra for any kind of CHANGE.*

Then you’ve got Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s ubiquitous and magic four lines:

*“Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute!  
BOLDNESS has genius, power, and magic in it.  
Only engage, and then the mind grows heated.  
BEGIN, and then the work will be completed.”*

Then finally, Tony Robbins, über motivational speaker, says simply, *“TAKE MASSIVE ACTION!”*

*“If you don’t like CHANGE, you’re going to like IRRELEVANCE even less.”*

*~General Erik Shinseki*

## 5. Discover Talent 'n Teams

I have never read a more perfectly stated organizational principle than Jim Collin's 'Magic Bus'.

*"Get the right people on the bus. Get the wrong people off the bus.  
Get the right people in the right seats."*

If you add that to *Hire for ATTITUDE. Train for skill and FOCUS ON STRENGTHS* ...you can make this talent thing a lot easier. (Remember, Kets de Vries says, *"It's easier to change PEOPLE ... than to CHANGE people."*)

In my world, Boxes are out. Circles are in. Old line organizational charts were based on hierarchical, military/industrial models that worked well ... in the early 1900's.

Ask any great leader who actually gets stuff done, and I believe you'll find very few of them were still operating under the old COMMAND & CONTROL MODEL. Rather, they wholeheartedly (I purposely use that word with 'heart' in it) embrace a collaborative TEAM MODEL built around inner-connected circles.

Obviously, you need to find, recruit, train and retain the absolute best TALENT possible to populate these TEAMS. Think HOLLYWOOD TALENT AGENCIES or TALENT SCOUTS for sports teams. Do whatever it takes.

## 6. Focus on Relationships

*“We don’t need COINS. We need CHANGE.”*

*~Sign in Social Venture Operation*

Almost every sales book and sales guru is in agreement on this one thing: FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIPS! In the Not-for-Profit world, we talk about No More TRANSACTIONS. It’s all about RELATIONSHIPS.

Martha Rogers and Don Peppers, who are truly the leaders in this one-to-one message, state that *“A relationship is a continuing series of two collaborative interactions each inherently unique to the individual participant.”* WOW!

### CHANGE THE WAY YOU FUND

While this was originally meant to help NOT-FOR-PROFITS (FOR IMPACTS) understand the important dynamic relationship of IMPACT and INCOME, this Challenge and the 3 accompanying Guiding Principles certainly work for ALL organizations. In his seminal book, *Begging for Change*, Robert Eger states simply, *“Nonprofits must stop chasing money and start focusing on the true work at hand.”* Covey’s *“No money. No mission.”* and my corollary of *“No mission. No money.”* work for For-Profits, as well as Not-For-Profits.

## 7. Commit to Sales

*“You’re in sales. Get over it.”* I use this everywhere and it always gets a laugh. But, it is so true. We are all in sales. And, as Mark Cuban, the peripatetic owner of the Dallas Mavericks says, *“Sales covers up everything.”* Every organization needs to totally COMMIT TO SALES, especially as it relates to PEOPLE and PROCESS and PERFORMANCE.

## 8. Do the Math

It's amazing what happens when you DO THE MATH. (It's also ridiculous when you don't.) A good friend and former head of the Gigot Center for Entrepreneurial Studies at Notre Dame, Jeff Bernel, may have pre-empted Jim Collins many, many years ago when he said simply, *"Deal with the brutal facts."* I use that to help drive me to DO THE MATH.

Doing the math, at least for me, involves defining the numbers around your problem, solution, activities, productivity, etc. Achieving success in any endeavor, especially as it relates to major GOALS, is always a function of DOING THE MATH.

## 9. Just Ask

Again, this simple declarative action statement.

Brian Tracy, one of the penultimate sales trainers in the world, says, *"48% of all sales people don't 'close' or 'ask' for the order."* Rick Page, in his book of the same title, says it a little differently. *"Hope is not a strategy."*

Whatever it is that you want to accomplish ... JUST ASK!

Just ask for help. Just ask for involvement. Just ask for feedback. Just ask questions.

In closing, E. B. White once wrote, *“I get up every morning determined to both change the world and have one hell of a good time. Sometimes this makes planning the day difficult.”*

If you’ve read this far, I know you want to help CHANGE THE WORLD. Intel Founder and super-leader, Andy Grove, says simply, *“ENGAGE. THEN PLAN.”*

Get more ENGAGED with your favorite social or FOR IMPACT organization. Bring your own experience and insights to the table. Please, don’t think of these organizations as ‘charities’ (especially allowing for organizational inefficiencies or lack of a business model, etc., because you have a *“This is the way they do things in the non-profit arena”* attitude) Step up. Provide leadership. Make an investment that is commensurate with your capacity and relationship with the cause or the particular organization.

Take a moment yourself or send your organization’s leadership to [ForImpact.org](https://forimpact.org) for more.

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*“EVERY ORGANIZATION is PERFECTLY DESIGNED to get the RESULTS they are getting.”*

*~Tim Kight*

*“RE-IMAGINE.” (EVERYTHING)*

*~Tom Peters*

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tom Suddes has made a name for himself as a THOUGHT LEADER, COACH, TRAINER, CONSULTANT, SPEAKER and WRITER. With over 33 years of experience in development, strategic visioning, campaign management and major gift solicitation, Tom has been labeled CONTRARIAN, RADICAL, WHACKY, CRAZY and (what he feels is the highest compliment) 'THE TOM PETERS OF THE NOT-FOR-PROFIT WORLD'.

Suddes is widely known as a MAVERICK and an AGENT of CHANGE. He began his career in the Development Office at the University of Notre Dame in 1973, eventually becoming the Director of Development.

In 1983, he founded The Suddes Group, which has managed over 300 campaigns, raised over \$1 Billion, and helped generate 3 million new jobs in their work with 125 economic development organizations around the country. He has made more than 6,000 one-on-one major gift presentations, and has trained thousands of 'NOT-FOR-PROFIT' leaders in the art and science of FOR IMPACT (and raising more money at a much lower cost). He speaks and provides training throughout the country for entrepreneurs, sales people and leaders in both the not-for-profit and the for-profit sector.

A serial entrepreneur since age 16, Tom has founded 19 businesses (his kids say he can't hold a job), and was the first Entrepreneur-In-Residence at the Gigot Center for Entrepreneurial Studies at Notre Dame.

Tom served in the U.S. Army as an Infantry Officer, Airborne and Pathfinder; was a two-time welter-weight boxing champion at Notre Dame; and has been the boxing coach at Notre Dame for 35 years (returning every year for a six-week 'mini-sabbatical' to coach and referee the Bengal Bouts).

Homepage URL: [www.forimpact.org](http://www.forimpact.org)

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