

Stanford SOCIAL INNOVATION^{Review}

Editor's Note
Leading During and After a Crisis
By Eric Nee

Stanford Social Innovation Review
Summer 2020

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Stanford Social Innovation Review
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Leading During and After a Crisis

Many of you reading this issue of *Stanford Social Innovation Review* are probably wondering why there aren't any articles about the coronavirus pandemic and its impact on the social sector.

We are, of course, aware that the pandemic is having a tremendous impact on all parts of society, in particular on the people who are most vulnerable. We are also aware that the pandemic has created a crisis for many nonprofit organizations and social businesses, as services and programs are forced to shut down or refocus, and revenues and donations decline, all at the very time when the need for many of these same services and programs is greater than ever.

But the magazine is not supposed to be topical. One of the reasons is that we only publish four issues each year. We pick the articles that we will publish months in advance of when you read them, often before the last issue goes to press. Many of the articles you are reading now were written last

December and January. With that publishing schedule we cannot possibly try to be topical.

There is another and more important reason that we don't attempt to publish topical articles in the magazine. Our mission is to find and publish articles that provide insight on important issues and challenges that social sector leaders must deal with continually: How can an organization be both innovative and able to operate programs at scale? What are the attributes of an effective leader? How can a business create social as well as economic value?

As it turns out, some of these eternal topics are essential now. Take our cover story, "Organizational Culture as a Tool for Change." Many nonprofit organizations are having to adapt and pivot in response to the pandemic and its effects, often very quickly. Some are able to do this more easily than others, and one of the reasons for that is the organization's culture. Is it a culture that responds well to change or not? Do the organization's leaders and its

employees know how to change the culture when needed? This article provides insights on those and other vital questions.

The same is true for many of the articles we have published over the last 17 years which are all available on our website. For example, during the Great Recession of 2008 and 2009, we published a number of articles about how to manage during an economic downturn such as the one we are now in. One of these articles was "Outrun the Recession," published in the Winter 2020 issue. It advised nonprofits to focus on seven areas, such as "draw funders in," "protect the core," and "fortify the best people"—all still good advice today.

The way that SSIR can best respond to current events is online, where we can develop an idea into a published article in a few days if necessary. Since March, we have published a steady stream of articles about the pandemic and its impact on the social sector. One of these was "Radically Adapting to the New World," which examined the different ways that organizations have significantly changed how they do their work.

So even during this crisis, please take the time to go to our website and explore the thousands of articles that SSIR has published over the years. You are sure to find something that will stimulate your thinking and help you and your organization not just survive, but thrive. —ERIC NEE

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