



Nine Ways to Change Your World

Use these tools to turn your vision into reality.

By Michelle LaBrosse

Even when the economy isn't doing well, there are always opportunities. To take advantage of them, you need the right tools in your toolbox.

Project management is an optimal tool for times like these. Through project management, you can capture the collective wisdom of staff and lessons learned on previous projects. You can manage a portfolio of projects that are all building blocks of your strategic vision.

Look at turbulent times as a perfect opportunity to use your project management skills and know-how to change the world. Here are nine ways to get started:

Seek out opportunities to do your own formal and informal learning.

Set a personal and an organizational vision for long-term sustainable success. You tend to create what you focus on. Focus on failure, and that's what you'll get. Focus on people, and you have a better chance of making a huge difference.

Create your own "school" of what you want to learn. Seek out opportunities to do your own formal and informal learning.

Develop a "can do, we will prevail" attitude, and bring those around you along on your quest for knowledge.

Diversify. Relying on one or two sources of funding is a recipe for disaster. Spread your net wide. Al-

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ways be open to new, entrepreneurial ways of earning money for your organization.

Develop a safety net that will let you take appropriate risks so you can weather whatever comes along. Remember what flight attendants tell us: You need to secure your own mask before helping others.

Don't fall prey to those (especially the media) with "the sky is falling" mentality. Do a risk management reality check on your projects. Then develop a risk management plan to handle the legitimate risks facing your organization and your projects.

Drop projects that are no longer serving your organization. Ask yourself, "If I had to make the decision today to start this project, would I?" If the answer is no, stop wasting your valuable resources on it.

Create a change management plan. When new opportunities arise (and sometimes these come disguised as difficulties), assess how they'll impact your organization's overall goals. Develop a strategy that incorporates change into your reality.

Find the path of least resistance where you can make the biggest contribution for the least effort. Every individual and organization has unique talents that when used effectively, in the right environments, can have a major impact. If something has become too hard for you to do, maybe you shouldn't be doing it. Seek out other opportunities where you can have more fun and make more of a difference. What is meant to be happens easily. ■

Ask yourself, "If I had to make the decision today to start this project, would I?"



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More Tools for Your Toolbox

For more ways to create the organization and world you want, see these *Nonprofit World* articles at www.snpo.org/members:

- **How to Get It Done** (Vol. 25, No. 6)
- **Building a Great Organization from Within** (Vol. 24, No. 5)
- **Mama Said Never Put All Your Eggs in One Basket** (Vol. 19, No. 4)
- **Foreseeable Harm** (Vol. 20, No. 3)
- **Master Change, Or Change Will Master You** (Vol. 14, No. 4)
- **Six Ways to Get Out of a Rut** (Vol. 24, No. 4)
- **Creating a Values-Based Road Map** (Vol. 23, No. 2.)