

The Results-Focused Manager

These principles will help you achieve results for the long haul.

By Terrence Fernsler

Managing to Change the World: The Nonprofit Manager's Guide to Getting Results. By Alison Green & Jerry Hauser. Softcover. 233 pages. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. (wiley.com)

Strong, effective nonprofit organizations can have a dramatic impact on resolving social problems. Managing well makes it easier to be a strong, effective organization that gets results. Management, in this book, is defined as how to get things done through others. There are three components:

1. Managing the work. Getting the work done requires delegation, and the authors clarify how to do this well by using clear goals and concrete measures. They also explain how guiding organizational culture steers staff in how they perform the work. Alison Green and Jerry Hauser present a few easily implemented management systems that will help managers delegate clearly and shift the culture of the organization to improve how work gets done.

2. Managing the people. Having the right people may be the single most important tool a manager has – and the most difficult to hone. Hiring and developing staff to get the best from them, and holding on to them, help make a strong organization. The authors introduce guidelines for determining who to look for, selecting the right person for a position, and selling the job to the candidate.

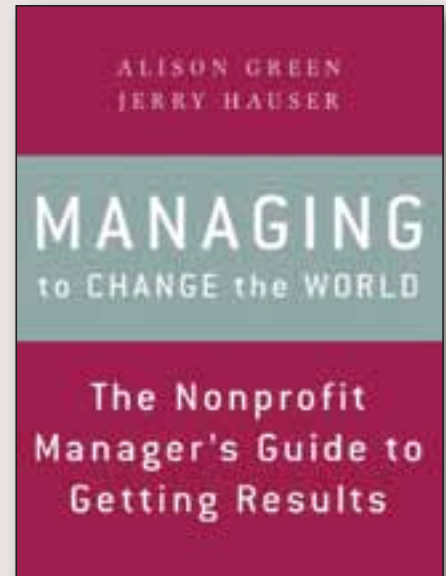
3. Managing yourself. The manager sets an example for others to follow. Using time effectively, being organized, and exercising authority empathically help build a high-performing team and organization. Focusing on strengths creates new possibilities for the organization's work.

Throughout their book, Green and Hauser stress the need to be results-focused. Does that mean nonprofits should be run like hard-nosed businesses? Their answer: Because the work nonprofits do is so important, they need to be *more* hard-nosed about management than for-profit enterprises are.

To that end, the authors cover a range of skills needed and discuss how to bring them together. They offer excellent tools for the practices of delegating, hiring the right people, and being organized. Their methods to accomplish more with less stress will make an organization stronger and more effective and build a high-performing nonprofit organization. And after all, isn't accomplishing more toward resolving seemingly overwhelming social problems why most of us get into this business in the first place? **S**

Terrence Fernsler has been a nonprofit professional for over 30 years and is currently in the School of Strategic Leadership Studies Ph.D. program at James Madison University in Virginia.

“Should nonprofits be run like hard-nosed businesses?”



The Five Ws of Delegation

There's always going to be more work than you can handle on your own. The key to effective delegation is to communicate your expectations clearly. One way to do so is to ask yourself these crucial questions:

Who should be involved? Managers sometimes fail because they assign the wrong person to a project. Take care to select the best person for the task, and make sure that person takes ownership of the project.

What does success look like? The outcomes you and your staff agree on should be as specific as possible.

Where might the staff member go for resources? What money, people, supplies, and other tools can the employee use? Is there a budget for the project? Are there others with expertise on the issue? Make sure people know that *you* will always be a resource for them – that staffers can come to you whenever they have questions, need support, or want someone to brainstorm solutions with them.

When is the project due? Be explicit about deadlines and where the project falls in relation to other priorities.

Why does this work matter? You'll create more excitement and buy-in when you communicate the big picture, where the project fits, and why it's important.