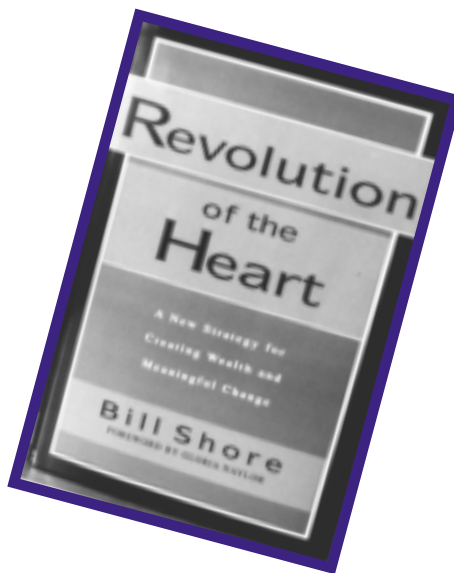




## Into the Heart of the Future



*Nonprofits need a new model they can use to create wealth and build communities. This inspirational book leads the way.*

BY TERRENCE FERNSLER

### *Revolution of the Heart*

*By Bill Shore. 167 pages. Hardcover. Riverhead Books (200 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016).*

“To meet the challenges of the future, nonprofits must be thoroughly reinvented to create new wealth,” writes Bill Shore. By “creating new wealth,” he means taking an entrepreneurial attitude to raising money. He also means inventing a new currency of hands-on efforts.

As he points out, people have always been willing to help, especially when they feel involved. Giving money is one way—but the most removed way—to contribute to an organization. Those who feel they are part of the

solution are more likely to make significant monetary contributions. Thus, we need to encourage people to give their time and skills as well as their money. We need to use this support to strengthen community-building institutions.

To do so, Shore says, we need a massive commitment to sharing our talents. It is up to nonprofit leaders to nurture that commitment, because it’s not going to come from anywhere else.

As an example, he winds through the history of how his organization, Share Our Strength, took shape. He

does not dwell long on the methods he used (other than the willingness to make mistakes), knowing that each organization must find its own resources. He does make clear the need to explore new possibilities and treat a nonprofit like a business.

Part memoir, part call to action, Shore’s book describes how Share Our Strength has grown into a grant-giving nonprofit that takes no money from federal programs. Most of its money comes from imaginative events that, as he puts it, “create new wealth.”

Entrepreneurship in nonprofits is far too rare, Shore declares. We can and must learn from businesses and apply the best of their principles to our sector.

The idea that nonprofits shouldn’t be managed like businesses is one of many misconceptions that keep nonprofit organizations from reaching their full potential, Shore maintains. Nonprofits must educate the contributing public about such harmful myths as these:

**Myth 1** *The best nonprofits are all volunteer and get everything donated.* Shore sums up the problems with this fallacy as “you get what you pay for.”

**Myth 2** *The best nonprofits are those with the lowest administrative expenses and the highest percentage of funds going directly to program support.* Some organizations simply require higher administrative costs, at least temporarily, to carry

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out their missions. Organizations should be judged on the effectiveness of what they provide, not the costs of doing business.

**Myth 3** *Donors should earmark their contributions for the purchase of food, clothing, or medicine for someone who needs it.* Nonprofits' real need is for unrestricted income. Like it or not, delivering programs costs money. The organization must pay rent, utilities, competitive salaries to motivate employees, and so on. Contributors must recognize that without money to cover these costs, nonprofits cannot be effective. Programs are useless if they cannot be delivered to clients.

**Myth 4** *The best social programs put children first.* Using Share Our Strength's goal of eliminating childhood hunger, Shore notes that it does no good to feed children if we do nothing for the adults with whom they live. They will simply get hungry again, and soon. We can't help a child without helping the whole family.

**Myth 5** *Urgent immediate needs make it impossible for nonprofits to invest and plan for the future.* Nonprofits that subscribe to this mentality end up with fewer resources and help fewer people than they would if they had the discipline to save and invest carefully.

Nonprofits looking for concrete ways to move their organizations into the 21st century will want a how-to book rather than, or in addition to, this one. But for the contemplative, Shore's insights serve as a wake-up call and excellent motivator.

Reading this book will remind most of us why we got into this business. Shore's idea about strengthening community-building is reminiscent of what we heard from barter proponents 10 years ago. It is nothing new. But its time has come.

Shore believes strongly in the nonprofit sector. He feels nonprofit organizations must take responsibility for leading people into civic engagement again—into a revolution of the heart. ■

