

A Catalyst for Change

By Sharon Danosky



A catalyst for change. A crisis or a period of uncertainty affords us this opportunity. Or as Paul Romer said during the 2008 financial collapse: A crisis is a terrible thing to waste.

And this particular crisis affords us new opportunities in a way that few other crisis have. Overnight, most of us were forced to think innovatively just to carry out our day to day activities and services that so many people depend on. Now, we need to fight against the weariness of this prolonged change and once again

pivot to create a different paradigm for the future.

There will be few among us who will ever return to providing services the way we did prior to COVID-19. That is simply a fact. However, it is far from a negative. As I have spoken with many nonprofits in the region and across the country, there are few that want to take that narrow vision.

This pandemic has shown us the under-belly of the nonprofit infrastructure. It is an infrastructure that is under-resourced, and overstressed with a huge swath of the population being grossly underserved or neglected for decades. At the same time it has created an awakening of a society that has allowed racial inequities and injustice to simmer below the surface. There have been huge shifts in the patterns of our daily lives – from spending more time with family and close friends to shifting our spending behavior to that of savings (personal savings rate hit 33% in April).

This is the time to plan for what's ahead. And I don't mean trying to read the tea-leaves and then adjust accordingly. **I mean plan for the organization you want to become.** Plan for how you can deliver your programs most effectively going forward. What infrastructure will you need? What staff and training will it require? Plan to address the racial inequities and injustices by raising the questions; who do you serve, who should you serve and are the people who can address the issues part of the conversation. Plan by having more meaningful and strategic discussions at your board meetings. And plan by more aggressively raising funds and engaging your donors instead of fretting about your events.

My next webinar will discuss these topics and more – Manage Change and Maximize Impact. I invite you to join me.