

Added Value

More than Money

Fall 2007

Glued-to-Start

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You can move from glued-to-start into action by identifying the glue that holds you tight and selecting and using the right “adhesive remover.”



Help for Stuck and Circling Organizations

Your nonprofit organization, like most, has a long list of activities to accomplish. Some are easy and get done. Others are important, but can be left until you receive a donor's gift. Others are critical, like addressing board tension, developing a plan for your next accomplishment or solving your fundraising impasse. With some of these critical items, no matter what you try, you don't move forward. You are glued-to-start. The goal of this article is to explore six common ways organizations get “glued” and describe a matching “adhesive remover.” As you read this article, consider the places where your organization is stuck.

1. Lack of Decision Information

“Renew,” advises your bank president when you ask her advice about a lease running out next year. “Move west to where we have more clients,” agree the staff members who stop you in the hall. “Move north to where rents are cheap,” suggests the treasurer. “Bite the bullet and build,” cajoles your favorite donor. Everyone has a solution, but no one has completed an analysis of each solution and its risks, benefits and costs.

Or, perhaps you plan to purchase a donor software package. Staff contacts all the major vendors and they send lovely brochures and information packets. Now, the vendors call weekly to update you and send you emails with even more information. All the glossy pictures and jargon weigh you down like a sack of wet sticky cement. Despite the crates of materials in your office, this too, is lack of information, that is, decision information.

The Glue: You have plenty of solutions, but lack decision information.

Adhesive Remover

- **Organize.** Write down the possibilities. If you have more than five, clump similar options. This simple and powerful step organizes choices. Often you can eliminate some you will not pursue, like the software that lacks service.
- **Cull** any information for quality. Recycle the repetitive brochures and rumors. Keep that comparative software analysis developed by your association.
- **Identify** holes in your knowledge. What do you need to know to make a decision? For example, how much will it

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Do you want to achieve more of your mission by turning your ideas into funded realities? Since 1994, this firm has helped hundreds of groups do exactly that—and secure millions of dollars to improve services and build strong organizations. Contact the *More than Money Consultant* today to build your team, develop your ideas and win grants.

ked*
Karen Eber Davis Consulting

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cost to build? And, how much less do rents cost up north?

- **Collect** needed information. If you are stumped, remember that with 1.5 million nonprofits, someone already solved your challenge. Contact knowledgeable people and seek advice.
- **Select** the best comparison organizations and study both their products and process (Why *and* how did they make the decision to move west?)
- **Develop** a comparison chart of your options to share with stakeholders and choose.

2. The Rewards

For Don't Are Certain and Those for Do Iffy

"If we don't get the grant I won't have to do the project." a staff member jokes. Often people aren't so direct about their ambiguous feelings about activities that move organizations forward. And it might not just be "them"—it might be you.

The Glue: In the world of overworked, under-resourced nonprofits, being glued-to-start can save you time, energy and money—at least now.

Adhesive Remover

- **Draw** three columns on a paper. In the first column, list the reasons why you want to do this activity. In the second, list all the reasons you don't. In the third jot down how you will remove or overcome the obstacles you identified in the second.
- **Determine** incentives for overcoming each obstacles. For instance, you remove an obstacle by calling in extra help and reward yourself by purchasing the bestseller you want. Cash rewards work, but so will

recognition, free time and perks, like assigning the staff member who gets the grant the prized shaded parking spot in August.

- **Bribes.** Its often easier to bribe (benefits rightly invested bring energy) than eliminate *all* the subtle reasons stopping action.

3. You're in the Gray Zone

"Let's add a staff member to do additional development," you suggest. "But," the CFO counters, "the expenses associated with hiring them will use all they raised and more, for the next year and a half. Why not use the money to offer existing staff overdue raises?"

The Glue: You must decide between two good, bad or even mediocre options.

Adhesive Remover

- **Use** a decision-making tool. (See one at www.kedconsult.com, under Free Articles, Proven Results.)
- **Analyze** further if the choices are still close: Which option has the most risk? The most potential for reward? The most certainty? Which calls for the most courage and integrity? Which would your role model choose?
- **Ask** and answer these and similar questions. Think. Sleep on it. Choose and move on.

4. You Get It—

Before Anyone Else

As the leader, you study the demographics for your area and recognize its time to construct an addition for your organization. But, everyone around you can't understand why you need to get started *now* when there are so many other time-sensitive priorities.

The Glue: You know its time to call 911, even if others don't smell the

smoke.

Adhesive Remover

- **Trust** your instincts
- **Collect** facts, figure and reasons that illustrate urgency for action
- **Communicate** with newsletters, announcements, emails, etc. Remember it will take up to seven times for people to hear your message once (and possibly more if its bad news.)
- **Don't** give up. Remember this is why you're a leader.



5. Where

Exactly Are We Going?

Everyone is excited about adding an adult program at your organization next year. You've hoisted the anchor and set the sails, but instead of sailing out of the harbor toward the program you are circling it. When you investigate you find folks are steering against each other. One group wants the adults program to emphasize job enhancement and the other parenting skills.

The Glue: Your destination is hazy. You made a choice, but when it comes down to it, some define it as A and others B or even C or D.

Adhesive Remover

- **Stop** trying to move forward
- **Identify** and review the differences between the destinations
- **Gather** information as discussed in #1. *Lack of Information*, if necessary
- **Seek** compromises when everyone understands the differences
- **Pick** a single set of coordinates

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- Set sail again

6. One (or Two) Miracles Short

Your organization wants to raise ten million dollars, but to date you haven't raised that much in your cumulative history. Or, you've promised to replace grant funds with new donors at the end of the grant, but you haven't a clue on how you will locate or motivate them.

The Glue: If you can't translate your hopes and optimism into realistic actions your dreams will be glued- to-start. It's like being in a car filled with people ready for a picnic with four missing wheels. No matter how ideal the destination and ready the picnickers, without wheels, you'll have trouble moving out of the driveway.

Adhesive Remover

- **Confirm** with a knowledgeable source, like foundation staff, national association or a consultant that your plans are realistic
- **If no**, establish smaller goals that move you in the desired direction, i.e., add a wing instead of a building
- **If yes**, draft a step-by-step plan to achieve your goal. Focus on a dozen initial small steps. Your goal is to develop a set of detailed instructions,

like a recipe. You might also find it helpful to gather additional information.

- **Implement** the new plan

Glued To Action

This article reviews several ways organizations get glued-to-start on critical activities. While you read, you considered your organization's sticky places. Congratulations—knowing where and how you are stuck is the first step to applying the right adhesive remover. You can move from glued-to-start into action by identifying the glue that holds you tight and selecting and using the right adhesive remover.

Grant-Link, Continued from page 4

is to identify potential grant sources. For internal needs, like facilitation and research, the best funders are tried and true friends of the organization, that is, your previous funders. For pilots, new programs or program expansions, you are in "typical grant territory" and a request can be made either to new or existing grant funders.

Learn More

Do you need more information? See www.kedconsult.com. You'll find over 45 free **Proven Result** articles on team building, leadership, money and grants. Download these three new ones today:

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Contact us for help with your planning, team building and grants

Grant-Link: Get Unglued When Money Helps

Can you get a grant to help you get unglued? Yes, seeking a grant is a reasonable approach if you need money to apply an “adhesive remover.” For example, you might use grant funds to develop a pilot program, new service, fund a facilitator for your retreat or a consultant to help you research options.

To determine if a grant makes sense, explore answers to these questions:

- ✓ Why are you glued?
- ✓ What are three actions that will help you move forward?
- ✓ Why do you believe each action will work?
- ✓ What visible sign will prove they did? That is, how will you know you are unglued?
- ✓ Which action is best? How specifically will you use the grant money?
- ✓ Are there any possibilities that use in-kind or non-cash resources, instead of or with the grant funds?
- ✓ What can you add to a request that shows your commitment to action?
- ✓ Will this be a one-time expense?

If your answers lead you to a grant fundable activity (to learn more about what makes an ideal projects, listen to the *Grant-tastic*, #2 *Unlock Fort Knox* CD available on the website,) your next step

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Grant-tastic! Tip of the Month #40

Grant-tastic!



121 Expert Tips
 on Writing and Winning Grants
 for Your Nonprofit



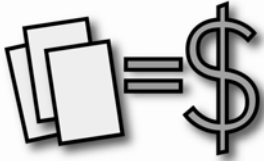
The More than Money Consultant

Award lists are a valuable tool in your discernment process because they show how donors interpret their own guidelines. For example, a Texas donor indicates they fund nationally. On inspection you learn

that they awarded grants in Dallas and Chicago. You conclude that, despite their national guidelines, your Los Angeles request is unlikely to succeed. Use award lists to help you decide if a grant is right for your situation.

Need more *Grant-tastic* tips? Purchase your copy today. Use the form on page 3 or go to www.kedconsult.com.

Grant-tastic!



121 Expert Tips
on Writing and Winning Grants
for Your Nonprofit

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* **grant-tastic** n. (grant tas'tik), a grant you submit and win



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