

Give Smart: Philanthropy that Gets Results

Thomas J. Tierney, Joel L. Fleishman
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GIVE \$MART

PHILANTHROPY
THAT GETS RESULTS

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Thomas J. Tierney, Joel L. Fleishman : Give Smart: Philanthropy that Gets Results before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Give Smart: Philanthropy that Gets Results:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. The right one, especially if you plan to donate large amountsBy Marty NemkoSo much how-to advice is common sense, and yes, much of that in Give Smart is no exception. But I've read three books on the topic, most recently the unfortunate Giving 2.0, which is pretty puerile, and I find Give Smart to be the best of the bunch. Yes, it tells you the obvious: align your values with your donations, have open and honest communication with grantees, and so on, but because the book is borne of considerable experience and cites example

after example, there's enough nuance spread through the book to justify the time to read, at least sections of it. For example, grantors should not impose undue reporting requirements on the grantee. Sure, you want to know you're getting value received for your largesse but so often, accountability beyond a modest amount, hurts the organization and its efforts more than it assures you're getting bang for the buck. The book stresses that you need to restrain excessive desire for micromanaging--you're not the program director, you are the funder and perhaps occasional advisor. The book urges that you put the time in, up front to find the right organization, and then try to keep your involvement modest. You need evaluate not just compatibility of the organization's mission with your values but, just as a venture capitalist might, carefully evaluate the quality of its leadership, its track record of results, and the sense that you'll trust the competence and integrity of their leaders, and yes, enjoy working with them: Donors have the right to derive some pleasure not only from the outcome of their donation but from the process, their involvement with the grantees.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Demand excellence of yourself
By Eileen Ellsworth
On average, philanthropy is ... well ... average. The current state of philanthropy is that it overhypes and underperforms. Market forces do not come into play, and the power imbalance between donors who have money and nonprofits who seek it can have a chilling effect on real time and useful feedback. Give Smart looks at what it takes to utterly transform this. Outstanding donors demand excellence of themselves and do not settle for mediocre results. They develop true and open partnerships with grantees and are not afraid of failure. They are clear about their values and beliefs and realistic about what they hope to accomplish. They have gone through the process of thoughtfully defining success and have a plan to achieve it. Most tellingly, donors who "give smart" continuously ask "Am I getting better?" and consciously learn to improve over time. Give Smart is a breadth of fresh air, challenging all philanthropists to rethink what they do and how they do it in order to get results.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Mostly for BIG donors
By Sapphire
The book gives good advice but much of it applies mostly to mega-donors; those who need a family office or will employ staff to administer their charitable funds.

In the first half of the twenty-first century, giving to family and community foundations alone will be ten times in today's dollars what it was throughout the entire twentieth century. Yet despite tremendous innovation in the social sector, philanthropy's natural state is under-performance. Not since Andrew Carnegie wrote *The Gospel of Wealth* has a book been written that provides practical guidance for donors to get the most impact from their giving. Almost a decade ago, Thomas J. Tierney left Bain Company to co-found The Bridgespan Group, a nonprofit focused on helping donors and nonprofit leaders to develop and execute strategies to accelerate social change. In *Give Smart*, Tierney pools his hands-on knowledge with philanthropy expert Joel L. Fleishman to create a much-needed primer for philanthropists and the nonprofit organizations they support. Drawing from personal experiences, testimonials, and Bridgespan's case studies, including those of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, *Give Smart* picks up where Jim Collins' *Good to Great* and the Social Sectors left off and presents the first in-depth, expert guide for engaged donors and nonprofit leaders.

Jim Collins
"Give Smart is a great gift to the world. By asking questions—the right questions—Tierney and Fleishman guide, advise, challenge, and, as with all great teachers, push us to find our own best answers. If you want your philanthropy to be useful—changing lives, solving intractable problems, making society work better—then engage deeply with this book!"
Melinda Gates
"One of the most exciting and important parts of my job as a philanthropist is learning. Over the years, Bill and I have learned so much from the authors of this book, and we are thrilled to see that wisdom collected in *Give Smart* so that everybody can benefit from it the way we have."