

July 21, 2011

A reply to someone with the right answer to the wrong problem

The cognitive policy workshop has fallen on hard times, for reasons explained in the e-mail sent to me, asking why their “crowd funding” is not working.

So, here is the URL for this fella and his web site;

<http://www.cognitivepolicyworks.com/blog/2011/07/13/the-future-of-cpw/>

Here is the text of what he said, and below it what I replied.

The Future of CPW

Throughout the last three years, this company has held the space for deep conversations about the role of cognitive science for politics, global issues, and the transition to a new economic paradigm. [Read the full story of Cognitive Policy Works here] We have continued the vital work of George Lakoff and the Rockridge Institute by extending into the realm of implementation and partnering with collaborators around the world.

And now, three years into this experiment, we stand at a crossroad. The days of working as a consulting team serving organizational clients have come and gone. The economy has stripped most non-profits and government agencies of the discretionary funds to invest in innovative new ideas with a long-range view. We have shifted modes and continued supporting our mission through crowdfunding campaigns that go directly to our community of fans to keep the ball rolling. But this has not produced a viable revenue stream to enable me to dedicate myself full-time to this work.

So it is necessary that we consider other options. It has become increasingly clear that the spirit of Cognitive Policy Works is in our relationship with you — the organizational strategists and community activists who hunger for systemic change in the culture of politics. Acknowledging how our fates are intertwined, I'd like to open up a discussion about the future of our partnership.

What would you like to see Cognitive Policy Works become? What needs does it serve for you now? How might it better serve these and other needs in the days ahead? I remain steadfastly committed to you and want to share better days as our relationship deepens.

One path I am considering is a return to academia in order to pursue a Ph.D. focusing on the application of cognitive science to global change. This grows out of my desire to shape the institutions of the 21st Century by helping create new research centers and academic programs that integrate psychology, neuroscience, linguistics, and anthropology — applying them to climate change, urban planning, economic development, and technology adoption.

If I go down this path, the nature of Cognitive Policy Works would have to adjust to my new role as a scholar and educator. If I don't go down this path, our future together becomes less certain.

You are my collaborators now, faithful readers. What shall we do together in the next few years?

Go here to discuss...

In solidarity,

Joe Brewer
Founder and Director
Cognitive Policy Works

Hello Joe;

The reason you are not getting anywhere with fundraising is that time has passed you by.

It would have been great to have had somebody explaining how the process of convincing people of something actually works back during the Reagan years. Or Mulroney times here in Canada. That is, if the "reasonable" types were prepared to even listen.

There are not so many "reasonable" types around any more. You have a generation now that is starting to figure out that the people trying to turn the USA and the world into a neo fascist tyranny are not going to be "rationally persuaded". They are not going to be out "debated". They are going to have to be defeated in the streets.

There is no need to win the public over to the need for that. the public is won over, everywhere. They just do not know what to do about it yet. But they seem to be figuring it out.

People now know that refuting the neofascist propaganda is not about making rational arguments or trying to "win" debates. They know you will never win a debate with someone who makes up his own facts.

People now understand frames and concepts. They can apply this knowledge. What they have to develop is new frames and concepts to give to people. You seem unable to help with that. You are still stuck with the idea that the democratic party or the "civil society" groups have anything to offer, are not part of the oppressive mechanism.

If I have some money to donate to something, it will be to some entity which is working to overthrow neo-fascism in the street. But also, working to get the super-leftie professional revolutionaries out of the way. What people are looking for is to create a real democracy, or in the jargon of an intellectual movement you seem to miss; "deep democracy".

How do people build on what they already know to be able to conceptualize what a real democracy would look like, how it would work, how to get there? That is the real question now.

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