



Raise Your Voice: A Cause Manifesto

Brian Sooy

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"Finally, a great marketing book for charitable organizations. Brian Sooy brings clarity and structure to the challenge of branding a cause." — Marty Neumeier — author, *The Brand Gap* .

Every day, meaningful causes are trying to rise above the noise and be heard. Is your nonprofit or philanthropy one of them? *Raise Your Voice* is an exploration of mission-driven design and the touch points that are meaningful to your audience. It explores a framework for understanding how your cause is represented by your organization's unique personality and distinctive voice.

This book will change the way you think about branding your cause.

The resolutions of the Cause Manifesto are timeless principles that align how an organization communicates its values through its purpose, character, culture, and unique voice. These twelve strategic, inspirational, relational, and aspirational principles will transform your culture and empower you to communicate more powerfully and effectively.

The principles of mission-driven design, and the resolutions of the Cause Manifesto, are a call to be courageous as you inspire your audience and connect them with your mission.

This book is for anyone who supports and believes in a meaningful cause. It's full of insights for executive directors, communication officers, grant and program managers, development directors and fundraising professionals. Share it with your board members, grantees, and volunteers. Encourage the organizations that you support and believe in to apply the principles, and make them part of its culture.

More praise for *Raise Your Voice*

"Now more than ever, effectiveness in the marketplace depends on our ability to rise above the noise and cut through the clutter. Brian Sooy provides a practical, design-driven approach for sharing your message with clarity and passion." — Todd Henry, author of *Die Empty: Unleash Your Best Work Every Day* , and *The Accidental Creative: How to Be Brilliant at a Moment's Notice*.

Raise Your Voice: A Cause Manifesto Details

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From Reader Review Raise Your Voice: A Cause Manifesto for online ebook

John E. Smith says

I am very excited about Brian Sooy's new and extremely valuable book "Raise Your Voice": A Cause Manifesto". I have worked in the non-profit arena most of my life and Brian's points make perfect sense to me ... he knows of what he speaks.

This book should serve as a clear call to action for the non-profit community, because it is full of powerful observations about how people think and behave.

"We're informed by what speaks to our minds and thoughts; we're inspired by what appeal to our hearts."

Brian is speaking to both my brain and my heart here ... we need to know the reasons why, but we also need to feel the needs. Both cognitive and emotional motivation is important and Brian does a great job of explaining why this is so and how we can make it happen.

Brian does not write like the usual leadership guru ... thank goodness. Brian recognizes the need to speak to both our minds and our hearts, both internally and to those we serve. Some things have to "make sense", while others are felt in our hearts with no proof needed.

Heart and mind are both essential for the organization to survive and thrive, but too often we focus on one or the other. Nurture both the rational and the emotional ... and you will succeed.

"You must be certain they (your audience) understands who you are, what you do, why you matter, and what difference you make."

This speaks to the need for congruence and clarity of purpose in our actions and our communications. I have seen what happens when you either depend on others innately recognizing the value of your good cause and of trying too hard to be a "business" without the soul.

Brian also talks about designing your organizational communications in comprehensive and thoughtful ways that move way past the usual corporate mumbo-jumbo. He uses the same terms we have seen elsewhere: Purpose, Mission and Values, Goals and Outcomes, and Strategy, but in a very focused way.

This book is all about getting your act together by using solid design principles and effective communication strategies to craft a shared vision.

Why is this important? Well, in Brian's words: "Your organization communicates with your audience through every verbal, visual, printed, and experiential touch point, where you intend to or not."

In this highly competitive world, we cannot afford to fail in our communications.

Obviously, I am sold on Brian's book and will be applying what I am learning specifically and immediately in several venues ... but don't take my word for it that this is one valuable book. Read a sample chapter or take the plunge and dive into the entire book ... you will be glad you did.

Bonus thought: While directed at non-profits, most of the valuable stuff applies quite nicely to the for-profit world as well.

Enjoying a book that reminds me of how things can and should be ...

John

Chantal Bechervaise says

I have worked in the non-profit sector and know first hand how hard it is to be 'heard' among so many other organizations competing for donors, volunteers, etc. Brian's new book: Raise Your Voice will help you clarify your message. It will teach you how to share your stories with others...the stories that will compel others to share your message as well. It is a great marketing book for charities and I would even recommend it for all other types of organizations. The principles in this book are timeless.

Jane says

When I read the title of Brian Sooy's book Raise Your Voice a Cause Manifesto I went scrambling for the dictionary. What would an author imply by use of the word Manifesto in the title? Manifesto

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recognizes a platform, a proclamation, an announcement, or in deeper meaning, a statement of belief. Manifesto originally indicated "proven public declaration explaining past actions and announcing the motive for those still forthcoming. (Source thesaurus.com) For this book, there are a number of non-profit organizations who understand the importance of declaring their unvarnished intent with absolute clarity and unmitigated purpose.

I can't remember the last time I found 150 pages containing this much immediately applicable content. From the outset, Brian Sooy dispels the myth that your non-profit is a brand. He tells us "Your organization is not a brand. It is the voice of your cause. Your organization is a group of committed volunteers, professionals, and ambassadors who want to achieve significant impact". Is it any wonder that the title of this book is Raise Your Voice?

Using the familiar quadrant illustration we are able to understand the realm of competing factors in our quest for funding. While the author describes appeal to audiences in greater detail, the underlying factors are broadly categorized as Emotional: Inspired by compassion – heart OR Rational: Informed by facts – mind.

The infographic created for this book is an excellent synopsis of the book. I won't replicate it here, but please find the link to it at the end of this review. These are my takeaways from what I found inspiring and motivating in Raise Your Voice – A Cause Manifesto by Brian Sooy.

Strategic Principles: If a cause is meaningful, it will be worth believing in.

A communication plan is essential. It's one bridge between the strategic plan and its execution. Then the

author includes a structure to start building one.

Inspirational Principles: Create compelling narratives to tell your story using visual and verbal language.

Perceptions vary. Stakeholders and prospective stakeholders want to be familiar with the causes and organizations they support. Help your audience understand your organization's character, purpose, mission, and culture.

Relational Principles: Non-profits seek funding. That's how they continue to exist. It's important to nurture genuine relationships of gratitude and trust through authenticity and transparency.

Acknowledge every donation, being authentically grateful. Being grateful matters. Every communication is a donor communication and being grateful must be the tone at every touch point.

Aspirational Principles: Leadership of non-profits demands confidence and inspiration. The staff and supporters of non-profits believe courageous leaders who continue to change the world.

Be positive. Be powerful. Be courageous. Your non-profit cannot thrive without these three perspectives interacting and threading through your culture.

Do these words describe your organization? Dynamic, Encouraging, Optimistic, Visionary, Focused Aren't those qualities you would want in an organization you support?

Brian Sooy wraps up his handbook for Raising Your Voice with some powerful thoughts. "It's not about brand, it's about identity and perceptions." Let this be your motto: We will believe our cause is meaningful, and act in the belief that it has the power to change the world.

This post has the infographic I mentioned earlier. John E. Smith consistently writes noteworthy posts about current issues that make a difference.

I was given a copy of this book.

Dennis Fischman says

When it comes to communications, a nonprofit should act less like a business and more like the voice of a cause. That's the message Brian Sooy wants to bring us in *Raise Your Voice: A Cause Manifesto*. He is tired of watching nonprofit organizations design their logos, their websites, and their social media around some artificial idea of a brand.

As a nonprofit board member as well as a design professional, he advises: start with your mission instead. Not your "mission statement," but the purpose for which you exist.

In Part I of this slim book, Sooy gives advice on how to reach clarity about your mission. In Part II, he spells out twelve principles related to the purpose, character, and culture of your organization and the tone of voice in which you speak to your supporters. Taken together, these twelve principles guide you toward a more meaningful relationship among your Board, Executive Director and donors based on the cause in which you all believe.

“This is not a how-to book,” Sooy says, and he is certainly right. It’s a philosophy, distilled. If you are working at a nonprofit, read it to take a step back from the everyday business of your organization and remember why you work there in the first place.

You may dip back into it from time to time for inspiration. What you probably won't do is read it cover to cover. The book is written in a very general way. Even when Sooy tells stories, the details are vague so the stories themselves fade from memory. I predict this book will be more often quoted than read.

Deborah says

This is a must read book for anyone - not just non-profits. Brian's clarity makes the points stand out. This is not a how-to-book, thank goodness! It's a book that makes you stop and think - something we don't do enough. Please read it and apply this to your organization - regardless of your industry and sector. We so often confuse our organization with our cause and mission - it's not, it's how we achieve those. So read this, share it, and apply it.
