

Solution: Self-help is not limited to just individual interventions. A unique business-to-business model emphasizing “giving” is outlined in a novel story that centers on a reapplication of both the definition of and customs surrounding Halloween. (500 words)
Other definitions: KindExcellence, Trick-or-Treat

Reut Schwartz-Hebron, President of San Diego-based KindExcellence Institute writes:

It is the season for giving. That is good for business and in more ways than most think. We are in the midst of the giving holiday season and it's Halloween of all holidays, oddly enough, that lit the light bulb about strategic giving in my mind.

The first year we went trick-or-treating was in Berkeley, California in 2003, four years after my family and I had arrived in the United States from Israel. My husband was a doctorate student at UC Berkeley at the time so we lived at the UC village housing--lots of families and lots of kids dressed up, which attracted even more Trick-or-Treaters from around town.

As it were by the time we got out of the house all the main street houses were out of candy (they had a sign on the door saying: "sorry out of candy") and the houses in the more peripheral areas of the married student housing village were loaded.

A Contemplative Application of a Definition: Partly because it was all new to us and also because we enjoy playing around with preconceived definitions, we thought it would be nice to take the candy we got from the "rich" and redistribute it to the ones who had run out.

The initial surprise to our knock on the Main Street doors was quickly replaced with a new dynamic--it became first about the giving and the game and only secondarily about the candy and the custom. By taking candy from those that still had it and giving it to those homes that had run out of candy everyone could continue to give it out, at least until it was all eventually gone.

This ability to "redistribute wealth" through giving has taught me a lot about the choices we make during an economic downturn and about giving in teams. I have learned that when you take a leadership role as a facilitator of wealth you get richer faster.

At the KindExcellence Institute we are proud of the fact that we cooperate generously with our biggest competitors. Instead of playing by the rules we bring them in and offer them the best deals possible. Joint efforts are always valuable--in times of hardship they can be vital.

We share everything we possibly can with our team, giving each other referrals and clients. Everyone has access to everything as the Institute's interests are made to align completely with their interests. "Redistribution of wealth" means everyone wins and the game is lively and on--each to himself means less action and work for everyone. Where other organizations would perceive the existence of competition and risk we see an opportunity for growth.

I wonder if you can see how this approach is completely aligned with the very heart of KindExcellence...

As a manager, choosing to be in a position of a "facilitator of wealth" has the same effect on success (provided it's done in an open organizational culture). It turns the energy in a team to energy of movement and you get a team that is eager to give and take.

Don't let definitions or precedent stand in your way. Take the position of facilitator in the "distribution of wealth" game with your team or your strategic partners.

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