



Not-for-Profit Unleashes the Power to Fund and Support More Programs

The Client: Cylvia Hayes is the Founder and Executive Director of 3E Strategies, a public service and consulting firm with a mission of accelerating the transition to sustainable building, energy and economic practices. The organization has been in business for eight years. Two years ago, they began offering consulting services, as Cylvia says, "due to popular demand."



The Situation: Cylvia was frustrated with the constant struggle to maintain significant funding reserves. This led to constant limitations to fulfill their mission. Cylvia recognized that the consulting arm of 3E Strategies had the potential to fund the not-for-profit side. She needed to begin thinking differently about how she approached consulting for that potential to become reality.

The Process: Cylvia had met Lisa Nirell on several occasions around Central Oregon. She decided to join one of her *EnergizeMarketing* Action Groups in an effort to further develop the consulting side of her organization. "We've always been a pretty entrepreneurial non-profit," says Cylvia, but adds that she was not as savvy as she could have been when it came to things like pricing services and her marketing message.

"Lisa helped me realize that I was still working within an industrial age paradigm - exchanging hours for dollars. Our main value is our knowledge base," says Cylvia. While working with Lisa and her *EnergizeMarketing* Action Group, Cylvia began to see more clearly how to leverage the knowledge that she and 3E Strategies held - not just into more consulting work, but into the kind of consulting work that her company was ideally suited to do.

Cylvia admits to being skeptical when she first joined her *EnergizeMarketing* Action Group, and was even skeptical after her first session. But, she says, "By the second session I knew I was onto something good." Cylvia committed herself fully to the process, read the supporting materials, and met with her group members between the sessions facilitated by Lisa. Cylvia appreciated the quality and high level of commitment of the other people in her group and the excellent feedback they offered. "There is diversity in the work we do, which is valuable. If we were all non-profit, mission-driven folks it probably wouldn't be as productive."

"I would recommend an EnergizeMarketing Action Group for anyone not completely clear on the services they provide or to the structure they will use to insure they are adequately compensated."

- Cylvia Hayes

The Results: Cylvia initially struggled with concisely describing the benefits of her company's consulting services. Her struggle paid off. "I'm much clearer now about the kind of consulting work we will and won't do, and how to talk about that," says Cylvia. She also came to view the not-for-profit side of her company in a more business-like way.

Cylvia says she's approaching her business with greater focus as a result of working with Lisa and the *EnergizeMarketing* Action Group. "This will get us the projects we want and help us avoid getting into projects that we can't deliver on, or are more trouble than they're worth."

"We have a goal that by the end of 2008, all of our organization's expenses will be paid for by our consulting services. Grants and contributions will go directly to programs," says Cylvia.

"In eight years we'd never had three months of funding in place. Faith had been my business plan. Now we're positioned to scale. It's exciting for me to think about the impact we'll have with a stronger financial base."

- Cylvia Hayes

What it's like to be in an *EnergizeMarketing* Action Group: "It focused me to work *on* my business more than *in* my business. That's easy to think about but difficult to do when you're as busy as we are. It's a group of committed, sharp people who help you flesh out materials and work through things and give you feedback. It's well worth the time and money invested."