



## **Funding Failure, Funding Progress**

By Richard Avanzino

When asking for funding, many non-profits focus on how great the need is and how terrible the problems are. Solicitations are riddled with horror stories and filled with pleas for help. Often, the more problems an organization identifies and fails to solve, the bigger the request for financial aid. And in the case of animal welfare grants, the money isn't necessarily to save more lives, but to get a bail out from operational woes. Where does this approach come from?

There has always been a huge difference in our perception of the for-profit and non-profit worlds.

We tend to view the for-profit world as cold and calculating. Salaries are attractive, money is king and all that really matters is the bottom line.

We tend to view the non-profit world as warm and fuzzy. Salaries are comparatively low, and there really is no bottom line. Non-profits are in the business of applying hard work and noble efforts to social causes. Charities aren't expected to succeed--they're in the business of doing good works, not generating results.

If a company fails, it hangs out a Going-Out-Of-Business sign and disappears. If a charity fails to make progress towards its mission, it says things are getting worse and uses that as a reason to ask for more funds.

Until recently, there's been little incentive to change--the model has worked.

But today, there is a growing movement to apply some of the principles used by for-profit businesses to the not-for-profit world.

Concepts like accountability and measurable results are being seriously discussed and promoted by a growing number of foundations, including Maddie's Fund.

Maddie's Fund has chosen to restrict its funding to organizations that are making a difference in their communities. It doesn't matter if they're big or small, five or fifty years old. We are looking for a track record of accomplishment. We want proof that organizations know how to solve problems, know how to establish goals, and can implement effective strategies to reach their objectives. Have they increased adoptions

every year? Expanded spay/neuter programs? Come up with creative fundraising or publicity campaigns? These are some of the benchmarks we look for, because those organizations that do get Maddie's money will be held accountable for reaching goals. In order to get continued funding, they will be required to monitor their progress and meet the objectives of their business plan.

Why is Maddie's Fund so hard-nosed? Our mission is to revolutionize the status and well-being of companion animals. We are not willing to spend our resources to maintain the status quo. The organizations we want to invest in are those that not only have the desire, but have demonstrated the ability to change the world.