

A R L E N E G O L D B A R D  
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## ***Power Dynamics in Philanthropy Worksheet***

This worksheet is for your use in understanding and crafting possible responses to a situation in which power dynamics complicate or distort the flow of collegiality and productivity. We will pick a situation, then build a multidimensional description of it—along with possible responses—extracting the fullest possible information from it as the basis for a transparent, inclusive resolution.

### **Five Steps**

(1) **What is the situation?** Are two or more parties in conflict? Describe the issue even-handedly from the perspective of each, without spinning or favoring any position. What is primary for each, and what does each see as secondary or irrelevant? What does each want?

(2) **List any and all observations you can make about the issue, going above and beyond whatever has been said by the parties directly involved.** Imagine yourself as a visitor from another planet: how does the issue look to your newbie eyes? What feelings does it evoke in your body? What emotions are prompted? What ideas are sparked? Does it resemble any other type of situation you've encountered? What might the people involved be missing due to their blind spots or biases? Include everything you can think of, even if some of your observations are directly contradictory. Can you see a way to reframe or redefine the situation so it's less polarized?

(3) **Now, how does the situation look through the lens of your own values and commitments?** Did you have a kneejerk response? How did that feel? Do you tend to favor a particular way of seeing such situations? Is there anything you might be missing because it conflicts with one of your own pet theories or core beliefs?

(4) **List all possible resolutions to the situation, whether you like them or not.** Consider the implications of each: how each might affect those directly involved, how each might be perceived by other community members, how each feels to you when you try it on for size.

(5) **Finally, spend some time devising creative ways to share all of this information with the people affected, seeking a transparent, inclusive way to surface and resolve the situation.** How can you help ensure that issues are explored to the fullest in the fairest possible way? Can you create a Playback or Forum Theatre around it? An online dialogue? A spoken-word slam? How can the issue become an opportunity for everyone to learn more, understand each other better, and create the best possible response?