

The Seven Faces of Philanthropy:
How to Recognize and How to Relate with

by Larry L. Van Oort, CFP

The definition of the term "complicated" is "a lot of parts, which are disorganized." As a result, it is difficult to remember those parts. The definition of the term "complex" is "a lot of parts, which are organized." As a result, one can remember them. Regarding my relationships with philanthropists, my understanding of them collectively and individually has always been "complicated." I have been continually confused as to why one often times exhibited values and motivations different from another when each gave to charity. As a result of reading The Seven Faces of Philanthropy, I now realize the subject is "complex," not "complicated."

The authors, Prince & File, have organized philanthropists into seven personalities. The organizing process they use is segmentation. They say it best on Page 7: " The objective of segmentation, . . . , is to group donors who are similar in the way they give." Their seven segments are clearly labeled in their Table of Contents:

Communitarians (26%): Doing Good Makes Sense
The Devout (21%): Doing Good is God's Will
The Investor (15%): Doing Good Is Good Business
The Socialite (11%): Doing Good Is Fun
The Altruist (9%): Doing Good Feels Right
The Repayer (10%): Doing Good in Return
The Dynast (8%): Doing Good Is a Family Tradition

What is the value in the authors' making the complicated complex? See Page 7 again: The motivational segmentation process "calls for identifying the major benefits that people look for . . . , and the kinds of people who look for each benefit." If one understands the motivations of the people one is trying to relate with, clearly the odds are much more favorable that the desired relationship has a better chance to emerge. That is value of the highest order.

What motivates which philanthropists? What follows from Page 139 are the essential motivations, or philanthropic personalities, of each segment. After careful study of the chart below, the complications of working with philanthropists should disappear. An understanding of their complexities should emerge.

Philanthropic
PersonalityPositive Images

RePAYERS	Pay back Grateful Effectiveness Opportunity	Supporting each other Made a difference in my life Socially responsible Doing good
Communitarians	Responsibility Service Fund raising Leadership Doing good Effectiveness	Supporting each other Serving the community Civic responsibility Accountability Socially responsible Good for the community
Socialites	Special event Leadership Doing good Fellowship	Serving the community Charity functions Fund raising Supporting each other
Altruists	Self-fulfillment Sense of purpose Doing good	Socially Responsible Self-actualization
Devout	God Duty Service Opportunity Good works	Mission Doing good Supporting each other Sense of purpose
Investors	Results Performance Fiduciary Professional Accountability Doing good	Efficiency Effectiveness Well-managed Leadership Opportunity
Dynasts	Family tradition Responsibility Doing good	Supporting each other Family history Socially responsible

Should it turn out that charitable giving is important to my next clients, I will ask them to prioritize this listing as part of my guided discovery interview. The more quickly I understand their philanthropic motivation, the more valuable I can be.