

Dan Pallotta

The Way We Think About Charity Is Dead Wrong: TED2013, California (March 1st, 2013)

https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_pallotta_the_way_we_think_about_charity_is_dead_wrong



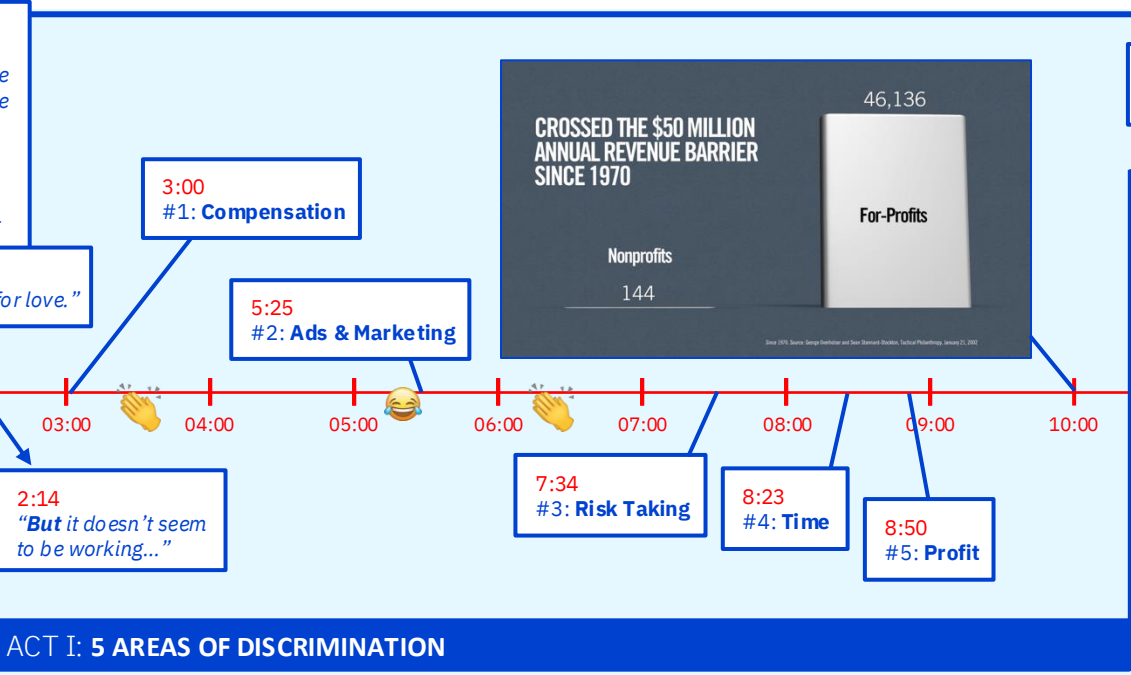
Personality Type (MBTI)
ENFJ

COLD OPEN – (0:00-0:34) 34 seconds
“I want to talk about social innovation and social entrepreneurship. I happen to have triplets. They’re little. They’re five years old. Sometimes I tell people I have triplets. They say, “Really? How many?” Here’s a picture of the kids -- that’s Sage, and Annalisa and Rider. Now, I also happen to be gay. Being gay and fathering triplets is by far the most socially innovative, socially entrepreneurial thing I have ever done.”

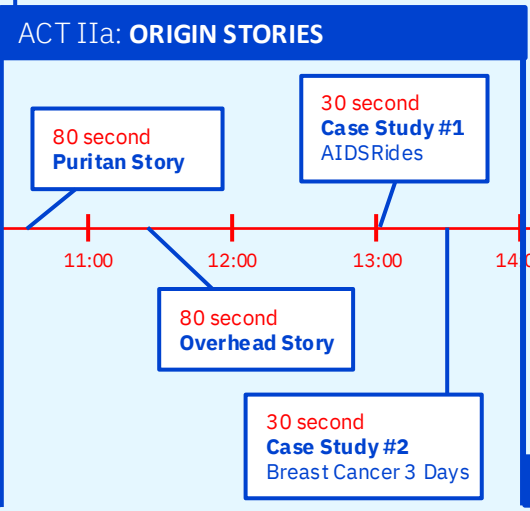
1:54
“Philanthropy is the market for love.”

INTRODUCTION

TELL THEM... – (0:34-1:02) 28 seconds
“The real social innovation I want to talk about involves charity. I want to talk about how the things we’ve been taught to think about giving and about charity and about the nonprofit sector, are actually undermining the causes we love, and our profound yearning to change the world.”



10:16
“So why do we think this way?”



ACT IIb: THE FALL

14:37
“Here’s how all of this impacts the big picture...”

ACT III: POTENTIAL FOR REAL CHANGE

16:45
“Our generation does not want its epitaph to read, ‘We kept charity overhead low’. We want it to read that we changed the world... by changing the way we think about these things.”

17:05
“So the next time you’re looking at a charity, don’t ask about the rate of their overhead. Ask about the scale of their dreams.”

Time: 18:30

Words: 2,953

Speaking: 160 (Words per Minute)

Readability Score (GFI) 12.74

Optimism Index 70.00 Optimism Index Assistant

Problem	Society’s mindset about charity is broken. He argues that we penalise nonprofits for spending on growth, talent, and marketing - things we celebrate in business - and that this double standard keeps charities small and prevents real social change. “We say we want to change the world — but our beliefs about charity make it impossible.”
UVP	Pallotta turns a moral belief upside down. He challenges the sacred idea that “charity should be frugal.” Instead, he argues that nonprofits should be allowed to think big, spend boldly, and even take risks - just like businesses do. Reframes “overhead,” “profit,” and “marketing” (words usually seen as bad in charity) as essential tools for solving big problems.
Surprise	“You can make \$50 million selling violent video games to kids and be celebrated - but if you make \$500,000 trying to cure kids of malaria, you’re seen as a parasite” and “From 1970 to 2009, only 144 nonprofits grew past \$50 million in revenue — compared with 46,136 for-profits.” It is our beliefs - not our lack of generosity — which is holding change back.
Urgency	Our current mindset is actively preventing progress on poverty, cancer, and homelessness. He creates urgency by showing the scale mismatch: “These social problems are massive in scale and our organizations are tiny up against them.” It’s not fear-driven urgency — it’s moral urgency with hope: change your thinking now so real change can finally happen.
“But”	B 25X (:44 secs) “But it doesn’t seem to be working. Why have our breast cancer charities not come close to finding a cure for breast cancer, or our homeless charities not come close to ending homelessness in any major city?”
Credibility	He speaks from firsthand experience — as the creator of the AIDS Rides and Breast Cancer 3-Day walks, which raised over \$500 million for charity. Then he lost everything when sponsors pulled out because of public outrage over “high overhead.” That personal rise-and-fall gives him moral authority — he’s lived the very hypocrisy he’s exposing.

