

# Case Study: Building a Movement from Scratch

---

How Save The CBC Mobilized  
100,000 people in months



**Harvey McKinnon**

# What we are doing today

- General campaigning principles
- The two types of campaigns
- How we choose a strategy
- Case studies
- Key Tips and learnings
- Questions/ discussion

# What is your campaign all about?

---

- Raising money
- Building lists
- Changing a policy
- Boycotting
- Changing attitudes



# Your campaign purpose dictates your strategy

---



# Two basic kinds of campaigns

---

- An election campaign
- Everything else



# How we choose our election battles

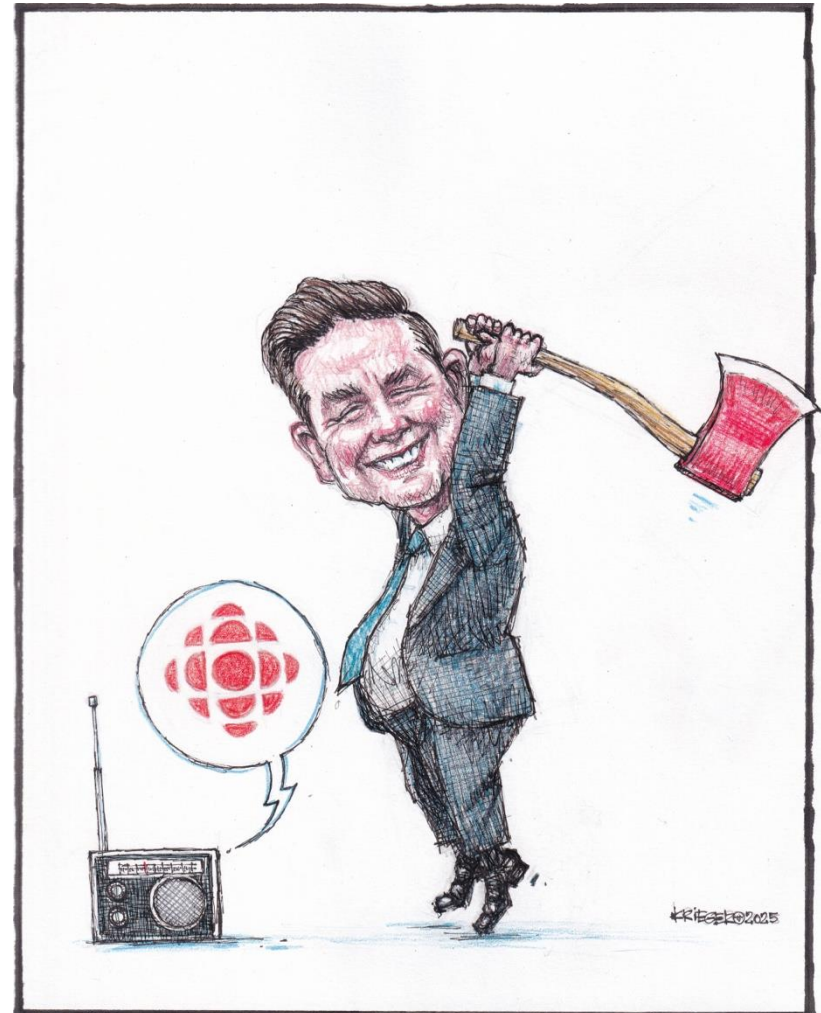
---

1. Find an emotional wedge issue
2. Focus on where you can gain/change votes



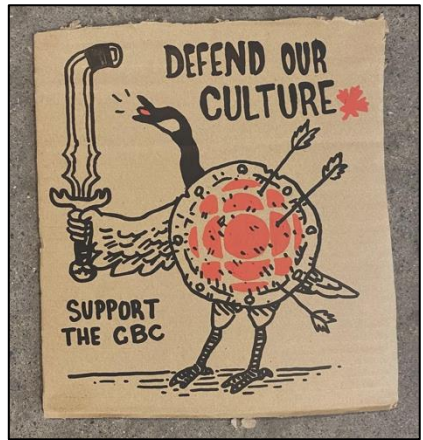
# Why did we choose Save the CBC?

- ✓ Wedge issue
- ✓ Survey research
- ✓ Nostalgia/emotional
- ✓ Align with values
- ✓ Loss aversion
- ✓ There's a bad guy



# Priorities for assessing your readiness

- Strategic experience
- Access to Survey research
- Copywriting
- Video skills
- Social media expertise
- Motivated volunteers
- Money



# Your priorities include:

---

- Avoid jargon.
- Avoid getting distracted by side issues.
- Make it easy to share. Make it urgent.
- Define the outcome before choosing tactics
  - Electoral goals can include strategic voting or forcing public commitments
  - Non electoral goals can include policy changes, corporate decisions, and visible public pressure



# Campaign 1

---

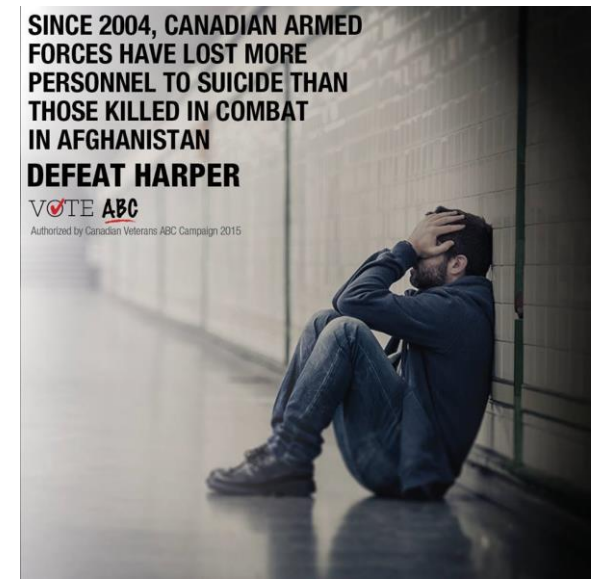
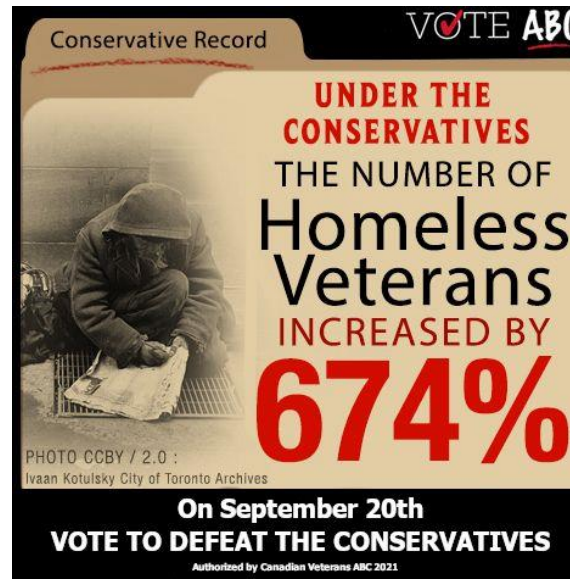
**Anyone But Conservative (ABC) Canadian Veterans**

Launched in the 2015 Federal campaign



# Anyone But Conservative (ABC) Canadian Veterans

## Mememes



# Anyone But Conservative (ABC) Canadian Veterans



# Campaign 2

---

**Stop the Grizzly Killing**  
2016 and 2020 provincial campaign



**the trophy hunt**

[www.facebook.com/StoptheGrizzlyKilling](http://www.facebook.com/StoptheGrizzlyKilling)

# Stop the Grizzly Killing



# Campaign 3

---

**Save The CBC**

2025 federal election advocacy





Who will tell Canada's stories  
if the CBC disappears?



<https://www.facebook.com/SaveTheCBC2025>



<https://bsky.app/profile/savethecbc.bsky.social>



<https://www.instagram.com/save.thecbc/>



<https://www.reddit.com/r/SaveTheCBC/>



# Save The CBC 2025 Federal election

r/SaveTheCBC • 8 mo. ago Join

From CBC stages to global screens, Eric McCormack never forgot where it started. Before *Will & Grace* made him a household name, before *Perception* and *Broadway* acclaim - Eric McCormack was a young Canadian actor finding his feet at the CBC.




is the CBC.

**ERIC MCCORMACK**  
SAVE THE CBC - A CITIZEN'S CAMPAIGN

0:3

r/SaveTheCBC • 7 mo. ago Join

Meet Jah'Mila — a Juno-nominated reggae artist who found a home and a voice in Nova Scotia. As a Jamaican-Canadian artist, she says the CBC has been essential in helping her share her music, her roots, and her truth with Canadians coast to coast.




Hey folks, my name is Jah'Mila

**JAH'MILA**

0:02 / 1:30

r/SaveTheCBC • 8 mo. ago Join

\*\*Icon alert! Two of Canada's most celebrated literary giants—Ann-Marie MacDonald and Margaret Atwood—have teamed up to speak out in defence of the CBC.



We should expand the CBC.

**MARGARET ATWOOD**  
**ANN-MARIE MACDONALD**  
SAVE THE CBC - A CITIZEN'S CAMPAIGN

0:49 / 1:03

# Save The CBC

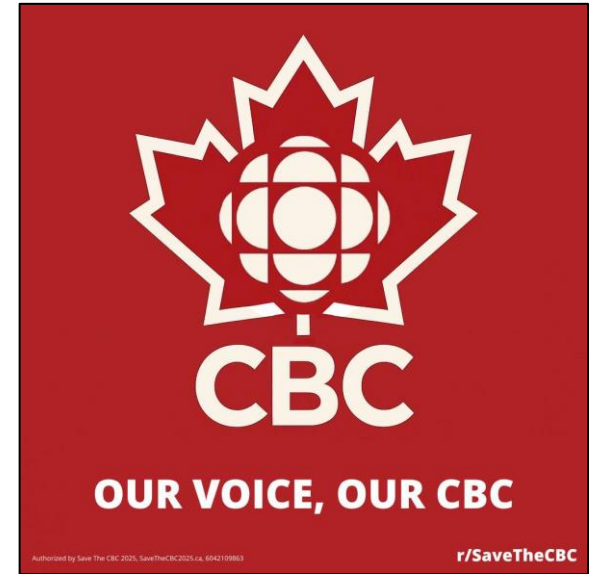
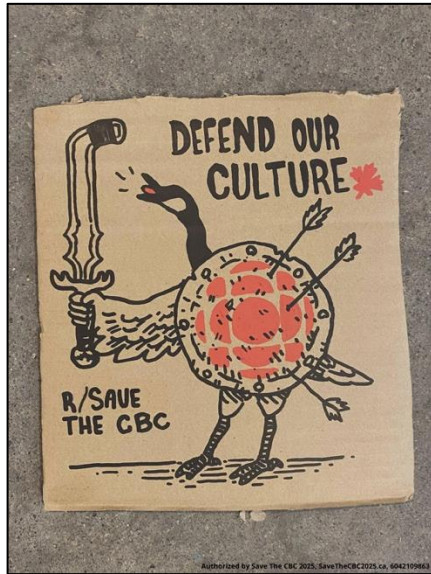
2025 federal campaign- Localize when possible

r/SaveTheCBC • 8 mo. ago


Big cheers to the volunteers who waved the flag for the CBC on Vancouver's Lions Gate Bridge this week! 🇨🇦 🗳️ They were out there bright and early during rush hour — getting smiles, honks, and a few grumbles — all to remind folks that a strong CBC means a strong Canada.



# Reddit organic posts that became paid ads











# Buying ads

←  r/SaveTheCBC · 2 mo. ago  
savethecbc2025

## Is it time to kick Postmedia out of Canada?

**Beware: Biased trade war coverage from American owned news media!**


**Postmedia ownership:**


-  NATIONAL POST
-  OTTAWA CITIZEN
-  CALGARY HERALD
-  TORONTO SUN
-  EDMONTON JOURNAL
-  THE VANCOUVER SUN
-  The Gazette
-  The Province

**Thanks to the Harper Conservatives in 2007,** much of our media in Canada is now owned by USA companies.

**Canadians take note:** when you are reading these publications, you are reading the perspective of American billionaires, NOT your fellow Canadians.

**We need to strengthen Canadian Media, now more than ever!**

→ 

↑ 2.8K ↓ 269 3 Share  Approved 2 days ago

127K views [See More Insights](#)

Total spend: \$1,300

Impressions: 521,588

Clicks: 7,084

CPC: \$0.18

CTR: 1.358%

\$2.51 per 1,000 impressions

# Save The CBC

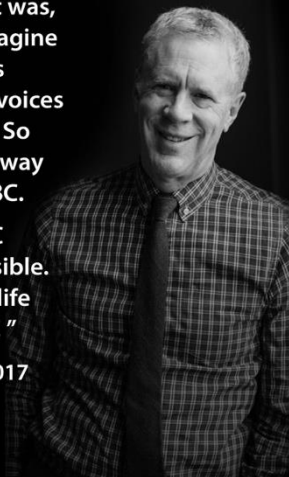
## 2025 Federal election campaign

Stuart McLean 1948–2017

"The dreamers believed it was, after all, impossible to imagine a viable country if citizens could not hear their own voices and tell their own stories. So the dreamers imagined a way ...and they called it the CBC.

Make no mistake, the CBC made Stuart McLean possible. And he spent most of his life keeping Canada possible! "

— The Tyee, February 16, 2017



Keep Canada possible  Vote to save the CBC

When you watch the news  
Consider the source



Whose side are you on?  
[www.SaveTheCBC2025.ca](http://www.SaveTheCBC2025.ca)

r/Squamish • 9 mo. ago Join  
Squamish: we need to band up to protect our public broadcaster during these troubling times for our country. Join r/SaveTheCBC.



WHO SPENT MORE TAXPAYER MONEY  
IN THE LAST ~ 2 YEARS?



Source: All publicly disclosed spending from <https://www.ourcommons.ca/en>

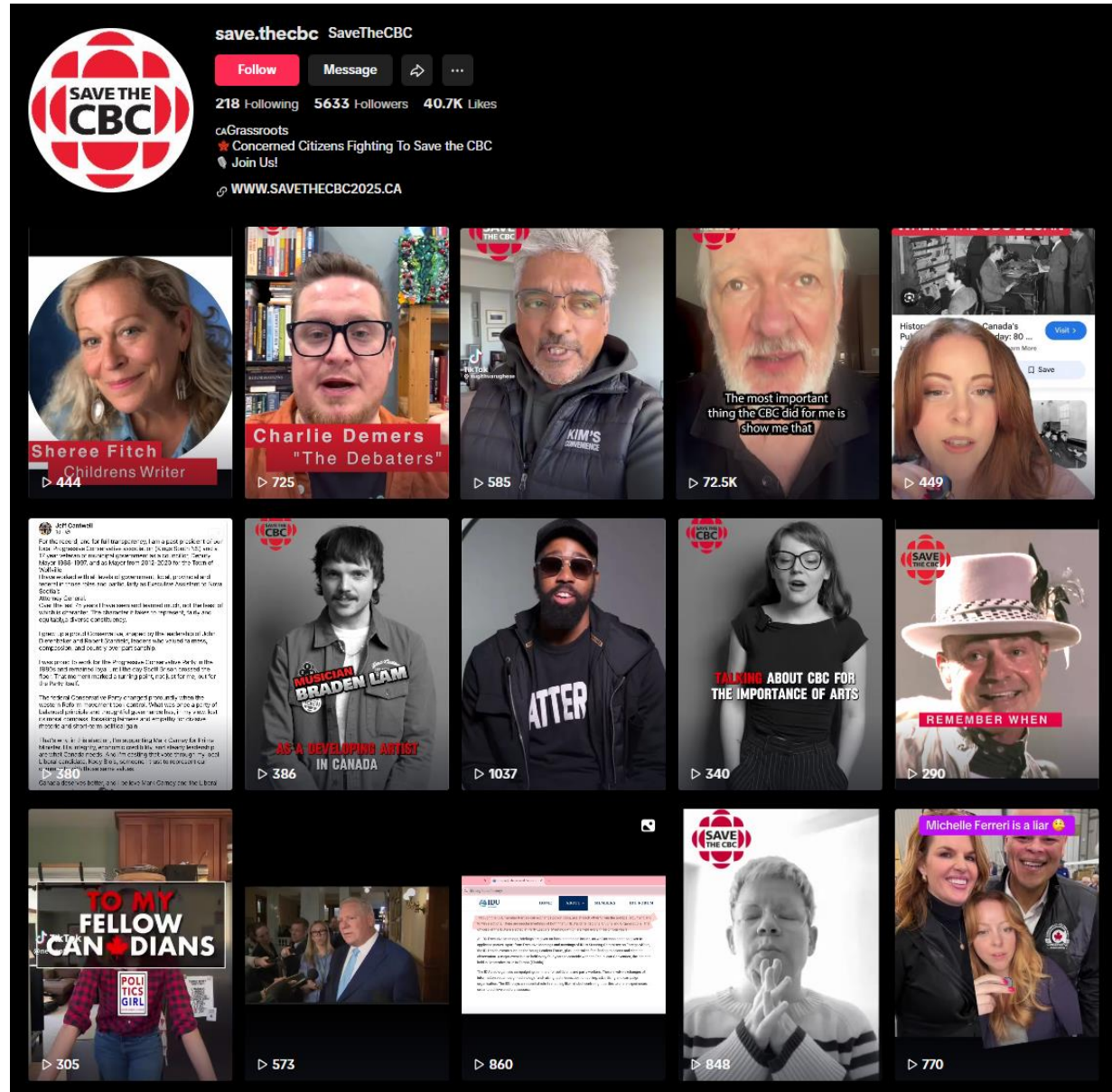
**MARY WALSH**  
You don't know what you got till it's gone.

Save the CBC - A CITIZEN'S CAMPAIGN

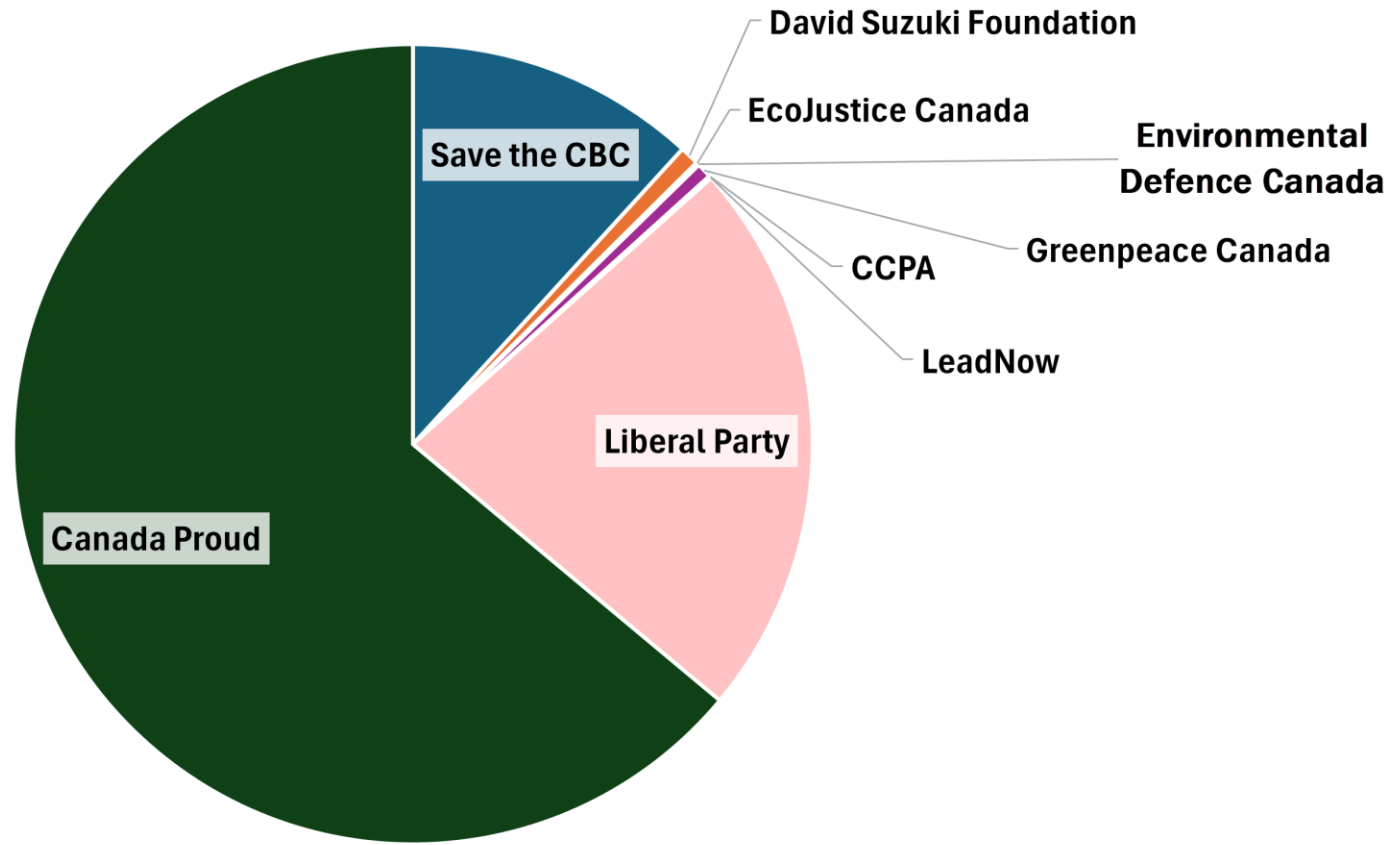
Mary Walsh reminds us: without the CBC, Canadians lose a shared thread that connects us from coast to coast... See more



- TikTok proved to be a good **organic engagement** channel
- Important to have a good network of **collaborators and influencers** on board to gain traction
- Influencer impact projected to surpass print media in 2026.



# Save the CBC Facebook reach compared to others



Total Interactions - Dec. 23 - Jan. 26

# Recent Save the CBC Results

Despite our campaign being over for a year, during a recent 28 day period we saw:



Facebook	
<b>Views</b>	10.1 M
<b>Viewers</b>	3.3 M
<b>Interactions</b>	203,000

Reddit	
<b>Subreddit Views</b>	1.05 M
<b>Comments</b>	3,283
<b>Crosspost views</b> (our posts in other subs)	929,014

# 15 Key Tips & Learnings

1. Know what your CTA is
2. Make everything easy
3. Make all communications emotional
4. Organic cross-posting on both Facebook and Reddit was key to reach
5. Using a content scheduler to post across multiple channels at once a “must”



# 15 Key Tips & Learnings

6. Your page should be welcoming and troll-free

- Facebook’s moderating tools can be a significant help.
- You can set up a list of words/phrases that cause a comment to be auto-hidden



7. Can restrict where people view from

- We noticed 75% of negative comments coming from Alberta, so blocked Alberta
- Blocked to anyone outside Canada



# 15 Key Tips & Learnings

## 8. If using AI – review carefully

- Reddit users seemed more conscious and opposed to AI content than Facebook users



## 9. That said – creating an AI persona was hugely helpful for content and responses

- Fed campaign info, details, tone, persona characteristics, etc.
- Incredibly helpful but be careful not to over-use and lose authenticity. Use carefully and be monitor audience response.

# 15 Key Tips & Learnings

10. Make it **about your audience** not your organization
11. Focus on shared **values**
12. **Storytelling** is key
13. Don't just preach to the **choir**
14. **Test** messages
15. **Cooperate** with allies & share what worked and what didn't



# Thank you!

Free webinar recording

Use QR code and sign up to ECDA to access

A colorful graphic for a webinar. It features a yellow vertical bar on the left with the word 'WEBINAR' in black. The main title 'How to use words and language to win campaigns and raise more money' is in white on a red background. Below the title is the ECDA logo. A green box contains 'SIGN UP' in white, with a yellow arrow pointing up below it. On the right is a black and white portrait of Harvey McKinnon, with his name written below. The bottom left corner shows the date and time: 'Wednesday 4 March 15:00 CET' on a green background.

**WEBINAR**

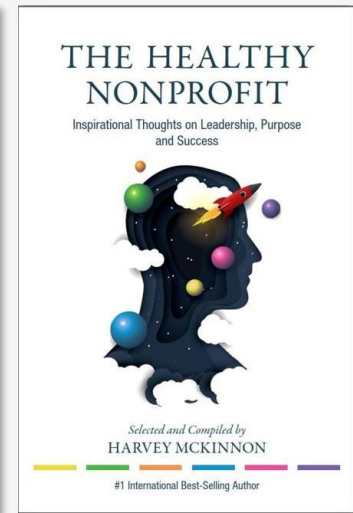
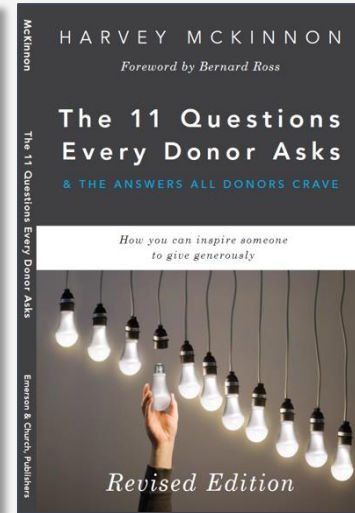
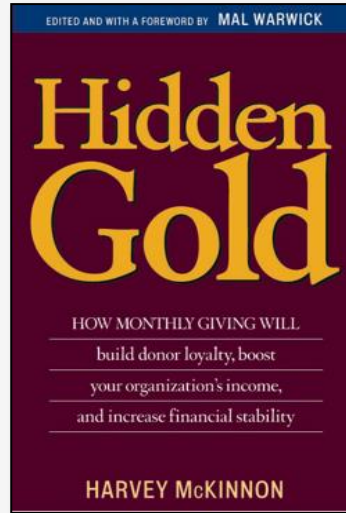
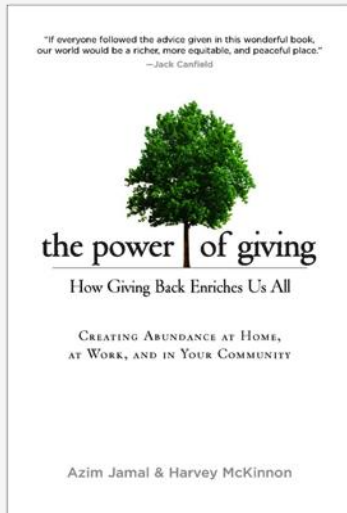
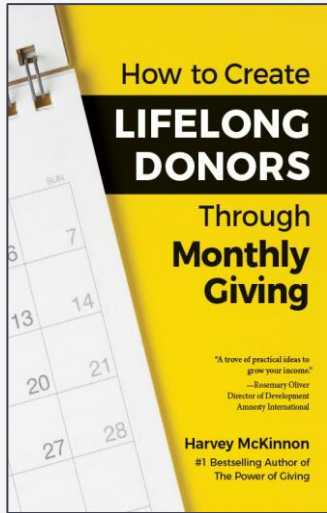
**How to use words and language to win campaigns and raise more money**

**ECDA**

**SIGN UP**

**Harvey McKinnon**

**Wednesday  
4 March  
15:00 CET**



[www.harveymckinnon.com](http://www.harveymckinnon.com)



[info@harveymckinnon.com](mailto:info@harveymckinnon.com)



Harvey McKinnon