



GRANTEES TAKE OFF THE GLOVES

When given a chance to comment on their funders anonymously, grantees often write about their program officers. Some 14 percent of the tens of thousands of comments on Center for Effective Philanthropy grantee surveys mention foundation staff. Comments about foundation staff are also longer than comments about other issues.

Although grantees are usually quite positive about their program officers, they also point out their assigned staff's shortcomings. "At times it does not seem as though [our] program officer understands nonprofit organizations, issues, and processes," writes one frustrated survey respondent. "Some decisions seem to be made on misinformation with no desire to clarify or confirm true information or outcomes."

Grantees' most common complaints about program officers, in order of frequency, are:

- Too little contact with them
- Unclear and inconsistent communications from them
- Negative interactions with them
- Too little understanding of the grantees' program, organization, goals, and community from them

—*K.B., P.B., & E.B.*

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