
150 Profiles: Markus Stadelmann-Elder

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As we mark the 150th anniversary of confederation, The Philanthropist is profiling Canadians from across the non-profit sector and putting a face to 150 individuals who work or volunteer in Canada's social sector.



Name: Markus Stadelmann-Elder

Current role in the sector: Communications Director, Maytree

Years working and/or volunteering in the non-profit sector: 15

Can you describe a defining moment?

There have been many moments that I could describe as defining. Although I wouldn't have identified these as such in the moment, they define my work and are the reason why I continue to work in the sector. At the beginning of my career, I had an opportunity to work with an athlete with a disability to achieve her dream of participating in international competitions. I could connect her with the media, have her story told and promote her fundraising campaign. This is when I understood that my words can make change happen.

Describe your desk/workspace.

I'm lucky – I have a large office with a round table where I can meet with people. This is where the magic happens – where we argue about issues and come up with solutions. My desk starts out clean and becomes messier as the week progresses. Paper accumulates as I'm working on my projects. Every Friday I go through the pile to recycle what's been taken care of, and to arrange the rest neatly so I'm ready to start again on Monday. This works for me.

What are you reading or following that has expanded your understanding of the non-profit sector?

I usually have a communications book and a leadership book on the go. I also read literature to relax and feel inspired. To stay up to date, I follow websites and social media accounts of my peers and organizations that do good work. One recent book that has influenced how I do my work is *The One Thing: The Surprisingly Simple Truth Behind Extraordinary Results* by Gary Keller. While not written specifically for non-profit leaders, it is a good reminder of the need to focus on what matters most and of the dangers of multitasking and diluting your focus.

What matters to you that you think our sector needs to be thinking about?

Maytree was the guest editor for a series in *The Philanthropist* on [Poverty and Human Rights in Canada](#).

One of my favourite articles in the series, and the one that touched me most, was [Michael Creek's very personal story](#). We had long discussions with the publishers at *The Philanthropist* on how to edit Michael's story. It was quite different from *The Philanthropist's* usual approach and tone. In the end, we agreed that any kind of editing would take away from the power of his voice. As an editor, this was challenging (as I'm eager to use my red pen). As a reader, this meant I could experience his story in the way it was meant to be heard.

Do you know someone we should profile as part of this series? Email us at philanthropistprofiles@gmail.com