

4D - 231127

- THIS EMAIL CHAIN HAS BEEN PUT IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

From: WRowan <[REDACTED]>

Date: Friday, November 17, 2023 at 5:55 AM

To: Adrian Haro <[REDACTED]>, [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER]

Subject: Follow up to yesterday's meeting

Adrian,

Our routine Thursday catch-up yesterday turned unproductively fractious and exposed a risk to this project I thought had abated. Our commitment to risk management means it has to be documented even though the trigger was a minor issue.

1) The minor issue

Briefly:

- I have set up experimental meetings of the managers of each of our publicly-funded launches (Long Beach/[REDACTED]/[REDACTED]). The idea is to extend an idea [REDACTED - LAUNCH TEAM MEMBER] and I adopted early in Long Beach: candid "*how are we coping, what feedback do we have for each other*" sessions outside formal program routines as an outlet for the inevitable personal pressures of the mission.
- Our wider group might - I hope - likewise benefit from a space to admit mistakes, share vulnerability, and occasionally vent with peers at the coalface of this demanding operation. Each of their launches requires satisfying a complex array of stakeholders.
- You texted [REDACTED - LAUNCH TEAM MEMBER] asking him to include you in the invite. He advised you he would rather you did not attend. Sessions like this are inevitably constrained by people outside the core group, however well-meaning or silent they may be.
- At the end of my agenda for yesterday's meeting, I said I also thought it was better we try to form a culture of unedited openness for people leading our playbook launches without spectators. My commitment to that is that if the group endures, I am planning to exit so that they could use the session to collectively "hold my feet to the fire".
- You expressed shock and hurt. You felt as funder, TWL was entitled to attend and said it would help with TWL's learning. You conceded [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER] or [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER] could attend instead of you.

I remain committed to TWL's learning from our work together. I relay key news - good or bad - from each launch in our Thursday sessions. Each of the main launches has a monthly project review/oversight meeting to which TWL is invited. If you wanted to dive deeper, sitting in on weekly

progress check-ins with each of the three will reveal far more about prospects, challenges, tactics, and processes than a group session intended to be about individuals' feelings.

And I want to point out the capricious nature of TWL's desire to learn. If I had been asked about a Chicago launch before it was decided, for example, I would have advised ensuring key criteria were met. It is obviously welcome that TWL is helping [REDACTED] fund their next stage, but if I had been consulted beforehand, I might have pointed out the [REDACTED] has \$[REDACTED]m coming and already has skin-in-our-game. Seeding the launch [REDACTED] want in [REDACTED] would likely deliver more impact for TWL dollars. And so on. There remains a list of actions my experience suggests TWL could gainfully undertake to significantly boost this program, you have been uninterested in that learning.

2) The wider issue

Twice yesterday you said you "might have to look at the cash" if TWL was not invited to the launch managers' get-together. You have previously threatened to arbitrarily cut our funding on a whim several times. It is enormously destabilizing of a program that is more fragile than I think you realise.

I have no desire to revisit events in my complaint to TWL. I had just assumed a lesson had been learned and this kind of behavior was history. My worry is that with TWL's cash position improved, you feel empowered to revert to periodic attacks which we are poorly equipped to manage. Yesterday it became clear how little insight or contrition you have about profoundly unprofessional behavior before March 2023.

Yesterday I, again, suggested you not do anything that adds further uncertainty, costs, or work to this operation. You implied you were unconcerned about any "threats" and had nothing to worry about.

I reminded you there was robust evidence of your earlier destructive behavior. Your claim that this has been adequately investigated and your implication you were exonerated is unfounded. The expensive "investigation" by what you referred to as "our legal team" was fundamentally flawed: blatantly one-sided, ignoring evidence, threatening the complainant, and concealing its findings. That's not opinion, it's in the emails.

Your conviction this is acceptable sets TWL apart from other non-profits. Post Weinstein, they have adopted high standards of accountability and transparency in these matters. You may be unconcerned about this disparity and that may be a prevailing sentiment within TWL. I would not assume it's a universal view.

You said I should "tell anyone you want about what happened". (For the record I have only told two people in America about the complaint and its aftermath: [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].) I can only repeat: your obvious belief that normal workplace conventions and organizational guardrails don't apply to you - and that anyone receiving philanthropic funding via TWL should accept the CEO's periodic abuse and distortions - could yet be deeply damaging to TWL. That includes people and organizations in TWL's orbit.

Again, your statements have put me in a difficult position. I am unwilling to let MM4A become an organization that defies its funders' instructions. But I am aware how challenging this project is and how much we are asking of poorly-resourced people at the coalface. I genuinely believe a culture of disciplined working backed by discrete peer support could be key; and that we should be given space to try fostering that culture in our own way.

So, can we stay focused on what unites us: a desire to make this ambitious project deliver for America's low-wage workers? And can we agree meetings like yesterday's are a drain on that goal. You and I have utterly different worldviews, ideas about organizational culture, and workstyles. That can be managed amicably; but we need to avoid flashpoints.

I am concerned that I am outnumbered at these meetings and don't have time to document issues. I have had no reason to doubt [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER]'s integrity; but he is both a TWL manager and, I think, a longstanding friend of yours? To keep our interactions on the rails going forward; unless you advise it is unacceptable, **I will assume I have the permission of TWL to record our regular weekly meetings**. You may well want to do the same. Hopefully this will push us towards more measured, structured, and productive dialogue.

Wingham

From: Adrian Haro <[REDACTED]>
Date: Friday, November 17, 2023 at 9:13 AM
To: WRowan <[REDACTED]>
Cc: [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER]
Subject: Re: Follow up to yesterday's meeting
Wingham,

While I appreciate your request, you do not have our permission to record meetings with The Workers Lab as we do not record meetings with any vendors to the organization.

As I reflected on our conversation yesterday, I couldn't help but wonder if it would be better for [REDACTED - LAUNCH TEAM MEMBER] and [REDACTED - LAUNCH TEAM MEMBER] to become contractors of MM4A. It seems based on the working dynamic / culture you have established with them, that formalizing that relationship with MM4A might be a better way to move forward. I'd like to explore this option further.

Unless I missed it in your note below, I don't see an answer about attendance by TWL at the astronauts meeting for the sole purpose of learning. I can appreciate that my presence might change the dynamic, but think it would be valuable for our learning end-to-end if someone like [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER] or even [REDACTED] could join.

Thank you, Wingham.

-Adrian

From: WRowan <[REDACTED]>
Date: Friday, November 17, 2023 at 9:50 AM
To: Adrian Haro <[REDACTED]>
Cc: [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER]
Subject: Re: Follow up to yesterday's meeting

Adrian,

Noted on the recording suggestion.

There is no value in [REDACTED - LAUNCH TEAM MEMBER]/[REDACTED - LAUNCH TEAM MEMBER] invoicing MM4A, we are a foreign organization. We offer support to *anyone* involved in our demanding projects who welcomes our learning, advice, or ideas. And part of the routine with [REDACTED - LAUNCH TEAM MEMBER] is about keeping me on my toes, which would be difficult in any quasi-employment relationship.

You have already committed in writing to [REDACTED - LAUNCH TEAM MEMBER]/[REDACTED - LAUNCH TEAM MEMBER] that they can invoice TWL. I am horrified that you would even think of upending that commitment, adding to their uncertainty and overall project disruption, for no reason I can see.

I will talk to [REDACTED - LAUNCH TEAM MEMBER] about the “astronauts” meeting. I think we will have to repurpose or cancel the idea based on your position, but I will come back to you.

I really want to deescalate any tension that might be building between us. We are on the same side in an incredibly demanding but important challenge. You know what I feel I need to function effectively, how can we work productively as a team so that everyone’s productivity is maximized? As an olive branch, here’s a suggestion: do you want a couple of hours of my input setting up Chicago (either in terms of the tech. or aligning demand)?

W.

From: WRowan <[REDACTED]>
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2023 at 7:55 AM
To: Adrian Haro <[REDACTED]>
Cc: [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER]
Subject: Re: Follow up to yesterday's meeting

Adrian,

You've won.

We have scrapped the planned weekly support/development meetings for teams working on our structured launches.(The "Astronauts" sessions.) Instead, we will have a bi-weekly factual update on toolkit resources and tech development that anyone can attend. You will appreciate that given your track record of inventing, then weaponizing, weaknesses in a grantee ("Your messaging is crap",

"Everyone in philanthropy told me to avoid you") I can't encourage launch staff to be open about real weaknesses in a forum attended by you or your nominee.

You have been invited to the central resources meetings. We will resuscitate the Astronauts support group after TWL funding ends.

This is just one more risk-point for our program. I don't have time to think through the ramifications. But **last week's meeting has put your behavior back at the top of my risk log.** Over the last 8 months, I had assumed we had a tacit understanding: you regretted your destabilizing actions in the past and, while not willing to clear the air about it, recognized this project had taken a knock and needed to be quietly helped back to solidity.

It's clear I was wrong. You believe you've done nothing wrong, that as CEO of our dominant funder you can intervene in our affairs at will, and our instincts matter little. **At the heart of this new phase is your reiteration that you see us as "vendors" to TWL (below). This is inconsistent. If we are just vendors, why can't we organize activities as we see fit?** Do you tell TWL's accountants which of their meetings you must attend?

We stumbled into this issue last Thursday. There's no ambiguity from this end. We have always wanted an enabling partnership with TWL, recognizing the value of our tight subject matter expertise within a broader organization that looks to study us, constructively challenge any gaps in the thinking, and underpin our trajectory. But with an ongoing TWL propensity to micromanage, we will settle for being traditional vendors; we supply as much expertise, project management, and tech. as TWL will pay for but as contractors with our own independence.

Now we know you have no concerns about your behavior or handling of the resulting complaint, we can still meet and present amicably. But we should avoid stumbling into flashpoints like last Thursday's. The issue is of course differences in culture and operations between us. Specifically, I think we now have four differentiators which we need to skirt round, or at least acknowledge before either side takes a stand:

Trust: Our software developers regularly meet without me, who oversees their work. I welcome it. They need space for professional development and agreeing their agenda for the system, which sometimes conflicts with mine. But the pride in their work it fosters, the safety valve for their frustrations, and their collaborative approach to challenges is a boon to us all. Because they are trusted, they take responsibility. You appear to regard this sort of forum as an affront.

Commitment: **The casualness with which you announced you might renege on TWL's commitment to [REDACTED - LAUNCH TEAM MEMBER] and [REDACTED - LAUNCH TEAM MEMBER] shocked me.** We just don't operate that way.

Checks-and-Balances: Your possible renegeing on promises to the [REDACTED] team seems to have been prompted by the fact that [REDACTED - LAUNCH TEAM MEMBER] and I hold monthly assessments of each other's work. We are both suppliers to this program and committed to its success. We both welcome a forum where feedback is given and thoughtfully received. For me, I want it to give early warning of any blindspots on my part.

You appear to think it means [REDACTED - LAUNCH TEAM MEMBER]' professionalism towards another organization could be in doubt which makes no sense at this end.

Auditability: Recording our meetings would stop disputed accounts of the conversation afterwards. It should reduce misunderstandings and foster constructive discourse. Call center operators have every utterance at work taped for all these reasons. Given the history on this project, at this end we would immediately welcome anything that increases accountability on all sides and have nothing to fear. You seem instinctively opposed.

It remains a mystery to me why you have chosen to periodically undermine and compete with your grantees like this. Or why you have been so uninterested in many things we wanted to communicate. You would have so much to gain - even at this stage - from studying, supporting, and trusting us.

But we are where we are. As long as we can avoid discussing charged issues like the above, we may still be able to deliver this thing.

Wingham

From: Adrian Haro <[REDACTED]>
Date: Monday, November 27, 2023 at 5:30 PM
To: WRowan <[REDACTED]>,[REDACTED - TWL STAFFER]
Cc: [REDACTED - TWL STAFFER]
Subject: Re: Follow up to yesterday's meeting

[REDACTED - TWL STAFFER] will attend these for The Workers Lab. Please add him to the calendar invite. Thank you, Wingham.