

# OUR VIEW: Inspiring story of wasted money

Steve McClure, for the editorial board

Posted on: Thursday, June 04, 2009

You're in big trouble if you have to bring in an outside consultant in order to find inspiration within your organization.

If you're spending more than \$112,000 for that consultant during the middle of the most significant budget crisis in your institution's history, inspiration might be the least of your concerns. Instead, it might be time to give yourself a pinch and reconnect yourself with the realities faced by the work-a-day people who keep the place running.

Administrators at the University of Idaho need to do just that after reports this week that consultant Magaly Rodriguez was brought in at a cost of \$12,500 a month to serve as the UI's "Chief Inspiration Officer."

Rodriguez ran employees through workshops as part of the restructuring process. Deans and administrators say it was worth every dime to have Rodriguez lead discussions on feelings and resolving personal conflicts.

That's easy to say when it's not your dime and your future is fairly secure.

Many of the people who went through the workshops, however, had a slightly different take.

All indicated Rodriguez was a nice person, but most said the sessions were not overly effective and, basically, a waste of money.

Given the jobs and cuts that are on the table, it's hard to disagree.

Rodriguez says she helps by building "global peacemaking communities," and even went so far in her biography as to claim to have coined the term "peacemaking."

She may as well have come up with the phrase "kerfuffleupigus" for all the value it would have in maintaining the people and programs students rely on to obtain and education.

It's no mystery that every penny counts right now, and the public records obtained by the Daily News indicate that someone needs to do a better job of counting some of those pennies.