

First Steps in Leading Change

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Opening Prayer

God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
Taking, as He did, this sinful world
as it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right
if I surrender to His Will;
That I may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with Him
Forever in the next.
Amen.

--Reinhold Niebuhr



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Presentation overview



Where is this change coming from? Authority vs. collaborative leadership



Part I - Discerning a shared vision of the change



Part II - Building a team to lead change



Part III - Sustaining a sense of urgency



Potential next steps

Where is this change coming from? Authority or Collaborative Leadership

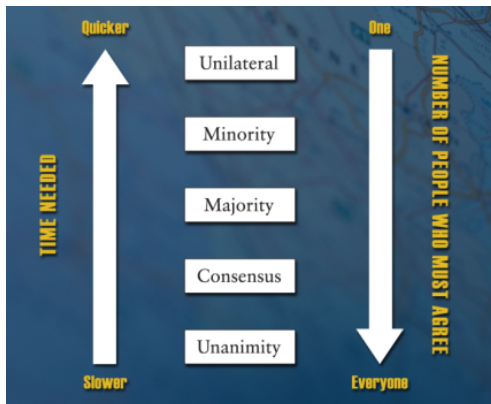
Change based on authority

- Faster, with unilateral decisions being fastest of all
- Clearer process
- Emphasizes roles & canonical responsibilities

But there is a critical difference between exercising one's authority and leadership, especially when it comes to leading communities of faith...



Where is this change coming from? Authority or Collaborative Leadership



Leading change in a community of faith

- Requires ongoing, prayerful discernment of a shared vision
- Slower, with emphasis placed on building consensus
- Unclear process - a lot of three steps forward, two steps back

What else?

Discussion

- When is it appropriate to make a unilateral change?
- Can you think of a time when a clergy person might have the canonical authority to make a unilateral change, when it would nevertheless be best to work toward consensus?



First steps in leading change



“Sifting” for a hopeful vision



“Sifting” for a hopeful vision

Vision = A hopeful picture of future that describes what things will be like when the change has been accomplished

“Vision plays a key role in producing useful change by helping to **direct, align, and inspire actions** on the part of large numbers of people. Without an appropriate vision, a transformation effort dissolves into a list of confusing, incompatible, and time-consuming projects that go in the wrong direction or nowhere at all.”

- Leading Change, John Kotter



“Sifting” for a hopeful vision

A strong vision of change is...

- Imaginable
- Hopeful and desirable
- Feasible
- Focused
- Flexible
- Communicable

- Leading Change, John Kotter

29%



Discussion

- Can you think of a congregational example of a ‘vision of change’ rooted in negativity (versus hope)?
- What would make your “vision for change” more hopeful?
- Does this vision for change pass the “strong vision” test?

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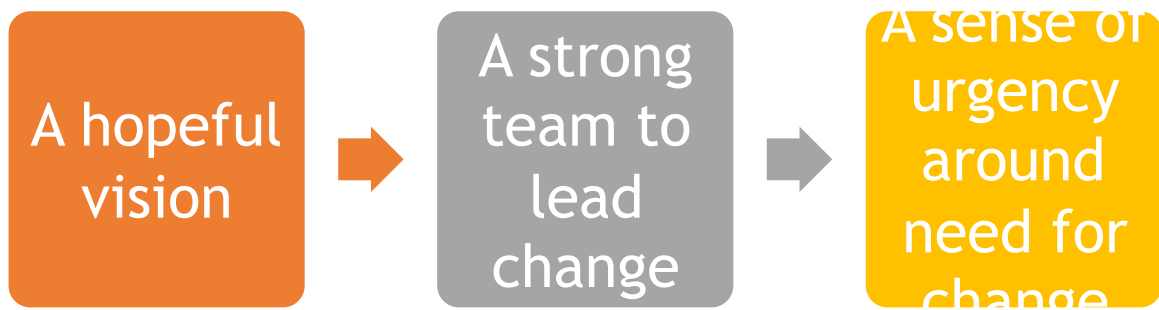
- Leading Change, John Kotter

Example of a vision of change



- St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Cleveland, OH

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A strong team to lead change

Stakeholder category	Broad effort to grow annual operating budget	Change in location of coffee hour - Part of broader effort to be more hospitable
Those ultimately responsible for decisions	Vestry (including clergy) + stewardship committee	Vestry (including clergy)
Those who implement/prevent implementation	Members of stewardship committee, staff, volunteers	Staff, volunteers
Those who will be directly affected by the outcome	All members of congregation, esp those with significant ability to contribute more	Members of the congregation, newcomers, visitors
Those who have information and expertise	Fundraising experts in the congregation	Leader from another congregation that has worked on hospitality

Stakeholder category #2 – Those who can prevent implementation

Part of a broader effort to be more hospitable to visitors

Changing the location of coffee hour from the dank basement to the back of the sanctuary

New rector got approval from vestry, announced the change to the congregation (and why), and had relied on outside expertise for this great idea

But a key stakeholder hadn't been included in the conversation...



Stakeholder analysis



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Sustaining urgency around change

Rule #1 - Don't underestimate power of inertia

- The absence of a visible crisis
- A rich, successful, and storied past
- Too many visible symbols that all is fine
- A lack of honest feedback around performance of staff, volunteers
- Too many messages from leaders indicating that everything is okay

- Adapted from *Leading Change*
by John Kotter



What are sources of inertia in
your congregation?

Sustaining urgency around change

- Stop saying that everything is okay, become much more honest about problems
- Talk about the missed opportunities that result from not changing
- Allow a crisis to loom large (or stop hiding the one already taking place)
- Set high performance standards with leadership teams, staff, volunteers
- Evaluate whether symbols are conveying everything is fine
- Question feasibility of returning to Golden Age
- Bring in an outside consultant to lead frank conversations about systemic problems



- Adapted from *Leading Change*
by John Kotter

Sustaining urgency vs. non-anxious presence?

- Many of us have learned that leadership has to do with being a non-anxious presence (Friedman), but here we're talking about ideas sustaining a sense of urgency over time. Can we sustain urgency while also being 'non-anxious'?
- What was a recent 'missed opportunity' that resulted from lack of change?
- Of the items listed on the prior page, what would be the easiest to do? Hardest?



Potential next steps

- **Don't go solo on this unless you absolutely need to.** Bring in the wider community.
- Listen for elements of a shared vision about what the church/world would look like if this change was accomplished.
- Craft a formal vision of what the church/world would look like once this change has taken place.
- Communicate the need for change on a regular basis.
- Make a list of stakeholders and engage each group.
- Build a working group whose purpose is to carry out this change in specific ways.
- Identify those sources of inertia that have kept this issue from being addressed before.
- Start building urgency around the need for change.



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