



October 2007

Development Directions

A free resource for pastors, principals, development directors, volunteers and anyone engaged in the ministry of Catholic development.

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"SHIFTS IN THINKING"

By Frank Donaldson, President

There is a passage from *Boy's Life* by Robert McCammon that I often use in ISPD workshops and also in working with clients. Actually, it is the opening chapter of the novel in which the author talks about change and creativity and being able to remember the "wildness" of our youth when we were alive and free and saw the world through the eyes of a dreamer. It is a wonderful piece that challenges us to realize that maybe, just maybe, we need to do things differently, and that the greatest challenges we face are mediocrity and always approaching situations the same way time after time after time.

There is another passage that I have always liked: ***The answers and the solutions that you used to get you where you are today will not be the same answers and solutions that will get you where you want to be tomorrow.***

In our workshops and consulting work, we often find that some Catholic institutions have been doing the same things over and over and still expect the results to be different. For example, I was visiting with a Catholic high school a little over a year ago. They had asked me to come in and give a talk to their Board on what "customer service" meant in a Catholic high school. While waiting for the business of the meeting to be completed, I sat there rather stunned when the chair of the Board stated that they were planning to increase the dollar goal of the Annual Fund by 20% the next year. Now, here it was in March; the goal was already \$150,000 for that year, and they had generated a little over \$90,000 and were not expecting more than another \$35,000 to come in to the school. So, if the Annual Fund ended up reaching \$125,000 in that year (\$25,000 short), what in the world was going to make it increase by \$50,000 the next year? (The \$25,000 shortfall that year and the \$25,000 increase the next year) When I asked this question at the Board meeting and there was no answer, I knew right then that my question was not something they wanted

to entertain. The bottom line was: We need more money. How it would be gotten? No clue.

Now, are there ways to increase an Annual Fund and grow it over a period of years? Definitely. However, the "people base" must increase for that to happen, and the retention of donors needs to be high. Many Catholic institutions need to invest the time and the effort to engage people in a meaningful manner. That is the main shift we encourage all to make.

I call it "shifts in thinking" because that usually is what it takes for a Catholic institution to go through positive change. The climate must be right; the leadership must be educated and receptive; and, there must be a positive plan of action to make something happen.

Here are five "shifts" that I encourage you to think about and questions I invite you to answer:

1. **Lead buffalo of the herd or a gaggle of geese who share responsibility?**
 - Are your development efforts moving forward with a T-E-A-M effort or with "boss management" as the norm?
 - Are the people making the decisions inviting input from those working in the area of development?
 - Do the leaders of your Catholic institution really understand development and are they willing to *develop* for the future by inviting, involving and engaging people?
 - Are changes in development goals researched or just *knee-jerk* reactions to deficient budgets?
 - Are you spending at least 25% of your development time building relationships with people? (alums, parishioners, parents, businesses, etc.)
2. **Willing to invest and cultivate or just interested in short term results?**
 - Are the leaders of your Catholic institution willing to invest in the future or is crisis-management the norm?
 - Are the attitudes of your leaders more reactive or more proactive?
 - Do those working in development look for WIN-WIN situations?
3. **Process rather than program thinking?**
 - Are your development efforts centered around one *program* after another (Golf Tournament, Raffle Calendar, Auction and Dinner Dance, Annual Fund Drive, quarterly newsletter, etc.) or is there constant improvement through the use of processes year to year that form a *development system*?
 - Do the development leaders understand and follow the 7 I process of *Identify - Inform - Invite - Involve - Implement - Invest - Improve*?
4. **Building genuine relationships with people or just going after the money?**
 - Are the leaders of your Catholic parish and/or school all about building relationships or do they get to know people because those people have financial wherewithal?
 - Are you inviting people to become involved in your Catholic school or parish because you really value their expertise, talent, and wisdom or because you feel if you involve them they will give you money?

5. **Change as a natural process or change as a crisis?**

- o Do your Catholic leaders understand that real change usually does not take place without friction?
- o Do your leaders realize that good positive change can come from conflict?
- o Do your leaders know the percentages of people and their reactions to change?
 - 8% are usually the *Innovators* who create the new ideas and then lead the change.
 - 17% are the *Leaders* who are open to change once it has been introduced to them.
 - 29% are the *Early Majority* who are usually the *Followers* once they have been convinced.
 - 29% are the *Late Majority*, and they are usually very *Skeptical* and may not change at all.
 - 17% are the *Destroyers* who are usually adamant about change taking place and who are usually willing to make sure they destroy any new ideas or thoughts. Usually, the new creativity or new process is a threat to their *Guarded Kingdom*.

Innovation and creativity usually come by inviting new people into the Catholic system. And, most everything we are talking about in this newsletter deals with cultural change. It is not easy, but shifts in thinking are vital if we are going to keep our Catholic institutions alive and prosperous. Years from now, what will be said about the leadership in our time? Who will the shapers have been? Who will make sure our Catholic schools and parishes remain open and vibrant?

*It is not the critic who counts.
Not the one who points out how the weak one stumbled
Or the doer of deeds could have done them better.
The credit belongs to the one who is actually in the arena,
Whose face is marred with toil and sweat and blood,
Who errs and yet comes back time and time again,
Who knows the great sweetness of victory and the bitterness of defeat.
And, who in the end if that person falls short,
At least it is done daringly,
So that their soul may never be cast with those cold and timid ones
Who sit on the sideline, complain, and point fingers,
And never even know defeat nor victory itself.
(Paraphrased from Teddy Roosevelt)*

UPCOMING FALL 2007 WORKSHOPS

Dynamic presenters share proven strategies and discuss development issues during one and two day seminars for Catholic parishes and schools. These workshops are conveniently held across the country at an affordable price of \$69-\$250 .

We hope you'll join us soon!

Topics Include:

- ** Become a More Welcoming, Engaging & Affirming Catholic Parish **
- ** Best First Steps to Take in Beginning Your Catholic Development Efforts **
 - ** Capital Campaigns That Produce Results **
- ** Catholic School Enrollment Solutions - One and Two Day Seminars **
 - ** Customer Service in Your Catholic School **
 - ** Long Range Planning **

Scheduled Locations:

Austin, TX ** Birmingham, AL ** Milwaukee, WI ** South Bend, IN

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E-mail: ispd@bellsouth.net
Phone: 800-299-2393
Website: <http://www.ispd.com>

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