



INSTITUTE OF SCHOOL & PARISH DEVELOPMENT

Bringing People, Process, and Ministry Together to Build the

Kingdom of God.

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Institute of School and Parish Development (ISPD) **Development Directions Newsletter**

WHAT WILL BE DIFFERENT THIS YEAR?

by

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One of the greatest joys in this business of consulting with Catholic schools, parishes and dioceses is meeting the many different people who make up the leadership of our Catholic institutions – bishops, pastors, superintendents, principals, presidents, development and advancement directors, board members, and many others. Although everyone has different situations and challenges, they all want the same thing: to see their Catholic institution(s) improve, stay alive, and thrive. Many go about it in many different ways – there’s boss management; there’s team management; there’s in-between management; there are those who are struggling to keep the doors open, and there are those who are way ahead of the ball game with many of the resources they need. A lot depends upon demographics; a lot depends upon history and culture; a lot depends upon if you have expertise in management. And, some Catholic parishes and schools wonder if they’re even going to be around in another year.

When we look at today’s economy, the oil spill along the coast of the gulf states, the housing market, the unemployment rate, and other sobering factors, most of us can admit that we are in the midst of tough times.

In our consulting, workshops, and webinars we often find that so many Catholic leaders want things to be different – especially in terms of Sunday collections, more students, more parish families, more people participating in the Annual Fund, more donors to the capital campaign, more money in the endowment, more volunteers to “spread the people base,” more people participating in the fund-raisers, and the list goes on and on. With these

demands and challenges, what usually follows are the directives from the pastor or the principal or the finance council or the board which say: more, more, more; improve, improve, improve; increase, increase, increase. And, many times with these new goals being laid down, there are no solutions on how to do it.

Two weeks ago, I had a development director from a Catholic K-12 school call me to say that he was new on the job. We spoke for a while, and one of the questions I asked him was, "Bob, what outcomes have you been directed to produce this 2010 – 2011 year?"

He answered, having been on the job for 10 days, "Well, the board wants me to raise \$250,000 in this year's Annual Fund."

"Really?" I said. "How did the Annual Fund do last year?"

"Well, it was the first year, and they raised right around \$30,000."

"So," I answered, "what you are telling me is that the board wants to see you increase the Annual Fund by 8x what was done last year. And, Bob, did they tell you HOW to go about doing this?"

"No, they said that is what I was hired to do."

Unfortunately, that story is not uncommon – possibly the amount is, but the principle of that scenario remains the same.

So, the question remains on the table: What is going to be different this year? What are those two quotes we use all the time? *When you always approach a problem the same way, you will always end up in the same place. And, Insanity is doing the same things over and over again and expecting the results to be different.*

Are you willing to take chances and try new things? Are you willing to invest money to make money? Are you willing to turn some things upside down and approach them brand new? Are you willing to move from "paper to people"? Are you willing to get up and get out of your office and really make something happen by talking, visiting and building relationships? Listed below are ten things that I would like to offer. Some may seem "far out" but they are not earth shattering. However, I will guarantee you one thing: Most Catholic institutions are not doing them. Why? Because they are different; some require

money; most take time; and 75% of the people always say, "That will never work here; we're different."

1. In your Annual Fund Drive this year, have the pastor, principal and/or president invite a total of 50 people one on one, "eyeball to eyeball" to participate with a gift of \$1,000 or more.

2. With either your board or parish council or advisory council, or whatever leadership group you have, request that they do three things:

- Each one call 6 people (parents, parishioners, alumni, etc.) per month and introduce themselves, say hello and ask if there is anything they (as Catholic leaders) can do for that parent or parishioner or alum.
- Each one invite 10 people/families throughout the year to attend a "fun event" at your parish and/or school.
- Each one invite 10 gifts to the Annual Fund in 2010 – 2011. This needs to be done eyeball to eyeball.

3. If you are a parish school, host an Open House just for the parishioners of the parish – possibly after each Mass. Purpose is to say thank you and to also say, "Look at what we are doing with your subsidy."

4. Visit each new family coming into the parish and/or school in their home and have a "buddy" family assigned to each one to make that happen.

5. Create your parish or your school's own "Fan Page" on Facebook.

6. Put together Business Packages in the Business Community Division of the Annual Fund. Instead of having every club, group, organization, sport, or whatever in your school/parish individually go after the businesses in your community, create packages whereby you, as a Catholic institution, will only invite them ONE TIME during the course of the year. Money can be distributed on a percentage basis. For example from a Louisiana parish/school:

\$10,000 Package

- Saints box seats (one game)
- Only name on Business Plaque -- strategically located
- Festival banner in gym and gym lobby
- Name on stage in cafetorium
- Name recognition in St. XYZ publications

- Interactive communication
- Facebook icon leading people to your Fan page
- LinkedIn icon leading people to your LinkedIn page or your “group” on LinkedIn
- Twitter icon leading people to your Twitter page
- Blogger icon leading people to your blog
- You Tube videos

8. Set the goal in engage over 100 “new” people into the life of your parish/school this year.

9. Kick, scream or holler, but get your battery charged twice per year with professional growth opportunities. (workshops, webinars, classes, etc.)

10. Get in touch with ISPD’s website (www.ispd.com) and explore ways we could be of service to you. Why spend three years on something when we could possibly get you there in one?

So, what is going to be different this year? Afraid of the conflicts and the storms you may encounter? I can almost guarantee that you will have to approach things from a different angle and from a different point of view if you are really going to make positive changes. Change can happen but you have to have realistic solutions and, as an old marine buddy of mine used to say, “You gotta make sure you put some fire to that piece of metal or else it ain’t gonna change into that shape you want it to bend.”

May your new shapes be bent to form new paths to new successes.