

Team Coaching Over the Pitfalls of Change

WEBINAR for The PCC Coaching Network, 4 November 2021

Opening Small Group Discussion - 5 Minutes

Have you ever been a part of a group (like a congregation) that got stuck – a PITFALL— on the road to change?

Share in small breakout groups. Share your story in no more than 3 sentences:

- “The change we were considering was....”
- “The pitfall we fell into was....”
- “We did / didn’t climb out of the pit because....”

Return to the Group:

- **POLL** on the question: “Have you ever been a part of a group (like a congregation) that ran into a problem(s) – a PITFALL— on the road to change?”

INTRODUCTION

Present with us today are coaches who work with VERY DIFFERENT constituencies:

1. All of you as coaches are facilitating some kind of change

THANK YOU: THIS IS CHALLENGING WORK!!!!!!!!!!

I am sharing out of my 31 years of academic study & experience of
Organizational change, leadership and motivation psychology

THAT SAID, I have personally had plenty enough failures coaching teams through
change – this is challenging work

But the Teddy Roosevelt quote highlighted by Brene Brown resonates deeply
with me:

- I want to dare greatly, be a person in the arena, and hope to be an agent for positive change

If you are a coach in one of our networks, you have entered an arena as well

- May you know God’s blessings as you dare greatly

Our goal today in about 50 minutes is to look at **5** common pitfalls
on the road to change

- And I think each of the four groups of coaches here today can find these pitfalls in their work.

I was asked to present on “coaching teams”

- Teams commonly fall into these pits,
- **BUT Teams RARELY recognize them**
- A coach knowing these pitfalls can help you help them out of the pits

HANDOUT for participants – LINK AT THE END

Q&A at the end

1] PIT #1: Not Appreciating that Leadership Is About Motivation

More often than not, a team considers change when they realize that the status quo no longer serves them:

- **New Beginnings:** Congregation in decline recognizes that they have to do something different if they want to slow down / reverse decline
- **Cyclical:** People feeling that the ways of established churches aren’t meaningful to them or to today’s society
- **Evangelism:** Seeing that society is becoming more secular and we need to have better ways

Feelings that the status quo no longer serves us becomes PUSH MOTIVES that we experience as CONCERN

POLL: of all the motivation needed for a team to achieve its goal, what % of that motivation is provided by concern that the status quo no longer serves?

10% 20% 30% (It is 10%)

Perhaps this info gives you an “ahaaa” moment, as it did me

- I can’t count the number of times I’ve engaged with congregations that have lived chronically with concern about their status quo AND NEVER EVER ACTED ON THAT CONCERN

Concern about the status quo is a very weak motivator

Having a clear, realizable goal is the place PULL motives live
That we experience as desire and anticipation

TYPE INTO **COMMENT BOX:**

- Of the motivation needed for a team to achieve its goal, what % of that motivation is provided by having clear, realizable goal?
- Actually it is about 20%. So we now have a total of 30% of the motivation the team needs
- We will talk about the other 70% shortly

PIT #1 is

- **not appreciating that leadership / coaching is about motivation**
- **You climb out by maintaining focus on building motivation**

As a coach YOU are in the motivation business

- You are not simply walking through a series of steps in a programme
- Coaches need to be mindful of the motivation of their clients
- Always concerned—in every engagement—with:
 - How can I help strengthen their positive motivation?

We know this as coaches from our experience

- The difference we feel if our client is enthused or not after a session

2] PIT #2: The Issue Is Not “RIPE”

A congregation needs to be prepared to have a thoughtful discussion about an issue

- Story of a Session thinking about relocating the congregation

Ron Heifetz says, you have to ripen the issue

When is an issue ripe for discussion and potentially for change?

- [Slide] When they have an **appreciation of the issue** from their point of view
- When congregants have a **degree of dissatisfaction** with their current reality
- When people feel a degree of **urgency** (importance and priority) about their situation

If there is not sufficient ripeness, then you are wasting your time.

Example: I was hired by a Session to coach a minister who was a procrastinator but did not believe he was a procrastinator

You help ripen an issue by:

- Directing people’s attention to the issue and maintain that focus
- Orchestrate conversations around status quo (conversations convert people)
- Help people grow in dissatisfaction with status quo situation

For Example: New Beginnings Programme:

- The first, Friday night talk, is about ripening the issue
- Keep this idea in mind as your goal as the presenter

PIT #2 is

- **trying to press forward with people aren't ready**
- **You climb out by making the issue "ripe"**

3] PIT #3: "The Squeeze" (Survival Anxiety vs. Learning Anxiety)

Has anyone had the experience in a congregation where congregants

- 1] become aware of a need to change
- 2] seem keen / anxious to change
- 3] BUT become immobilized to change?

This is a very common experience in congregations

COMMENT BOX: Why do you suppose that happens?

Edgar Schein was the first to articulate this paradox as a tension between

- **Survival anxiety:** the feeling of motivation that compels you to change ("I have to change, or else..." is usually how we frame it)
- **Learning anxiety:** the realization that we have no idea how to be different than we are

"Thinking outside the box" is VERY hard, because

- Our point-of view.....
- Our experience.....
-is all INSIDE the box

The paradox creates a standoff—creates pressure in a congregation

- The two anxieties pushing against each other

How do we get past this impasse?

- Often leaders ratchet up survival anxiety, but this can lead to people feeling
 - crushed under the worry for their future
 - helpless to know what to do
- ultimately this approach fosters a belief that we are incapable of dealing with our problem (leads to "learned helplessness")

According to Schein, the solution is to lower the learning anxiety

- rather than set some kind of achievement goal...
- set a learning goal:
 - eg. “What are five ways other congregations have dealt with our situation?”
 - the goal to LEARN something creates less anxiety than the goal to ACCOMPLISH something

Learning helps you

- 1] discover possible goals & directions
- 2] find a goal that is meaningful to the congregation (thus motivating),
- 3] fosters confidence that “If they could do it, we can do it!”

Example from Cyclical:

- I WONDER ABOUT two things that happen in Discernment
 - An Imagining Phase, BUT:
 - CAN STRUGGLE TO RICHLY IMAGINE NEW FAITH COMMUNITY, OR...
 - PUSH THROUGH WITH POORLY DEVELOPED IDEA

2 POSSIBLE REASONS

1. Motivated by push motives (dissatisfaction with status quo) AND hard to think outside box – feel STYMIED
2. This is a PRESSURE POINT that you can feel.
 - Feeling the need to act can push one ahead with an underdeveloped vision for new faith community

So setting a learning goal here for the discerner can be a real help

- “What are 3...4...5...ways your faith community can attain the goals you aspire to?”
- “Are there faith communities out there that look like what you want your’s to look like? What do they look like? How did they develop to that point?”

PIT #3 is

- **getting stuck in the squeeze**
- **You climb out by reducing learning anxiety**

4] PIT #4: Leading With The Wrong Motives

Have you ever seen this happen?

- There is an urgent issue that everyone agrees is urgent
- There is great dissatisfaction with the status quo
- The leadership has a good solution / goal to deal with it
- They present the goal and the reasons why to pursue it
- The congregation votes “yes”
- Then nothing happens.....

[Slide] How change is promoted – FREQUENTLY

- The analogy of the teeter totter:
 - Leaders want to tilt the balance away from maintenance of the status quo towards pursuing change
 - [Slide] In the change message they load up THE LEADERS’ MOTIVES on the side for pursuing change, but change doesn’t happen. Why?
 - [Slide] We easily overlook the number and importance of motives for maintaining the status quo, AND WE DO NOTHING TO ADDRESS THOSE
 - We TEND TO DEFAULT to work from the presumption that the positive motives for change the leaders have are all we need

20th century social psychologist Kurt Lewin talked of the need to understand and respect people’s “decisional balance”

- He conceived a simple exercise called “forcefield analysis”
- List “drivers” (the motives and attitudes) that favour change and the “resisters” (motives and attitudes) that disfavor change, then weight them according to influence
- Next: consider how to increase the influence & number of drivers, and decrease the influence & number of resisters
- Next: help congregants to make these changes
- Consequence: the teeter-totter shifts because the balance of motivations favour change

[Slide] Example: my story of arriving at St Andrews for a building program

PERSONAL EXERCISE: - PRIVATE EXERCISE

- Choose a personal chronic change issue
- Conduct forcefield analysis on it
- What is causing you to be stuck
- How to you find a new balance of your motives?

In New Beginnings Programme:

- I encourage the coaches to be involved with the house group discussion leaders in the early stage of report prep
- As the group leaders begin to assess the ideas for the congregation's future (focusing in on one or two)
 - Run a little decisional balance exercise
 - For congregants, what will be the Drivers and Resisters that will move / impede people on the path to goal attainment?
 - Can they highlight the Drivers and address the Resisters?
- Doesn't have to be complicated or comprehensive.
- Provides a bit of a framework for presenting the possible direction in a way that people will find encouraging

PIT #4 IS:

- **Assuming the leaders' motives are everyone's motives**
- **Climb out by recognizing and addressing motives of others**

5] PIT #5: Weak Capability and Context Beliefs

When we think about the 100% of motivation we want people facing change to have, we've said:

- 10% comes from concern that the status quo no longer serves
- 20% comes from the goal
- **COMMENT BOX:** 70% comes from.....what?

70% comes from capability and context beliefs

Motivation depends on three main things:

Dissatisfaction with the status quo (PUSH MOTIVES)

Experience as CONCERN

Believing the goal is *important* and addresses your situation

(PULL MOTIVES) experience as anticipation and desire

and **believing the goal is *achievable* (70%)**

Motivation depends on motives and moderators of motivation

- *moderators* strengthen or weaken our motives

Two most important moderators are the answers to these questions:

- 1] Do I BELIEVE I have the capability to attain my goal?
- 2] Do I BELIEVE my context allow me to attain my goal? (context could be your congregation, neighbourhood, community, society, the Presbytery, etc)

THIS IS A HUGE ISSUE REGARDING CHANGE OF ANY KIND

New Beginnings Programme

- “Learned Helplessness”:
 - Arises from the experience of trying to turn things around in a declining congregation and failing. Multiple attempts can foster the belief that “we can’t do it”
 - Congregants can not support / engage in the new direction because they have adopted learned helplessness

Cyclical

- There are many points where leaders forming a new faith community can become demoralized (“we can’t do it”)
 - Recruiting people to be a part of new community
 - Dealing with Presbytery: Bk of Forms rules and Presbytery bureaucracy
 - Encountering unforeseen barriers and setbacks
 - Clergy who are trying to create the new thing while working with the current congregation!

Coaching Clergy

- Burnout and demoralization is on the rise
- Clergy are ill-equipped for the multiple, complex “messes”.
 - Russell Ackoff: “Managers don’t solve simple, isolated problems; they manage messes.”

ALL MODERATORS OF MOTIVATION

When you want people to feel motivated,

- you need a goal that people find appealing and desirable
- But if they are going to pursue the goal, you need to help congregants answer well the two questions:
 - “We are able to do this”
 - “Our context will allow us to do this (or at least, won’t prevent us from doing it)”

In practical terms, you can help the team by:

1. Simple encouragement is shown to work
2. Help client to “experience mastery”:
 - i. Set an interim goal that is achievable, support them to succeed and help them appreciate that “I can do this!”
3. Confidence through “Vicarious Mastery”
 - i. Help client learn about a situation that WAS just like their’s, and that group succeeded. Help client to learn from that situation, then appreciate “If they could do it we can do it!”

In particular, look at building an implementation plan composed of small steps

- REMEMBER it is not just about eating the elephant one bite at a time....
- It’s about helping people believe they CAN eat the elephant!!

WRAP-UP: So What Have We built Here?

We have explored 5 common Pitfalls encountered in change
BUT ALSO LOOKED AT BUILDING MOTIVATION

Discussion Groups: Look at the 5 pitfalls, apply it, now talk about experience (preferably current one)

OR

Open Q&A

For notes: go to www.choosingchange.ca/PCC