

LET'S DO SOMETHING



A friend of mine, I'll call him John because that's his name, decided to leave the consulting firm where he and I worked years ago, and on the day before his departure, an executive of the firm did one of those wonderful "exit interviews" with him. The executive began by asking John the question, "What could we have done to keep you here longer?" After thinking about the question for a few seconds, John smiled and responded, "Anything."

Really. That's what he said, and it was brilliant.

I love telling that story because it's funny and true, and because it reminds me that when it comes to addressing a problem in an organization, one option will never work: nothing. As obvious as that sounds, it is often the default that leaders choose, mostly because taking action can feel risky and inertia can be such a powerful thing.

For pastors and their team members who have attended the Amazing Parish conference ([and for those who watch our online training videos which are now available](#)), there is usually an initial and overwhelming desire to improve. They come away from the experience with a list of actions or goals, and with every good intention of following through on them. But once they re-enter the parish and are faced with the realities of preparing for weekend Masses and doing all the other things they do on a regular basis, it becomes easy for them to postpone making changes until they have enough time to do it right.

That is true for leaders and teams in almost every organization, including mine, and it is as natural as it is dangerous. Why? Because people learn from action, even small action, much more than they do from waiting and analyzing. That is not to suggest that pastors should rush back to their parishes and start making random changes carelessly just to make a point. But it is to suggest that one of the most important things that any group of leaders must do to gain momentum is to achieve a victory or two, even if they are minor victories, just to prove to themselves that change is possible.

So, whether it's implementing a new regimen in the office around team prayer, or taking an initial step toward improving homilies or hospitality, or beginning an activity around evangelization, what is most important is that parish leaders do something. And stay with it.

What exactly that something is depends on the situation and the discernment of the parish leadership team. But one thing is certain: *something* is exponentially better than *nothing*. May God help all pastors and parish team members to have the courage and discipline to get started, and may He guide your parish to continue improving forever.

Pat Lencioni | Co-founder
The Amazing Parish