



Learning Community One

Creating Ownership

20-30
minutes

Personal Check-in:

Facilitator Instructions: Take a few minutes and isolate a story or a passage about a biblical leader who had to overcome resistance. Be ready to share your thoughts on these questions:

- What impresses you about this biblical leader?
- How did he/she seek to overcome resistance?
- Which leadership lesson or principle from the story or passage challenges you the most as a leader?

Sharing Question:

What is one thing that you would appreciate prayer for as it relates to the ideas and concepts you have been exposed to in this learning community? In other words, how can we help you in prayer today?

*As a group, spend time praying for the needs that were shared around the room.



30-45
minutes

Book Review Debrief:

***Direct Hit* by Dr. Paul Borden**

1. On the bottom of page 17, Borden argues for two major causes of inward-looking churches. Which one best describes your current situation and why?

2. Which “Barriers to Leading Change” listed on pages 20-22 are true for you and your church? Why?

3. Borden argues that “Leadership behavior is a practice, not a gift.” Do you agree or disagree with this and why?

4. Of the leadership behaviors listed on pages 30ff., which behavior(s) could you strengthen and how would you do it?

5. Which Vision tactics from Chapter 3 would you like to try and how will you do it?



6. Which tactics for creating urgency (Ch. 4) would you like to implement and how will you do it?

7. Borden suggests that a pastor will need to transition from a “chaplain” to a “leader” over time. Do you agree or disagree with this argument and why?

8. The *Direct Hit* approach utilizes “outside help” as a part of the revitalization process. What could the risks and benefits be for your church and for you personally in getting outside help?

9. What are three of the most important insights you have gained from reading *Direct Hit*?



45
minutes

Case Study: For the First LC

Facilitator Instructions: Give pastors 15 minutes to work through the case study worksheet on their own. Answer the questions in the “Case Study Report.” Ask each pastor to post their ideas on a piece of flipchart which they will present to the rest of the group. Bring the group back together and give each pastor five to ten minutes to present their “first pass” of the significant issues that the case study is facing. This is meant to be a brief orientation to the group and will be built on in the future.

Case Study Template: For all Future LC's

The purpose of the Case Study exercise is twofold:

** To provide the pastor with a reproducible tool that he can use with his key lay leaders to assess and monitor health issues related to the church.*

**To allow other pastors to resource the case study pastor through peer mentoring (problem solving, sharing of ideas, and constructive feedback).*

For the case study format to be effective, the case study pastor needs to take time (by himself or with key lay leaders) to prepare a case study report.

Typical case study segment (45-60 minutes in length)

1. Hand out the case study report (1-2 pages in length) and allow everyone time to read over it carefully. The pastor is meant to respond to the eight core case study questions (see next page).
2. Case Study pastor walks the group through his report. This is not a time to brainstorm but to simply clarify the core issues the church is facing.
3. The group offers ideas, feedback, observations, questions, and concerns with the purpose of helping the pastor think more deeply about core issues that need to be addressed.



45-60
minutes

Case Study Interaction:

Instructions: If a pastor is lined up for this meeting, give him 10-15 minutes to talk about his church. With the remaining time, ask the group to give feedback on the following questions and to spend time interacting with the pastor about the following:

- 1. Please share the prescriptions you received from the Weekend Consultation.**
- 2. What progress have you made toward implementing the prescriptions?**
- 3. What are the most significant challenges you are facing in implementing the prescriptions?**
- 4. Have you done your time study? What did you learn about your use of time? What are you doing to make changes in your use of time? How are you getting these changes rooted in your life for the long term?**
- 5. What leadership skills are you focused on developing? Share your sense of progress and your challenges.**
- 6. Have you built new bridges into the community? If not, why not? If so, how? What are the results so far? How can you improve your vision casting for reaching the community?**
- 7. What are you doing each week to create a sense of urgency? Are you seeing an increase in Sunday worship attendance?**
- 8. What are your plans for the next three months?**



5
minutes

Learning Activity: “You want me to do what?”

With a partner, take a couple of minutes to share about a time when you had to make a change that you really didn’t want to make. Specifically, talk about:

1. What made the change so difficult or challenging for you?
2. What kinds of things did the “required change” tap into mentally and emotionally for you?

20
minutes

Learning Activity: Creating Ownership

Facilitator Instructions: Draw the groups’ attention to the article below entitled “Creating Ownership.” Ask them to read slowly and to underline key thoughts and principles as they go. After everyone has finished ask the discussion questions at the end of the article (either in pairs, triads, or as a group):

Creating Ownership

Leadership maxim on resistance: When you encounter resistance it’s wise to pay attention. Or stated differently, when you encounter resistance but do nothing, hoping it will go away on its own, you’re waiting for a time bomb to go off.

Push back...lack of follower-ship...questions...no buy-in...criticism. These are all part of being a leader. They can best be summed up in one word: resistance. Let’s face it, people and organizations find it difficult to change. There can be a number of reasons why people resist change, but one thing is clear: wise leaders pay attention to resistance. When people fail to follow, either passively or actively, leaders need to look for clues and seek to address the pockets of opposition. Inactivity or inattentiveness on the part of a leader regarding resistance can severely arrest the change process in the life of the organization.



10 Reasons People Resist Change

They:

1. Don't see the benefit

Some oppose change because they just don't see the benefit of changing. They might say, "I'm fine the way I am," or "I don't understand why we should change." The problem for these people is that they have not fully embraced the possible benefits of making a change. They have not been persuaded. The preferred future just doesn't seem very compelling to them.

2. Feel like they will lose something

Change is about costs and benefits. A part of the nature of change is the reality of loss. Adjustments that are made in an organization require that some people may lose position, influence, or control.

3. Don't agree with you

People may nod their heads at the meeting, but deep down in their hearts they have no intention of following your lead. Leaders can't please everyone nor should they. Some decisions that leaders make regarding direction, goals, or the future may be quite unpopular. Unfortunately, some who oppose change never voice their opinions and stay underground with their discontent.

4. Don't see the problem

This group of resisters are frustrating because they just don't see it. They don't acknowledge that a change is needed because they are apathetic. Deep down they either don't care or have not picked up a sense of urgency about the issues at hand.

5. Are going to wait and see

Others resist because they have been down the change path before and they got burned. Their strategy is to hold their breath and wait for the whole thing to blow over. They have seen people get excited about change before, only to lose their enthusiasm two months later. These folks have decided that it's best to sit on the sidelines and simply wait and see how serious everyone is about changing.



6. Don't feel confident to change

Some are resistant to change because they are intimidated by the very thought. If asked, they would tell you that they don't have the skill or knowledge necessary to do what is being asked of them.

7. Are afraid of failing

Change is also spelled r-i-s-k. Some resistance is related to the fact that a portion of the people are afraid to fail. Their favorite motto is, "If I do nothing then I can't fail."

8. Fear the unknown

This group's favorite motto is, "We've never done it like this before." It is more comfortable to stay unchanged than to venture out into unknown territory. Staying in the boat is far better to this group than trying to walk on water.

9. Fear too many changes at the same time

Leaders can sometimes make the mistake of initiating too many changes at the same time. People can get buried or frustrated by all that is being asked of them. When too many "growth opportunities" are foisted upon people, resistance is likely to develop.

10. Have personality differences

Some people are not wired for change. They like predictability, stability and steadiness. Some resistance is simply rooted in personality differences. This group of resisters needs time to get "used to the idea" before they will buy in to the change initiative.

Tips for Creating Ownership

Tip #1: Involve people from the beginning.

If people have their fingerprints on the ideas, goals, and plans that a church develops, they will be much more likely to own it. Involving people from the beginning takes time and patience on the part of a leader, but it pays off down the road.



Tip #2: One thing at a time.

Leaders are notorious for loving change and trying new approaches to ministry. We must remember though that those who are following us are not nearly as “addicted” to new methods as we are. If the ship keeps changing course, the sailors are going to get frustrated. With that in mind, choose your changes carefully. And when you are asking people to invest energy into an initiative give it your best and fullest attention as a leader.

Tip #3: Communicate often.

Many a fine vision of a preferred future has died on the vine due to under-communication. We fool ourselves into thinking that the people get it. We come down the mountain with the stone tablets in our hands and announce the new day and we deceive ourselves into believing that we have “communicated the vision.” Overcoming resistance to vision is an ongoing, relentless leadership challenge. So keep people abreast of what’s going on. Highlight advances...celebrate breakthroughs...weave your vision into your sermons. Whatever you do, just keep talking about it.

Tip #4: Use case studies of other churches who have changed.

People are inspired by stories of changed lives. One of the best ways to handle “push-back” is to point to successful transformations. Sometimes a good, old-fashioned field trip, where your people get to talk with another church about changes that they have made, will do the trick. Or perhaps, it could be through a training series produced by any number of churches around the country. The key is to overcome resistance by inspiring and motivating your people with case study churches and leaders. Transformation is possible!

Tip #5: Expose people to new ideas.

There are times when resistance can be overcome by exposing a person to new ideas. Consider purchasing your favorite book, DVD, or CD in bulk quantities and handing it out to scores of people. Infect people with the disease through exposure to great ideas, great churches, and great leaders. Chances are, if you found a resource helpful, someone else will probably find it helpful. So don’t keep it to yourself. Get that powerful information into the hands of others and watch resistance go down.

Tip #6: Have open forums (small groups, classes, meetings).

In the business realm, companies form focus groups of customers to gain their opinions. Church leaders would be wise to pulse their “customers”



from time to time in small gatherings. This is different than the typical annual meeting. Forums are small groups, Sunday school classes, and gatherings in a home where the express purpose is to talk about ideas, opportunities, questions, and concerns. This is a time for leaders to ask questions and listen. Leaders will discover valuable information in an open forum, and it will also alert you to potential problems that may be under the surface. Getting resistance out into the open in a safe, non-threatening group setting can go a long way toward overcoming resistance.

Discussion Questions:

1. Which four ideas from “Creating Ownership” stood out to you and why?
2. What principles from the article are you most challenged by and why?
3. What are your strengths and weaknesses in how you typically handle resistance?

**10-15
minutes**

Learning Activity: Resistance Role Play

Facilitator Instructions: This works best with groups of three people. The purpose of the role play is for individuals to practice the six tips for overcoming resistance. In each group:

- One person is the resisting lay person
- One person is the leader being resisted
- The other person is an observer



Each time there is a role play session, a new scenario should be selected from the list below. Give each role play session three to four minutes. The person playing the leader should try to use as many of the 6 tips as possible in working with the “resisting lay person.”

Scenario #1: The lay person does not like the recent shift toward contemporary music in the Sunday service.

Scenario #2: The lay person is frustrated by the emphasis on reaching out when there are so many pastoral care issues not being addressed.

Scenario #3: The lay person does not believe the church should build a new facility.

Scenario #4: The lay person does not want to join a small group.

Scenario #5: The lay person thinks that less money should be given to outreach projects.

15
minutes

Learning Activity: Me and Resistance

Facilitator Instructions: This is a time for individuals to work through resistance in their own lives and brainstorm ways to address it. Give each person ten minutes to work through the assignment on their own then pair them up to discuss their answers.

1. In what ways are you experiencing resistance from others right now or in the recent past?
2. What are some of the root causes or reasons for the resistance?
3. In what ways have you tried to remedy the situation?
4. Which of the “10 reasons people resist change” are you personally experiencing? Why?



5. Which of the 6 tips for overcoming resistance would you like to implement?

6. What steps do you need to take in the next 30 days to “lean into” resistance so that it can be overcome?

7. What needs to change within you, for you to be a leader who overcomes resistance more consistently?

5
minutes

Homework and Wrap-up

Facilitator Instructions: Close out the session by highlighting the homework assignment.

Homework Assignment:

1. Over the next few weeks be intentional with resistance. Go out of your way to spend time with some of the difficult people in your ministry area. Look for opportunities to lean into resistance rather than avoid it. Follow through on the reflections you generated on the “Me and Resistance” exercise and act on them. Be prepared to report in next time about how you handled your resistance opportunities.

2. Make it your goal to pray daily for a few people in your sphere of relationships who need Christ. Come prepared to discuss how you are personally engaging the community and how you are overcoming the ongoing challenges you face in being outreach oriented. Fill out the “Me and the Harvest” worksheet prior to the next meeting.

3. Read Andy Stanley’s book *Visioneering* and come prepared to discuss the Book Review Questions (see next page).



Book Review Questions

Visioneering by Andy Stanley

1. In what ways do you agree with Stanley's claim that "Visions are often born in the soul of a man or woman who is gripped by a tension between what is and what should be"?

2. With this tension in mind, what's bothering you? What is the solution?

3. In what ways are you inspired by Nehemiah's visioneering capabilities?

How can you grow to be more like him as a leader?

4. What will you need to give up in order to pursue your vision?

5. What are the possible risks of you pursuing your vision?



6. What criticism or backlash might you get from others?

7. What distractions (good and bad) are you susceptible to that could cause you to lose momentum?

8. What actions could you take that, if done consistently, would provide the greatest potential for the vision's success?

9. Of the 20 "vision building blocks" listed on page 16, which are your top five and why?

10. What are the three most important insights from the book that you would like to implement?



LC Evaluation:

Date:

Location:

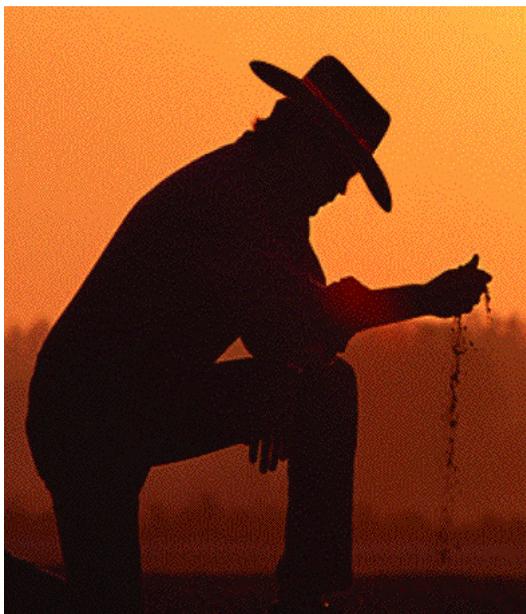
Questions:

1. What did you like most about the homework from the last Learning Community?

2. What did you like least about the homework from the last Learning Community?

3. How could we improve today's Learning Community experience?

4. How can we give you additional support for developing leadership skills in your own life and helping your church turn outward?



Me and the Harvest

1. How committed have I been to praying for people who need Jesus?
2. What have I done in the past month to help someone move closer to Christ?
3. What changes do I need to make in the next month to find time to be more outreach focused?
4. How did I keep the fire burning for outreach in our church this past month?
5. What have I learned about the community needs in this past month that our church could be poised to meet?
6. What's the most important outreach oriented action step I can take in this next month?