ACTUAL EXAMPLES OF PROBLEM SITUATIONS

Introduction

Here is an opportunity to test your problem solving skills. The examples below are actual, real life situations in which I became involved as a consultant.

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Comptroller for a religious order does not agree with the allocation of funding and has a severe personal and ethical conflict with the order’s president.

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Newly appointed pastor can’t seem to connect with the people in the parish and is unable to gain a clear understanding of the cultural landscape. Parish council seems to have a hidden agenda and is hindering the changes the pastor feels are necessary.

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Director of an archdiocesan office is totally disorganized. Late for meetings. Missing deadlines. Buying a professional version of a Day Planner did not seem to help and simply added to the frustration.

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Finance committee of a parish council uncovers the fact that the new pastor spent $35,000 of parish funds to furnish his residence in the rectory - without any consultation with the parish finance committee. The pastor also spent an unusually large amount of funds for entertaining. He hired a personal cook who shopped for fresh meat and vegetables daily and accumulated a rather large bar bill - all at the parish’s expense. When the parish council voted to limit his budget, he simply exclaimed, “You have 12 votes. I have 13 votes. Motion denied.”
Pastor signs off with a contractor for structural changes in a new parish building without advising the building committee. In addition, the committee finds out that they are now faced with several thousand dollars in cost overruns.

Pastoral staff cannot agree about who is supposed “to do what” and “what is and what is not their job”.

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