Mission Webinar: Subsidiarity: A Leadership Principle for Good Work

March 8, 2016
1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET

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Reflection

A New Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the people I cannot change,
which is pretty much everyone,
since I’m clearly not you, God.
At least not the last time I checked.

And while you’re at it, God,
please give me the courage
to change what I need to change about myself,
which is frankly a lot, since, once again,

I’m not you, which means I’m not perfect.
It’s better for me to focus on changing myself
than to worry about changing other people,
who, as you’ll no doubt remember me saying,
I can’t change anyway.

Finally, give me the wisdom to just shut up
whenever I think that I’m clearly smarter
than everyone else in the room,
that no one knows what they’re talking about except me,
or that I alone have all the answers.

Basically, God,
grant me the wisdom
to remember that I’m
not you.

Amen

- Fr. James Martin, SJ

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Your Speakers for Today’s Program

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Respect in Action

Building Subsidiarity in the Culture of the Organization

APPLYING SUBSIDIARITY IN BUSINESS

RESPECT IN ACTION
I. Seeing

Locating Subsidiarity at Work

- Good Goods: making goods which are truly good and providing services which truly serve;
- Good Work: organizing work so that coworkers develop their gifts and talents; and
- Good Wealth: creating sustainable wealth and distributing it justly.

Gallup Survey:
Engaged/Disengaged

- 29% Engaged
- 55% Not Engaged
- 16% Actively Disengaged
Three Voices on Bad Work

A Pope: “For dead matter leaves the factory ennobled and transformed, while men are corrupted and degraded” (Pius XI, 1931).

An Engineer: “If engineers could think of people as if they were robots, they would give them more human work to do” (Howard H. Rosenbrock, 1981).

A CEO: “We must as leaders embrace the principle of subsidiarity. It is wrong to steal a person’s right or ability to make a decision.” (Bill Pollard, ServiceMaster, 1996).

II. Judging Deeper Roots in a Logic of Gift

“Subsidiarity respects personal dignity by recognizing in the person a subject who is always capable of giving something to others” (Benedict XVI).
Joining Subsidiarity and Solidarity in Organizational Life

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<tr>
<th>Paternalism/ Centralization</th>
<th>Community of Persons</th>
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<td>Collection of Individuals</td>
<td>Entitlement/ Localism</td>
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I. Seeing, Judging, Acting
Subsidiarity and Good Work

- **Good Goods**: making goods which are truly good and providing services which truly serve;
- **Good Work**: organizing work so that coworkers develop their gifts and talents; and
- **Good Wealth**: creating sustainable wealth and distributing it justly.
III. Acting: *Orienting toward Subsidiarity*

- **Engage in Person-Centered Job Design:** Define the work as broadly as possible, to tap the gifts, talents and skills of associates.

- **Develop Associates:** Educate and equip associates to exercise decision-making responsibly.

III. Acting: *Institutionalizing Subsidiarity*

- **Establish Formal Structures to Mediate Participation.** Establish processes and programs that promote and facilitate associate participation in decisions.

- **Communicate regularly about subsidiarity.** Underscore the principle’s importance via communications (newsletters, websites, and other media) that showcase examples of subsidiarity in action within the organization.
III. Acting: *Institutionalizing Subsidiarity*

Monitor Relevant Metrics: Engagement Surveys

- “My work is meaningful.”
- “My work makes good use of my skills and abilities.”
- “I have a say in how work is performed within my workplace.”
- “I have opportunities to influence policies and decisions that affect my work.”
- “I am given opportunities for ongoing education and professional development.”
- “I have the resources I need to do my job well.”

Monitor Relevant Metrics: Other Measures

- Culture of Safety surveys
- Associate turnover rates
- Associate absenteeism rates
- Internal promotion rates
- Education/training budget (and actual expenses)
- Associate progress against development/training plan
- Exit interviews: Themes and trends
- Leader/Manager Assessments: Themes and trends from 360° evaluations
III. Acting

NOTICE HOWEVER: An organization that

• espouses subsidiarity with conviction (orientation)
• and whose practices and processes reinforce it (institutionalization),
• can nevertheless fail to sustain a culture of subsidiarity if it fails to seriously attend to this core value in hiring and selection processes for associates, managers, executives, and board members

III. Acting: Sustaining Subsidiarity

• Recruiting/Selection: Recruiting and selection processes for associates, managers, and executives should attend to subsidiarity, as well as more basic job competencies. Eagerness and understanding when it comes to taking and sharing responsibility are important.

• Succession Planning and Development: Associates, managers, and executives being groomed for promotion should be familiarized with subsidiarity (formation) and trained in practical ways to operationalize this principle (education or training).

• Boards of Directors: Board formation should address subsidiarity. Boards need to take responsibility for the culture of the company over time, as well as performance against critical financial and operating goals.
Subsidiarity in Action: Some Tensions

Between Trust and Accountability: Give as much individual responsibility as possible and as much administrative support as necessary.

Between Standardization and Innovation: Make as many standards as necessary but ensure as much initiative and innovation as possible.

Between Decentralization and Centralization: Move decision-making to the lowest level possible and to the highest level necessary.

Conclusion
We Seek to Form Leaders who can Manage Two Perspectives at Once with the help of Practical Wisdom:

- A perspective of gift recognition and subsidiarity, and
- A perspective of gift coordination and solidarity
Some Points for Reflection

**General:** How does your organization *encourage* associates to bring their gifts and talents to the organization? What challenges make it *difficult to build* a culture of subsidiarity?

**Systems:** What current policies, programs, processes or practices *foster* subsidiarity? *Inhibit* subsidiarity?

**Communications:** How could your organization better promote subsidiarity in its communications, via *content, frequency, tone/language*?

**Individual Self-Assessment:** How can *I* lead in ways that better promote subsidiarity? What inner *qualities and dispositions* must I cultivate to better practice this type of leadership?

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[Image: RESPECT IN ACTION]