

Roles from which parish development efforts can be initiated

The parish role you are in will make intervening easier or harder. In each role the person is using change agent knowledge and methods in a process of parish improvement.

<i>THE ROLE</i>	<i>CHARACTERISTICS</i>	<i>BENEFITS</i>	<i>COSTS</i>
<p><u>The Rector</u> The Rector (or vicar, priest-in-charge) has the primary responsibility for system improvement. Is somewhat comparable to an executive director or the manager of a department in other organizations.</p>	Has the legitimate authority for shaping processes, structures, and climate; also, for initiating and monitoring. The person is visible and accountable.	Easier to make entry into the parish system. More focused on results. Has a very defined place in the parish.	May be drawn away from the improvement effort by other demands. Can become the target of the parish's cynics and those resisting changes.
<p><u>Internal Consultant</u> A role not usually seen in parishes though it can be done effectively under the right circumstances and by a person with the needed training and experience. In other organizations this person has a defined position within the organization that carries responsibility for consulting and training activities toward improvement.</p>	Visible. Accountability may be cloudy. Contracts often less defined, more informal.	Is part of the parish. Can develop a highly integrated sense of how to do an PD effort in the parish.	Less status than external consultants. Dependent on others for authority to function. Low influence. May be under pressure to do projects or do them in a manner that violates own sense of good practice.
<p><u>Internal Change Agent</u> Any member or employee in the parish that acts for improvement on their own authority. Has no formal authorization for the effort.</p>	Role is not formally defined or authorized. May call for low visibility. May be risky.	Acting on own values. Sense of purpose.	Risk of punishment - being ostracized, being forced out of the parish or loss of job
<p><u>External Consultant</u> Not part of the parish's on-going life. Is contracted with to provide services to facilitate improvement. Generates own clients. Most commonly works alone.</p>	High visibility. Temporary in the system. Has a formal contract.	Clear contracts. May see things the insiders fail to see. May be able to productively use dependence.	May be unfamiliar with the parish and its ways - may lead to misunderstandings, lack of integration in approach.

A useful adjunct to the rector's role is a Parish Development Team. The team is an extension of the rector's authority and shares responsibility for improvement efforts. This would be similar when there are clergy or lay people on the parish staff who have been delegated some responsibility for system improvement.