

Doing so gives us a way of assessing just where, in the change process, an organization happens to be. The stages usually do not occur in a neat sequence. However, for the purpose of analysis, we will describe them in the following manner.

**Stage 1: No Doubt** All organizations go through a period of time, often quite brief, when their staff members share a common sense of purpose, commitment, and clarity. Staff members think of themselves as "we." They feel energized and excited by their work, and dedicated to it. Because most people *like* being engaged in a worthwhile endeavor, the staff likes the "No Doubt" stage and will go to great lengths to remain in it.

**Stage 2: Operational Doubt** This is the point at which staff members begin to raise questions related to the maintenance of the "No Doubt" stage that was such a joy. These questions are often phrased

as problems to be solved. (For good administrators, there is nothing quite so satisfying as solving a problem.) The areas addressed in this stage tend to be about time, schedules, and adjustment of various things. However, the better people are at solving problems, the more problems they are likely to find. By staying busy solving minor problems, staff members in the "Operational Doubt" stage often blind themselves to the fact that something deeper is going on.

The "No Doubt" and the "Operational Doubt" stages of life occur in the organization's Rational dimension. This is the dimension in which problems can be solved intellectually, with reason and clarity. Solving problems in this way is possible primarily because the people involved have a commitment to making things work well. However, as change accelerates in the organization, this commitment may become frayed.

## REFLECTION

### Tapping employees' energy and passion



Sr. Riehl

*Sr. Claudia Riehl, OSB, director, mission integration, Benedictine Health System, Duluth, MN, offered the following reflection on Rosalie McDermott's ideas.*

Significant change in the workplace challenges all organizations. Catholic health care, because of its emphasis on mission and values integration, faces even greater challenges than other organizations in implementing major change in ways that align with its stated values.

Rosalie McDermott's way of clarifying the change process, with its five distinct steps, makes the process easy to understand and apply. The entire process is ideal for Catholic health care to use as it carries on the Gospel imperative to continue the healing ministry of Jesus, with his values. While the base remains constant, the industry is constantly changing.

As organizations respond to change, McDermott's process allows them to assess their acceptance of it and then develop ways that can channel their efforts toward recommitting themselves to its mission and values.

I could relate personally to all of McDermott's concepts because the Benedictine Health System (BHS) has recently completed significant organizational restructuring. According to McDermott's theory, a mission integration department can play an important role in moving an organization through change by accompany-

ing the change with rituals and celebrations that remind people of their original commitment. At BHS, rituals that celebrated the sponsoring order and reminded us that change is part of life helped us all to respond positively to the process of change.

I believe that mission integration departments can also be a source of reflection that helps one bridge the stages of change. Mission integration can help a system's leader recognize the stages and respond wisely to them.

The most vital piece of McDermott's article urges leaders to allow the process to unfold, while at the same time providing employees with opportunities to share their feelings and concerns about the change they are experiencing. Listening to and respecting their responses prevents erosion of employees' interest, commitment, and trust.

Stronger relationships develop, trust is built, and commitment is strengthened when, as McDermott says, an organization addresses its "nonrational" areas and creates new "myths." Catholic health care is an inspiring witness when employees are listened to and their passion and energy are tapped. Then all things are possible.

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