Before attempting to respond to this post, refer to the “Seven Practices for Building Systems Thinking into Your Organization” Activity.

The seven practices mentioned in the activity are,

Practice 1: Try to Anticipate “Ripple Effects” of Change Initiatives

Practice 2: Small Changes Can Produce Big Results; Search for Optimal Levers

Practice 3: Identify Feedback Loops and Multiple Drivers of Change

Practice 4: Align Change Initiatives Around an Inspiring Vision of the Future

Practice 5: Change Mental Models

Practice 6: Engage in Vigorous Dialogue Around the Welfare of the System

Practice 7: Work to Maintain Openness to the System to Avoid Entropy

Select one of these practices and describe how you could use it to bring about change in your organization.

Of the seven I select two, one for each company I work at. For the school,

I choose Practice 2. Small changes can produce significant results; Search for Optimal Levers.

At the school, I run a Music Club during 20/20. 20/20 is an innovative process introduced by the administration where students spend 20 minutes eating in the cafeteria, and the other 20 in a club of their choice. There is no lunch hour free time for just hanging out. Teachers are encouraged to sponsor a club. There are reading clubs, chess, basketball, volleyball, and others. In the music club, I found that students show little interest in learning things to support their goal. For instance, the singers don't want to learn music theory. At first, I took a hierarchal approach telling the students that the club was a privilege and if they didn't want to do the work to find a new club -- this resulted in a minimal attendance. Instead, I will make small changes that include more of what they want to do, and choose such things that show the need for foundational stuff like music theory. For instance, the singers will be given songs not inside of their comfort zones to sing. They will need to transpose the song into a new key; this will require music theory to do.

For the Church maybe practice 5: Change Mental Models. Currently, the church is very utilitarian. What the pastor says goes. On one instance I was going to quit the worship team, instead of finding the problem, The pastor ordered me not to by saying, "I am your pastor, and I am telling you not to quit." At the time I did what he said, although now, years later, I realize this put me in a submissive position in which now He approaches me as Lord more often then pastor. A change in mental model is required, as I like the church. I am no longer going to ask permission to do repairs or leave a ministry that I am involved in. Hopefully, the change will be noticed, and a new approach will be forged.

What would you try to change with this practice if you had the authority to do so?

1. Students would begin to find ways to enjoy learning foundational materials while keeping the goal in sight.

2. Pastorate will start to show value through a less utilitarian style.

What would you need in order to make this happen?

Patients, Perseverance, Vision.