

New Speaker:

One of the biggest challenges all of us are facing right now, well, especially now, but always as leaders, is how do you find and generate momentum. Every once in a while you have it, and then sometimes you don't have it. And then you're like, "How do I get it back?" And what you'll discover ... Some of you are brand new at what you're doing. Maybe you're new in the job or you're part of a new plant or a new start or a new launch. And then there's almost always momentum that comes with new, which is amazing. But then you'll get into a place where things kind of solidify and your 50% growth or 100% growth becomes 20% growth, becomes 10% growth, becomes 3% growth, becomes flat, becomes well, it's only a small decline and then like, how do you put the paddles on and how do you actually generate momentum?

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That's true not just organizationally, it's true departmentally. Some of you who are watching this training, you're responsible for an aspect and one part of your organization is doing really well. Another part is just kind of stuck, right? We're just kind of flat-lined over here. One of the challenges as a leader and as somebody who's led now for over 25 years is, I'm always thinking about momentum. What do you do that generates momentum? What do you do when you don't have momentum and how do you get it back? So I want to walk you through seven keys to finding and generating momentum. These are things you'll have to figure out how to apply to your own circumstance. What I would say too is to pay careful attention to the trends and the metrics because most organizations go through a life cycle and most products go through a life cycle and you've got to always think about new.

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You might think, "You know, Carey, I don't know whether I need to pay attention to this because we're doing okay right now." But what I found is that organizations are a little bit like people. You look in the mirror and you think, "You know, I look okay." And then you look at a picture from three years ago and you're like, "Wow, I looked so much younger back then." Right? Like what happened? You didn't really notice it day-to-day but somewhere along the line kind of aged, like I've aged over the last few years. Momentum is the same way. You think you have it and you're like, "This is great." But then you look back at an old picture and you're like, "Oh yeah, that's like totally different." And that's how change happens in an organization. So you really got to pay attention to when you have momentum and when you don't. How do you generate momentum if you really want to see it?

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Start here. Pour fuel on the one or two things that are growing because when you look at an entire organization, everything you're responsible for and you're like, "Okay, this is complicated. We can't tackle it all." Right? But probably within your area or somewhere inside the organization, you've got momentum. Maybe you have a lot of new people coming for the first time. Or maybe you have a lot of first-time customers or maybe you don't but you have a lot of returning people who are very passionate about it. Or maybe you're discovering that giving is going up or that sales are going up but they're going down over here. But almost always, when you look across a dashboard, you'll be able to see one or two columns that are in the green.

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Okay, why are they in the green? What is going on? We do have a little bit of momentum here. We're struggling over there. We're struggling over there. We're struggling over there but we got some

momentum over here. Now, one of the best things you can do is to pour fuel on the areas where you have momentum because you probably got it somewhere. And if not, then go to the next thing.

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Second principle is cut or discontinue anything you're manufacturing energy for. There's always something that you kind of wish would go away, right? Like a meeting you don't want to take. A program you want to cut. An item you want to discontinue. But you're like, "Well, you know, we better keep it around." And here's what happens. Let's say it's an event. All right, you do it every year. Maybe you do it every month. And you're like, we just got to get people to that Saturday morning breakfast. Maybe the Saturday morning breakfast used to be a thing but it's not a thing and it's not what it was back then. Then the organizers say to you, "Well, you know, you just got to promote it more or you got to talk about it more." And it's like, "No, this thing just isn't working." What a lot of organizations do is they try to manufacture energy around things that just aren't working. It doesn't take a great leader to kill something that's dead. It does take a great leader to cut something that's simply good or that used to be good that isn't working.

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What you'll find is it's very much like a garden or a vine or a tree that when you cut off the dead or the struggling branches or limbs, the healthy ones start to really flourish. You probably already have picked one or two things in your mind that you're like, "Yeah, if I had some courage, I would cut that." You might want to cut that because what that's going to allow you to do is it focuses yourself on the things that have the most potential. It focuses you as a leader, you as an organization on the things that have the most potential, and you can bring your life and your limited energy and your limited time into those things.

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Third thing. Start something new. Start something new. It could be that you do a new spin on something. It could be that you try a new approach or it could be a new offering or a new product. Now, Andy Stanley years ago, pastor of North Point Ministries, gave an amazing talk on momentum. He said, "The secret to momentum is new, improved, improving." And I think Andy's right. If you take a look at say something as simple as your toothpaste tube. It probably has new on it somewhere. It'll say new packaging, new label, new formula, new flavor, right? And you're like, "It's toothpaste. Like Colgate or Crest. You guys have been around since my grandparents time, what do you mean it's new? It's not new."

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But what they realize is, if it's new, it actually gains momentum. The same is true for something like baking soda or think about all the shampoo. It's like the shampoo you're using has probably been around for a long time but now it's a new label or new color or new look or new fragrance or new something. Why? Because new, improved, improving tends to get momentum. If you haven't done anything new, a lot of the time what you're trying to do is you're just trying to revive something that used to work. Maybe you want to try something new. That's another way to do it.

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Number four. Avoid diffusing your energy. Avoid the trap of doing nothing well. A lot of the time what happens is you find yourself with split energy and you're saying, "Well, we're doing something new but

we're also trying to do this as well." As some leaders say, when you try to do everything, you end up really doing nothing. Think about it. If you were a restaurant, you've got in-person dining but you've also got takeout. You've also got drive-through. Now, depending on where you are, you might say "We're best to really focus on a great in-person dining experience." Or maybe people aren't dining in right now because of health concerns. Then you're like, "Well, we really got to double down on the drive-through." And perhaps you're at a point where you're saying, "You know what? We should just close the dining room even though we're legally allowed to open because we're losing money on it and it's not a great experience and people are scared. We're going to double down on takeout and drive through. So we're going to look at bringing food to people rather than having people come to the food."

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The church has found the same thing with in-person and online, right? When you're doing online only, and I'm not saying that'll be the future, but you can really focus on doing online well. Then you open up in-person services, it's 10 times more complicated than it used to be and you're getting a fraction of the results you used to get. So that's where you have to look like we only have so many hours. We only have so much time. We only have so much energy. What can we cut, what can we eliminate so that we avoid the trap of doing nothing well. Because if you're not really focused on doing online well, if you're not really focused on doing in-person well, and to choose, you got to think, where is the greater potential? You got to look at where do we have the chance to be really good at something.

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And that leads to point number five which is become a student of culture. To really understand where you should be cutting, where you should be doing something new, where you should be focusing, you've got to understand how the culture is changing. Right now it is changing fast. It's changing faster than ever. One of the cheats to do this on is to look at generational trends because me, I'm a Gen X. Some of you are Boomers. Some of you are Millennials. A lot of you are Millennials. There's a few Gen Zs may be in the mix. But what you'll discover is sometimes the habits of Gen X or Boomers are a little bit different than Millennials, are a little bit different than Gen Z. There's an Alpha generation under that. So you want to do what Wayne Gretzky said. "You don't want to skate to where the puck is. You want to skate to where the puck is going."

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So generationally, what's shifting? People are moving to more and more video, right? More and more online. Our life is a seamless integration between online and real life. And if you look at where generations are going to behave five years down the road, 10 years down the road, a lot more is going to be online. A lot more is going to be video, a lot more is going to be it's coming to me. I'm not going to you. If you're in retail, you're thinking about what's our distribution system going to look like? How do we get our products not just into the store, but into consumers' homes? If you're a church it's like, "Yeah, okay. We're always going to have people in person but what are we going to do about all the people that we want to reach who are online? Where is the future going?" You want to be a student of culture.

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You want to pay attention to data and then you want to try to figure out how do we actually move to where things are going to be ahead of time, two or three years in the future. I've found when I've done that well, it's turned out really well. At first people are going to say, "Why are you spending all your

money and time on this?" It's like, "Eh, just wait a little bit" and you move into the future a lot more effortlessly. Become a student of culture.

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Number six, focus on your sweet spot. Ask yourself the question that Jim Collins asked years ago. What do you think you can be best in the world at? Or maybe not in the world but what do you think you can be best at? What do you do that makes you special? It could be like, "Wow, we are great at relationships and we broker online and in real life relationships really, really well. For a lot of small churches or small businesses, here's the thing. How can you be the best local organization? You think about it. We went from agribusiness and AgriFood, which is a very real thing, to like this whole farm-to-table movement. Everybody wants to be this farm-to-table, local, local. Well, the good news is nobody should be able to out local the local church and nobody should be able to out local the local grocer or the local restaurant or the local business or the small business owner.

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If you're really focused on your community, because a lot of these national brands or national churches or national organizations, they're not coming to your town. Or if they come to your town, they don't really know your town the way you do. So nobody should be able to out local you. Then what are the unique gifts that you bring that maybe others don't and look at that. So for me, I'm not the funniest content creator. I'm not the most brilliant content creator but what I try to do is I just try to be helpful. I try to distill complicated concepts into simple bite-sized pieces that can help leaders in their day-to-day struggle. The overarching mission is I want to help people thrive in life and leadership. That's one thing where I feel like I can add a little bit of value. Where can you add value? Where can your organization add value? Focus on your sweet spot. So for me when I'm creating content like this, that's kind of my sweet spot. It's one of the things that I personally, one of my favorite things to do and things that have helped some leaders over time.

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Then finally, when you're stuck, try this. Ask what your successor would do. Imagine you don't hold your job anymore and a whole new team comes in, okay? Imagine there's a new boss, there's a new CEO, there's a new lead pastor, there's a new executive director or whatever. What would that person do? Sometimes when you phrase the question that way, you kind of know. "Well, they would stop doing that and they would start doing this and they would probably make these staff changes. And they would probably, and you kind of know." Well, do that, do that. That can be the courage for you to say, "Yeah, that's exactly what we should be doing." Or if you want to think about it another way. Let's say you spent 5,000, 10,000, 20,000 dollars on a consultant to come in so they could tell you what to do and you kind of already know what that consultant would say. Just do it, just do it, right?

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So those are some things that have helped me generate momentum and those are some things that I've seen other organizations do when they find momentum. I hope they help you and your team. There's an application guide that will walk you through some really practical steps next.