



# Episode 72: Moving Implemented Ideas Into an Organization

Featuring: Mingo Palacios & Ethan Vanse

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## Transcript:

Mingo Palacios: [00:10](#) Hey everybody, thanks for tuning into the PD Podcast. You know from time to time we get the luxury of traveling around the country and actually bringing our podcast to conferences and events that are happening all over the country. This conversation took place at Thrive Conference. It's an incredible one hosted by Bayside Church. Enjoy the episode.

Mingo Palacios: [00:30](#) Hey everybody. Welcome to the Purpose Driven Podcast. My name is Mingo, your host, and we are here at Thrive Conference in Sacramento and all week long we've been hearing from some incredible leaders both on the platform and from off the platform.

Today we've got Ethan Vanse sitting across the table from us in our good 'ole airstream studio. Ethan, welcome to the podcast. We're thankful to have you. Ethan, you came from Church On The Move and you are a critical part of that organization's move from one generation to another and really helping them become the best version of themselves, and now you find yourself a part of the leadership team here at Bayside, which is so exciting. I'd love for you to share with our listening audience maybe some key insights that you've learned along the way in your ministry career about having the intuition to see a pivot or an idea implemented and how you took it from something that the Lord was revealing to you personally and how you moved it into the organization at large being, you know, not 'the guy' but a guy in the organization. Go ahead and talk to our audience.

Ethan Vanse: [01:40](#) Yeah, such a great question. Great topic. Thanks for inviting me to talk to you guys for a little bit. First, let me just set the bar of expectation really, really low.

Mingo Palacios: [01:49](#) [laughing] Dial us down dude. Dial us down.

Ethan Vanse: [01:52](#) Just fast forward, skip to the next podcast. No, I'm kidding.

Mingo Palacios: [01:55](#) So funny.

Ethan Vanse: [01:55](#) You know, I think I've been really fortunate since I was really, really young to be around some fantastic leaders, like top of the line leaders. And so a lot of who I am is gained out of osmosis.

Mingo Palacios: [02:07](#) Yes, so good.

Ethan Vanse: [02:09](#) I think most of us are probably that way. Right?

Mingo Palacios: [02:09](#) Yeah of course.

Ethan Vanse: [02:10](#) We're a product out of the soil we were planted in.

Mingo Palacios: [02:12](#) Yeah.

Ethan Vanse: [02:12](#) And so one of the things that is such a part of the culture that I come out of and just ingrained into me is knowing that change is just part of life. Everything's a season and every season is temporary. And so with that expectation, that makes transitions a lot easier. Now the problem in churches is most people that go to churches don't share that expectation. Like, "The way I like it is the way I like it and this is the way it should always be."

Mingo Palacios: [02:36](#) Right and "It will be that way forever." Right? "So help us God."

Ethan Vanse: [02:39](#) Right. "Why would we do that?" And so knowing how to navigate that has always been something that has both been something that's part of our culture, but also comes really naturally to me because I'm just on any personality profile that you take, you're either going to be on the high structured side or the high spontaneous side.

Mingo Palacios: [02:55](#) Yes. Yeah.

Ethan Vanse: [02:55](#) I'm just really on the high spontaneous side. So I think that helps too, just to see it clearly. The question is how you get other people to buy into that?

Mingo Palacios: [03:01](#) Yeah. Good.

Ethan Vanse: [03:01](#) So you know, leaders see things way before they're often necessary or other people see them and so how do you get other people to tag along so you're not just, in the old John Maxwell language, just going for a walk, right? Nobody's actually following you, right? Like you're just like-

Mingo Palacios: [03:15](#) Oh my gosh, that's so good. When you're just going for a walk. No followers.

Ethan Vanse: [03:18](#) Yeah, you're just on your own. So, the way I'm wired is I love to rejuvenate things, sort of reenergize things and that's really the journey that we were on for about three years at Church On The Move. So Willie George is our founding pastor and Whit George just this summer transitioned into being our lead pastor. And so it was about a three year journey to set that up and one of the coolest things that I got to do was to sort of be a part of that process to go, "How do you set a young leader up for success and how do you transition something so that people actually really feel like they're a part of the transition and the transition isn't just being handed to him?"

Mingo Palacios: [03:55](#) Wow. That is a key concept. Like that's a paradigm shift in and of itself that people are a part of a process, not just the receiving end of one.

Ethan Vanse: [04:07](#) Yeah and I think nobody likes to be told what to do. Right?

Mingo Palacios: [04:11](#) Of course.

Ethan Vanse: [04:11](#) Especially Americans.

Mingo Palacios: [04:11](#) [laughing]

Ethan Vanse: [04:11](#) I don't know how many people are listening outside of America, but especially in America, it's like we have that pioneer spirit like, "I want to do things my way. Get out of my lane, I'm driving here" kind of thing. So we often find ourselves pushing back on change, pushing back on transition because we feel like it's being mandated to us instead of something that we got to be a part of and have input in. So, I think one of the things that is probably most pivotal in that from both what I'm learning here at Bayside as I transitioned into leadership, specifically at Adventure, which is a church here in Sacramento. This is the Sacramento area. That's the reason that my family and are moving here is to lead that church. Very similar with Church On The Move is that whoever has the loudest voice, whoever has the most leadership chips in their pocket, the most leadership credibility has to leverage that on behalf of the younger leader and the changes that they're going to implement. Because you're coming in, especially if you're a younger leader and if you're listening and you're a younger leader, you're an emerging leader and you're kind of like, "I'm starting to step into my first sort of

leadership season." One of the hardest things to do if you're in that chair is to feel like your voice doesn't amplify. Like, "I'm talking but I don't have a microphone. Nobody's listening. Nobody can hear me."

Mingo Palacios: [05:25](#)

Right. Right. Right.

Ethan Vanse: [05:25](#)

"I say something and it doesn't get heard." But the point leader in the organization always has a microphone. They always have sort of that invisible lapel microphone on and their voice just gets amplified across the organization. So one of the best things you can do is sit down and have a conversation if you haven't already about how can I as the point leader, if you're initiating the conversation and I think that you should, if you're listening and you're a senior leader, initiate that. Just basically assume that the emerging leaders in your organization need this. They'll very often not say it, but do desperately.

Mingo Palacios: [05:57](#)

So good.

Ethan Vanse: [05:58](#)

They need that conversation to go, "Okay, how can I use my voice to set you up to succeed?" And if you're the emerging leader coming into that setting, find a place where you can get the full attention bandwidth of your leader and say-

Mingo Palacios: [06:12](#)

Typically not between services in the green room.

Ethan Vanse: [06:15](#)

Right. Yeah. Exactly not when you're trying to flag them down in the hallway, but just when you can

actually have their attention, say, "Listen, as I step into this, one of the things that will help me will be..." or "You will help me most by..."

Mingo Palacios: [06:27](#)

Yes. So good.

Ethan Vanse: [06:27](#)

And one of the things that helps a lot is, especially if you're in a church setting or in a setting where maybe you have a board meeting and the point leaders often talking to the key stake holders is just to say, almost like you're just ad libbing it, "You know, the other day as we were talking, Ethan said this... And when he, man, as he's been talking about this, he just has so many smart ideas with this." It's just giving that leadership credibility so that now when I, as an emerging leader circle up with leaders in the organization, shareholders in the organization, they know we're on the same side of the desk. The point leader and you are on the same side of the desk is huge. If that doesn't happen, it's so, so, so difficult to walk in and try to force your voice where it doesn't yet have acceptance. So that's really, really huge.

Mingo Palacios: [07:15](#)

Right. And you ended up having to, if that amplification isn't given to you, you will burn out your voice trying to be heard.

Ethan Vanse: [07:22](#)

Trying to scream at the top of your lungs and you run yourself hoarse just trying to do that.

Mingo Palacios: [07:26](#)

What's unfortunate is that I think there are so many organizations, because that keen awareness isn't there, that EQ isn't high enough inside of either the

senior leader or the emerging leader that they end up having something very critical to add to the organization. But because there's not a, almost like the playground isn't, like the rules aren't set on the board yet or the question is, "Are you for me? Are you with me? You have the young hot shot. I'm wondering if you're a threat to my system."

Ethan Vanse: [07:55](#)

Right.

Mingo Palacios: [07:55](#)

And then equally I'm wondering if the senior leader is a threat to my system. To realize you're mutually working towards the same thing. Right? But you said something really, really so smart, "Do not try to rush that, experience that exchange." You can't have it in the hallway. You can't have it as he's on his way to his car in the elevator going down. You can't have it in a moment where you don't have his attention because that moment is so significant.

Ethan Vanse: [08:24](#)

Yes. I think maybe the key word to keep in mind with all leadership transitions, whether you're bringing somebody on board, especially if you're passing the leadership baton, right? The point leadership, senior leadership baton, is patience. Just know it's going to take longer than you want it to take, but it'll be worth it. And the reason why it takes a long, you've probably heard this, there's a sort of a leadership axiom, a sort of a leadership equation that  $Q + A = E$  that it can be an excellent idea, or it can be a quality idea, but if you don't add acceptance to that, you won't get an excellent product. So quality plus acceptance



equals excellence and you can have quality, but quality by itself does not equal excellence. Quality plus acceptance and the acceptance piece is what takes time. And that's what I love about the Purpose Driven model. In fact, there's a huge influence on us at Church On The Move. Huge influence on Bayside is that it gives you a common leadership vocabulary so that you can sit down and go, "Okay, what do we believe our church is wired to do?" And if you haven't been through that process, one of the best things you can do is go, "Okay, let's rewind. Let's go through." For us at Churchill moves, Purpose Driven Church. We didn't take it as just like a blank check and try to plug and play it. But it gave us like this foundation.

Mingo Palacios: [09:42](#)

It's like a wireframe, right?

Ethan Vanse: [09:43](#)

Yes. And you just go, "Okay, do we believe these? So the five things in Purpose Driven church, are these are the five things that we believe a human being was wired by God to do? Now how do we express those in our church environment? So do we believe there's five? Would we classify them as four? We had a six. How would we do that?"

Mingo Palacios: [09:59](#)

Can you boil them down? Can you add an extra?  
Yeah.

Ethan Vanse: [10:00](#)

But if you go through that process, then the new leader coming in and the senior leader both have a shared vocabulary and then the leadership circle around them, you go, "Okay, here's what we've been

praying about. Here's what we've been thinking."  
Then you widen that circle out. Everybody starts sharing that. Now you know, the hardest thing is when you're the emerging leader; you don't want to step on toes. When you're the senior leader, you don't want your toes stepped on and so you're always, "Who's leading?" You're always kind of asking that question like, "Can I lead? Can I do this?" But if you rewind and have those leadership conversations-

Mingo Palacios: [10:32](#) Have that common language established.

Ethan Vanse: [10:33](#) Yes, and then when the time is right big, you know, just for whatever it's worth, depending on where you are in this journey, a neutral facilitator to those conversations is huge. Just somebody to go ask good questions from the outside, emotionally neutral and see what the responses are from emerging leaders in the organization, senior leaders. Are we on the same page? Are we sharing vocabulary? Because if you're not, eventually that will bleed out into the public and there's going to be that obvious rift between the two people, but patience, patience, patience.

Mingo Palacios: [11:04](#) Patience.

Ethan Vanse: [11:04](#) And gaining acceptance, sitting down with key shareholders and going, "Hey, this is what I feel." So if you're passing the leadership baton, maybe you're starting a new initiative in your church, you've never had this ministry before, and you're putting an assistant pastor in this key leadership position, a

campus pastor position, whatever it is, having those conversations. And most of you listening, you know this instinctively. This is not new to you. It's just really hard to do. When we're remodeling our house, we want to snap our fingers and the paint's done. The new faucets are in. We don't like the process of-

Mingo Palacios: [11:32](#)

The process. Yes.

Ethan Vanse: [11:33](#)

"What? That paint has to dry before I do that? Ugh! I just want to get my fingers on it." Then you put fingerprints where they don't belong and then it gets messy. And so I think that we do the same thing often in leadership was we rush that process instead of going, "Let me let the cement dry, the paint dry."

Mingo Palacios: [11:49](#)

We need it to dry and there's a system that needs to work. You're not going to lay baseboards down before you let the paint dry, right? All of those things or you work twice as hard to make it the way it ought to be. And I don't think any of us are hungry for that model to be implemented. You know?

Ethan Vanse: [12:05](#)

Yes. And if you're wired like me, it's just like you see the end and you're like, "Why can't we just be there?"

Mingo Palacios: [12:09](#)

Yeah.

Ethan Vanse: [12:10](#)

"Why can't we just be at the end of this?" So all of that, I'm living it right now with Adventure, with Bayside. It's just going, "Okay, there's this season where leadership has to take a backseat to learning." And if you are coming in as an emerging leader, if

you're new and people don't know you, come in as a learner, not a leader.

Mingo Palacios: [12:32](#) Wisdom pouring out right now. Come in as a learner. Put the pause, the brakes. You probably know you've led well seasons past people hired you because they know you have the capacity to lead, but make your first impression that of a learner.

Ethan Vanse: [12:46](#) Yes, yes, yes, yes. And just know, the thing I've had to remind myself a lot during this process is I don't know what the people in the seats are feeling. I don't know what the people across the desk are feeling. I don't know how their day is. I don't know if they're burnout. I haven't worked with them for five years. I don't know if this is a happy face. If this is fake, if they don't want to get fired. I don't know anything about them. And so you ask the question, how are you doing? Most people as a new leader, they want to impress you, they want to please you and they're going to say, "Good, I'm fine. Everything's wonderful." But knowing that every season has grief because every new season means the loss of another season. You have to let people go through that process of letting go of what was, and there's that season in between. There's a great book called Managing Transitions. The author's last name is Bridges, which is an awesome last name for transition book.

Mingo Palacios: [13:38](#) It was like, it was meant to be his topic.

Ethan Vanse: [13:41](#) Right, but in that book he talks about the three stages of transition and understanding those and understanding that grief is part of that even though you wouldn't put that language around like nobody died.

Mingo Palacios: [13:54](#) Right. Right. Right.

Ethan Vanse: [13:57](#) For example, between Willie George and Whit George, "Willie George is my pastor, and so is he not going to be my pastor?" And helping people unpack that and understand I'm not going anywhere. I'm not retiring. I'm still going to be around. I'm still helping Whit lead the church. I'm still very involved, reassuring people and then giving them time. What I thought one of the wisest things during the leadership transition that Whit and pastor George did was that the weekend that the official announcement was made, there had already been a lot of meetings with key leaders in the church, key shareholders in the church. All these people already knew. So many people. Basically the goal should be this. I think in any good transition, we do the same thing at Adventure. So if you're listening and you're from Adventure, you're behind the scenes don't tell anybody.

Mingo Palacios: [14:41](#) This is the playbook.

Ethan Vanse: [14:42](#) Yeah, so just help as many people as possible. Feel like you're letting them in on a secret.

Mingo Palacios: [14:47](#) On the inside circle.

Ethan Vanse: [14:47](#) And then you're going to let the public know later.

Mingo Palacios: [14:49](#) Yeah, that's good.

Ethan Vanse: [14:49](#) So that they go, "Okay, I'm valuable here. I matter. They thought of me." Because the truth is you do feel that way course being fake. You really do feel that way and so you're trying to help them. And then right after we made the public transition, pastor George, our founding pastor, preached like, I think two or three weeks in a row. So it was like, "We're doing this, but he's still here and we're still getting to hear from him. We're still hearing his leadership voice." So there's some really key things like that, just patience, patience, patience. Getting that buy in, helping people to feel like we're doing this together. I'm not doing this to you.

Mingo Palacios: [15:19](#) I love so much of the heart behind that. The heart is that nobody is hurt in the process. The heart is that everybody is brought at the same pace so that nobody's senses that they were left out of such an important transition. All keys to making everybody feel like they're a part of it, not just being handed it.

Ethan Vanse: [15:39](#) Yes.

Mingo Palacios: [15:39](#) I imagine for our listening audience, either somebody who is a part of a transitional plan as the key player in that or somebody who has to implement a transition having access to you would be a massive blessing outside of just this episode. So, is there a contact like social media or facebook or an email address that

you'd be willing to share with our listening audience if they ever wanted to go, "Hey, here's the season I'm in, here's the situation I'm in, what would you? How would you?" Would you ever be willing to share?"

Ethan Vanse: [16:15](#) Absolutely. Absolutely. So let me give you a fake cell phone number.

Mingo Palacios: [16:18](#) [laughing] My flip phone number. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ethan Vanse: [16:22](#) So a great email address is just my first and last name, Ethan Vanse. Vanse is spelled with an s. V-A-N-S-E @gmail.com. So super easy to remember. Just first last name @gmail.com.

Mingo Palacios: [16:32](#) That's excellent. Ethan, thank you so much for giving us just a snippet of not what you've done so well in the past, but what the Lord is currently walking you through right now, Bayside, Adventure, Church On The Move. What a critical and what a glorious space to be in, in order to honor the bride, right?

Ethan Vanse: [16:51](#) Yes.

Mingo Palacios: [16:51](#) Every version of her, whatever her name might be on the front door. Then you get to steward her well. I love that so much. For our listening audience, if this was a conversation that encouraged you, I'd love for you to either tag somebody in it or share it and pass it along to somebody who might be in that season where they're having to manage transition. This could be a really great blessing for them unexpectedly, so Ethan, thanks for your time. We'll talk to you guys soon.

Mingo Palacios: [17:22](#)

We hope today's insights left you feeling inspired and propelled towards your greatest potential. Thanks again for joining us for another episode of the PD Podcast. Until next time.

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