

Conclaving the California Way: Getting an OD view out to the world thru hip publications like Zocalo

A few weeks ago I got a call from [Joe Mathews](#), our storyteller for the [Delta Dialogues](#), who is a career journalist. Pope Benedict XVI had resigned—the first pope in six hundred years to do so—and speculation was swirling about who would be elected next.

Joe asked me a fascinating question: How would an organizational development consultant provide the cardinals with a better decision-making process in choosing the next pope? It was a critical moment for the church. The new pontiff would face many strategic questions, not to mention a seemingly constant stream of sexual abuse scandals. Debate was rampant about who the best candidates were. We both assumed that it would take the cardinals at least several days, if not a couple of weeks, to choose the next leader of the Catholic Church.

Boy, were we wrong. Before the moon could rise a second time over the Sistine Chapel, the white smoke unfurled through its chimney, signifying that the next pope had been chosen.



Alas! I didn't get my chance to influence their process. (But it did crack me up to imagine a woman, hailing from *California*, no less, telling the ecclesiastical princes of the Catholic church how they could have a better conclave.)

So even though this is now yesterday's news, I wanted to share the article because it is also an excellent example of how we practitioners can disseminate our thinking to a larger and less traditional audience. It's as simple as tying what we know to an interesting current event, soliciting the help of a professional writer, and publishing the piece in a place that is not directed at practitioners.

[Zocalo](#), the e-zine where my article appeared, publishes online pieces and hosts events targeted at young people and minorities. I think their mission is best summed up here:

"We explore connection, place, big ideas, and what it means to be a citizen, be it locally, regionally, nationally, or globally. We are committed to welcoming a new, young, and diverse generation to the public square."

Zocalo reminds me of what "[This American Life](#)" has done for radio and what "[The Daily Show](#)" has done for TV—it brings a personal, direct, and fresh voice to written journalism. Definitely check it out. Whatever the topic, it is sure to impact your thinking—especially around something you thought you were clear on.

I hope you enjoy the article, "[Cardinals, Don't Squander This Conclave ... With a Professional Facilitator, Flip Charts, and Breakout Sessions, You Could Put the Church On a Much Better 500-Year Path.](#)"