



**DIC IN PRACTICE:**

# Discerning the Future of PT Kanisius

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## Our Starting Point

PT Kanisius is a Jesuit-owned enterprise engaged in publishing, printing, and trading. Although PT Kanisius was formally established in 2014, its journey of service as a Jesuit mission in Java, Indonesia, through publishing and printing began much earlier, in 1922. It was initiated by Fr. J. Hoeberechts, SJ, the Superior of the Jesuit Mission in Java. He was a Dutch Jesuit missionary who was involved in the development of the Church and education for the indigenous people of Java.

For many decades, the work of Kanisius was carried out under the legal framework of a foundation. As time went by, Kanisius continued to grow in its production and marketing activities and gradually developed into a more professionally managed organization, with an increasingly significant economic impact. This development eventually led to the transformation of the Kanisius Foundation into PT Kanisius.

This history and evolution have given PT Kanisius a somewhat unique identity. On the one hand, it is recognized as part of the Church and as a work of the Jesuit mission; on the other hand, it has developed into a professional publishing, printing, and trading company serving the wider public. PT Kanisius is also actively involved in national publishing, printing and trading associations and contributes to the development of these industries in Indonesia.

This dual identity has created an ongoing tension between business orientation and apostolic mission. Every employee who joins PT Kanisius encounters this tension, particularly when making operational decisions in the day-to-day running of the company.

As PT Kanisius approaches its 105th anniversary in January 2027, it faces a challenging business environment marked by economic pressures, intense competition, rapid developments in digital technology, and market disruption. The company is challenged not only to sustain its operations but also to find ways to grow and remain relevant in the future. At the same time, PT Kanisius needs to achieve significant economic growth in order to provide for the well-being of approximately 300 employees and their families.

These business challenges require the Board of Directors (BOD) of PT Kanisius to make decisions that are effective from a business perspective, while at the same time remaining faithful to the mission and Ignatian values handed down by its founders.

## The Key Question

**What does PT Kanisius need to do to sustain its growth over the next ten years?**

## DIC as an Alternative Approach

DIC emerged as a relevant approach to be undertaken collectively by the BOD. The hope was that, through this process, they could discern and agree together on the key areas that needed attention in determining the direction of the company for the next ten years.

We believed that each member of the BOD had their own dreams and ideals about how the company should develop over the next ten years. At the same time, each of them was also carrying particular concerns and worries about the company's future.

Through DIC, we wanted to create a space for each member of the BOD to express their dreams and concerns for the company, and then, through a shared process of discernment, to identify and agree on the key areas that should receive attention over the following ten years.



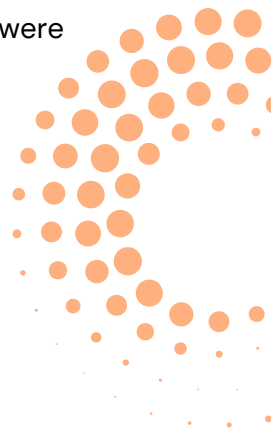


## Our Challenges

In carrying out the DIC process, we faced several challenges.

### In Terms of the Participants

1. Most members of the BOD at PT Kanisius were already familiar with the process and dynamics of spiritual conversation. However, they had limited practical experience with DIC and had only a theoretical understanding of the process.
2. The members of the BOD range in age from 42 to 71, representing different generations—Baby Boomers, X Generation, and Y Generation. Each person also had distinctive characteristics and communication styles, which often created friction in their everyday interactions.
3. Psychologically, each member of the BOD was experiencing anxiety and carrying particular burdens as they faced increasingly difficult work targets. These targets were becoming more difficult to achieve as the external business environment became increasingly complex and difficult to anticipate.



## In Terms of Time

1. Limited time meant that the three rounds of spiritual conversation could not be completed in a single session/gathering and had to be spread over several meetings.
2. One difficulty in not being able to complete all three rounds of spiritual conversation in a single meeting was that each subsequent meeting had to begin by recalling and reconnecting with the experience of the previous spiritual conversation.
3. This required the participants to remember, re-enter, and re-experience their own inner movements as they had experienced them in the previous meeting. This was not easy, and not all participants were necessarily able to fully reconnect with those inner movements.

## Enabling Conditions

In addition to the challenges mentioned above, there were also several factors that supported the implementation of DIC, as follows:

| Participants                                                                                            | Space                                                                                                                                         | Timing                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| All participants were already familiar with one another and knew each other's strengths and weaknesses. | There were several comfortable and accessible spaces available for spiritual conversation—clean, cool, quiet, and with adequate refreshments. | The period leading up to the company's 105th anniversary provided an appropriate moment to reflect on the company's journey and discern the way forward. |

## Our Process

DIC was designed to be integrated into the company's *ongoing formation* program for its structural leaders, which has become a regular annual program at PT Kanisius. The process was relatively extensive, as it consisted of several stages.

### Stage 1: Writing a Personal Reflection as Preparation for the Retreat

As preparation for the retreat, each participant was invited to write a personal reflection based on the following questions:

**Over the past month, was there any work experience that made me feel proud? Was there any work experience that made me feel disappointed? What can I learn from these feelings of pride and disappointment?**

## Stage 2: Guided Retreat

Before entering into the DIC process, the company facilitated a three-day retreat for the BOD, guided by Fr. Benedictus Hari Juliawan, SJ.

The retreat provided ample opportunity for the participants to communicate more deeply with themselves in an atmosphere of silentium (Latin for silence, stillness, quiet) as well as to engage in spiritual conversation in small groups of three.

During the retreat, the participants revisited and prayed with the reflections they had written beforehand. With the guidance of the retreat director, each participant was invited to take time to deepen and interiorize their reflections on the history of the company and its direction for the future.

The following guiding questions were used to support the participants' reflection and interiorization throughout the retreat:

| Day One                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Day Two                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Day Three                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1. How would I describe my recent experience as part of PT Kanisius? What do I feel as a person and at the same time as an employee of PT Kanisius? Why?</p> <p>2. What grace has brought me joy? What conversion do I need?</p> <p>3. Draw a picture that symbolizes your current situation at PT Kanisius.</p> | <p>1. Reflect on the story of PT Kanisius from its beginnings and its development over the years. Which part of this journey feels like the "main chapter" of its story?</p> <p>2. What thread can I find running through the story of PT Kanisius?</p> <p>3. In the presence of God, what insights can I gain about the company's mission, charism, values, and identity?</p> | <p>1. What will be the greatest challenge facing PT Kanisius over the next ten years?</p> <p>2. Is my "oil" (Parable from Matthew 25:1-13) as a leader sufficient to remain vigilant in facing this challenge?</p> <p>3. What can I do to become better prepared when the time comes to face this greatest challenge?</p> |

The retreat concluded with the participants sharing the fruits of their reflection that they wished to carry home, through sharing in the larger group. The participants were invited to return to their daily lives with a commitment to continue deepening, personally, the spiritual fruits they had received during the retreat.

After the retreat, all the participants returned to their regular work, carrying out their respective duties and responsibilities.



### Stage 3: Three Rounds of Spiritual Conversation

Two weeks after the retreat, the participants were invited to come together again for spiritual conversation. Since the conversations had to take place in between their daily work and the available time was limited, the three rounds of spiritual conversation could not be completed in a single session/gathering. Instead, they were divided into two separate gatherings.

#### Post-Retreat Gathering 1: Rounds 1 and 2 of Spiritual Conversation

- In the first round, each participant shared again the spiritual fruits they had brought home from the retreat, as a form of refreshment.
- In the second round, each participant shared what had touched or resonated with them from what the other participants had shared.
- The note-taker recorded all the points that had touched or resonated with each participant.
- After the second round, we took time for silence and prayer with everything that had been recorded by the note-taker. The notes were then shared with each participant for their own personal prayer and interiorization.
- The spiritual conversation was concluded, and again, the participants returned to their respective work.

#### Post-Retreat Gathering 2: Round 3 of Spiritual Conversation

- One week later, the participants gathered again for the third round of spiritual conversation, as a continuation of the first and second rounds conducted in the previous gathering.

- One day before the meeting, the participants were given the following guiding question for personal reflection:

**Reflecting on the summary of the second round of spiritual conversation, what might God be asking of PT Kanisius in the next ten years?**

This guiding question was intended to help the participants discern together what PT Kanisius needed to undertake in the next ten years.

- Since several days had passed since the previous gathering, the third-round conversation began with a reading of the note-taker's summary of the sharing from the second round, as a form of *refreshment*.
- In the third round, each participant shared the fruits of their personal discernment regarding the priorities that PT Kanisius should pursue over the next ten years, based on the notes from the second-round conversation.
- The process resulted in a list of strategic actions that PT Kanisius needed to undertake. These still needed to be mapped according to their time horizons: short term (the next 1–2 years), medium term (3–5 years), and long term (6–10 years).
- The gathering concluded by bringing what had been written on the list into prayer.

## Tensions and Difficulties

### 1. Spiritual Movements vs. Rational Strategic Arguments

Since the second round of the spiritual conversation, we have sensed a shift in the atmosphere of the conversation—from one characterized by *spiritual movements* toward a more rational and strategic discussion. At times, the atmosphere of the spiritual conversation seemed to be influenced by the dynamics of a business strategy meeting.

The moments of silent prayer at the beginning and end of the gathering helped to restore the spiritual character of the process. However, the highly strategic and professional nature of the topic continued to draw the participants toward rational thinking based on accurate data. At the same time, the topic was closely related to the company's business strategy and therefore required complete and accurate data, which needed to be discussed—and at times even debated—through rational argumentation.

This raised an important tension within the process: how could we remain attentive to spiritual movements and discernment while also engaging responsibly with the rational and data-driven aspects of strategic decision-making?

## 2. The Significant Time and Energy Required for DIC

The DIC process required a considerable amount of time and energy. It demanded a strong commitment from the participants to sustain the process alongside the participants' demanding work schedules and targets.

### Action Taken

The key points that emerged from the three rounds of spiritual conversation were strategic and professional in nature. They therefore required further enrichment and grounding through quantitative and qualitative data, as well as more comprehensive discussion.

For this reason, the insights that had emerged through the lengthy process of reflection and spiritual conversation were subsequently brought into a series of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) for further discussion, organized according to specific themes.

#### A significant moment



In this particular application of DIC, we encountered a significant moment: the company's 105th anniversary. This was a moment when all employees were experiencing a sense of joy and sharing hope for a better future. In such an atmosphere, the awareness and enthusiasm to evaluate ourselves and reflect on our experiences seemed to be heightened compared with ordinary days.

### Results

One of the visible results of the DIC process was the each member of the BOD growing conviction regarding the key points that had emerged. With this sense of conviction, they were spiritually more prepared to take a proactive role in the subsequent FGDs, where each of the points emerging from the DIC process would be examined further for its feasibility and viability.

Another positive outcome was that the participants became more accustomed to engaging not only their minds but also their hearts in the process of making collective decisions for the good of the company.

## What We Learned

1. DIC can be applied to general topics that may not appear to be directly related to spiritual matters.
2. DIC can be combined with FGDs to support more grounded and well-considered decisions.
3. DIC can be more effective when carried out in several stages, beginning with a process of preparation and ending with sufficient time for interiorization, without rushing the process.
4. DIC is more than a process of collective decision-making. It can become a way of cultivating the habits of listening, reflecting, and sharing responsibility with sincerity and openness.
5. The implementation of DIC needs to be adapted thoughtfully to the context and objectives of the organization so that it can serve its purpose more effectively.

