

Guidelines for the

Professional Staff Person

When Interviewing the Pastor/Staff-Parish Relations Committee

These Guidelines are offered to the professional staff person as he/she considers employment or for reviewing present position and status. The following is general in nature, and each person should apply the necessary data and criteria to his/her own individual situation.

I. Analysis. It is important that you are aware of your strengths, weaknesses, and interests and that you analyze the local congregation's understanding of itself so that together you find the best possible way to serve the needs of each.

A. Know yourself so that you are clear about:

1. Your abilities, interests, training, experience – your vast store of strong points.
2. Your weaknesses and/or areas of lesser strengths and interests.
3. Your long and short-term professional goals.

B. Study the local congregation under consideration so that you know:

1. Its theological stance and understanding of its mission.
2. Its understanding of its program priorities and its needs for professional leadership.

C. Comparison of A and B for compatibility.

II. Job Description and Terms of Employment. This should be a mutual searching and seeking by you and the local church or agency under consideration. Each of the following points should be considered in detail.

A. Assessment of Responsibilities

1. Developing programs in which areas
2. Developing lay leadership in which areas
3. Giving primary leadership in which ministries and areas
4. Other

B. Delineation of Relationships

1. Support staff — what you will be provided, i.e., secretarial, etc.
2. To whom will you be responsible

Pastor/Parish Relations Committee

When Interviewing and Hiring a Professional Staff Person

These guidelines are offered to local churches or agencies who may be hiring a professional staff person or evaluating an existing staff position. The following is general in nature. Each committee should apply the necessary data and criteria to its own individual situation. It is important to look at the individual strengths and gifts of each person.

I. Analysis to find out compatibility. It is important to know your congregation's needs and goals. You should study the prospective staff person's skills and abilities so together you can determine that the needs of both are served.

A. Study your local congregation so that you are clear about:

1. Your needs and goals regarding your ministry
2. Your theological stance
3. Your priorities — your long and short-term goals as a congregation
4. Determine talents, abilities, skills
 - a) already available in present staff personnel
 - b) needed in prospective staff positions

B. Study the prospective staff person under consideration so that you are clear about:

1. Their interests, skills, abilities, and training
2. What areas are his/her strengths? What areas are his/her lesser strengths?
3. What are his/her short and long term goals?

C. Comparison of A and B for compatibility

II. Job Description and Terms of Employment. It is important that you and the prospective staff person spend time discussing the following points to arrive at a mutual understanding of job expectations and the terms of employment:

A. Assessment of Responsibilities

1. Developing programs in which areas
2. Developing lay leadership in which areas
3. Giving primary leadership in which ministries and areas
4. Others

B. Delineation of Relationships

1. Support staff — what will you need to provide, i.e., secretarial, etc.
2. To whom will the prospective staff person be responsible
3. For whom will the prospective staff person be responsible

3. For whom will you be responsible
4. To what lay groups will you be related — as member and/or resource person
5. Agreement on job title

C. Program budget

1. Availability of funds
2. Who will have control

D. Time requirements

1. Days and number of hours required to accomplish job
2. Extra meetings
3. Vacation
4. Continuing education
5. Outside commitments (beyond the local church)
6. Conditions for termination

E. Salary. It is important that you agree on a base salary, benefits, and time intervals for reviews of salary. It will also be helpful to know the factors used in establishing the salary that is offered.

1. What basis was used to decide salary offered:
 - a) local church staff salaries including senior pastor
 - b) salaries being paid professionals in related areas
 - c) church budget possibilities
 - d) salary scale in the annual conference for comparable positions
2. Benefits
 - a) housing
 - b) insurance
 - c) pension fund
 - d) sick leave
 - e) continuing education
 - f) travel/car expense
 - g) other
3. Reviews — should occur at regular intervals and include discussion about:
 - a) quality of work (merit raises)
 - b) increased responsibilities
 - c) cost of living
 - d) academic growth/increased skills

F. Termination

1. Agree on the defined termination procedures.

III. Process of Interviewing

A. Clarification of I and II outlined above

1. Arrive at common goals and priorities for yourself and local congregation
2. Negotiate between your abilities, interests, skills, and congregation's goals and priorities
3. Agree on specific terms of employment
4. Agree on written contract

4. What lay groups will the prospective staff person be related to as a member and/or resource person
5. Agreement on job title

C. Program Budget

1. Availability of funds
2. Who will have control

D. Time Requirements

1. Days and number of hours required to accomplish job
2. Extra meetings
3. Vacation
4. Continuing education
5. Outside commitments (beyond the local church)
6. Conditions for termination

E. Salary. It is important that you agree on base salary, benefits, and time intervals for review of salary. Some factors that should be considered in establishing the base salary are:

1. Local church staff salaries including senior pastor
2. Salaries being paid public professionals in related areas
3. Church budget possibilities
4. Salary scale in the annual conference for comparable positions
5. Benefits
 - a) housing
 - b) insurance
 - c) pension fund
 - d) sick leave
 - e) continuing education
 - f) travel/car expense
 - g) other
6. Reviews — should occur at regular intervals and include discussion about:
 - a) quality of work (merit raises)
 - b) increased responsibilities
 - c) cost of living
 - d) academic growth/increased skills

F. Termination Procedure

1. A written contract is advisable. Note policy in the *2000 Book of Discipline*, ¶258.2f(10) and ¶322.14e.

III. Process of Interviewing

A. Clarification of I and II outlined above

1. Arrive at common goals and priorities for yourself and prospective staff person
2. Negotiate between your goals and priorities as a congregation and the abilities, skills, and interests of the prospective staff person
3. Agree on specific terms of employment
4. Agree on written contract

B. Find out persons you need to see

1. Lay Persons
 - a) Pastor/Staff-Parish Relations Committee
 - b) Administrative Board personnel
 - c) Council on Ministries personnel
 - d) work area personnel
 - e) others
2. Staff persons
 - a) senior minister
 - b) program staff personnel
 - c) secretarial and other support personnel
 - d) others

B. Determine persons the prospective staff person should see

1. Lay persons
 - a) Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee
 - b) Administrative Board personnel
 - c) Council on Ministries personnel
 - d) work area personnel
 - e) others
2. Staff Persons
 - a) senior minister
 - b) program staff personnel
 - c) secretarial and other support personnel
 - d) others

Locating Staff Persons and Positions

The following resources may be helpful in locating persons seeking positions and in locating churches/agencies seeking professional staff:

- A. Council on Ministries offices and district superintendents
- B. Positions Available and Persons Available, Section of Deacons and Diaconal Ministries, P.O. Box 340007, Nashville, TN 37203-0007; phone 615-340-7375; Web site: www.gbhem.org, (click on Ministry)
- C. Professional Associations and Fellowships:
 - Christian Educators Fellowship, P. O. Box 24930, Nashville, TN 37202

- Fellowship of United Methodists in Worship, Music, and Other Arts, P. O. Box 24787, Nashville, TN 37202
- United Methodist Association of Church Business Administrators, 1200 Davis St., Evanston, IL 60201
- The Fellowship of Adults in Youth Ministry—Dr. Ed Trimmer, Pfeiffer University, P.O. Box 960, Misenheimer, NC 28109
- United Methodist Association of Health and Welfare Ministries, 601 W. Riverview, Dayton, OH 45406
- D. United Methodist seminaries, colleges, and universities
- E. Professionals in the area



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