

CONTINUING EDUCATION *NEEDS ASSESSMENT INVENTORY*

for Ministerial Leaders

MOTIVATION FOR COMPETENT MINISTRY

A servant ministry is the result of a calling. This is foundational and assumes that there are service ministries to perform and that there is a service ministry to be lived. Such is our Biblical tradition and spiritual heritage. With such a servant ministry understanding, our ministry is not professional in the sense of being established as a craft organization for self-aggrandizement. Any such self-pleading and arrogance is disavowed.

There is, however, an earlier use of the word "professional" which does relate to the Christian ministry. "Professional" involves aspiration to excellence in the sense of equipping oneself as carefully as possible to fulfill one's calling. Therefore, we are concerned with any effort to help us "...lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called." (Ephesians 4:1). We want to become more mature in our calling, comfortable with it, secure in it.

We are to be dedicated and responsible people who have committed ourselves to a lifelong process of education, growth and maturation. From time to time we need to evaluate our progress, both as a Ministerial Leader and as a person. Such evaluation is at least threefold and involves the being, knowing and doing dimensions of ministry. Being, knowing and doing cannot be isolated, each in sterile fashion, but they can be separated for purposes of evaluation. Each contributes to and touches the other.

Competence in the practice of ministry may come through self-evaluation and peer evaluation. This document is designed to aid one in that evaluation and to motivate one to serve as his or her own continuing education advisor in developing a strategy for growing competence in ministry. In keeping with Baptist polity and tradition, the standards of competency are self-imposed rather than externally imposed. The accuracy of evaluation will be aided, however, if this document is completed both by the Ministerial Leader and by objective lay persons.

How to Use this Instrument

TWO OPTIONS:

As stated in the Introduction to this document, the Needs Assessment Instrument is designed to be used in either of two ways by the Ministerial Leader.

1. **Self-Assessment:** A ministerial leader can use the document to evaluate himself/herself, designing a continuing education program appropriate to the conclusions.

2. **Term-Assisted Assessment:** A ministerial leader can invite up to four laypersons to assist in the process. A word of caution, however: These persons should be carefully chosen. A preferred procedure would be to use the members of the Pastoral Relations Committee or a group serving a like function.

Whether self-assessment or team-assisted assessment is used, the designers of this document also strongly recommend enlisting a consultant to work with the ministerial leader or group. This could be another pastor (or chaplain) with strong counseling skills, a career counselor, or a person from the community who is church-oriented and with expertise in educational procedures.

Additional Suggestions Related to Step I

1. Use a pencil. In some cases you may wish to change your initial decision.
2. Don't rush this process. Take your time! Think of examples or situations where this item does or does not apply to you or your ministry.
3. If a team-assisted process is used, make sure each member of the team understands the meaning of all items. Clarification here is best done by the consultant so the explanation can be kept separate from the evaluation functions.
4. In moving through Step I it has been found helpful by some ministerial leaders to make notes on a separate sheet to be kept for later discussion.

Additional Suggestions Related to Step II

1. The Step II column on the right side of the scoring sheet is for use by the ministerial leader and should have an entry for each item. Leave no blanks.
2. To the left of each number on the scoring sheet is a short line. This line is for use when the team assisted procedure is followed. Each team member enters his/her "A," "B," "C," or "D" on this line (rather than in the right hand column used by the PCL) for purposes of comparison.

Additional Suggestions Related to Step III

1. When the team-assisted assessment is used, analyze and discuss the "B" and "C" listings of both the team members and the ministerial leader to pick up any noticeable differences or variations. These may need to be discussed.
2. It is in this step where the needs of the church (or constituents) may surface. Any of these needs that may relate to the ministerial leader's continuing education objectives should be discussed and placed on the agenda for discussion in Step IV.

Additional Suggestions Related to Step IV

1. This is the most important part of the document since it becomes the Working Plan for your continuing education program....your own, personalized program. In addition to using intentional terminology, be as specific as possible and clear out any "fuzzy" language or unfocused phrases.
2. When using the team-assisted assessment, use the members of your team as much as possible in the Growth and Action Steps (Step IV). Often the ministerial leader is surprised at the quality and quantity of their suggestions at this point. They may know of resources of which you are unaware.
3. Don't overlook the question of accountability (bottom of the page). This subject is an important factor in your program. You will, of course, need to first contact a person or group and get their consent to serve in this capacity.

Your Name: _____

Date: _____

This instrument is not a test but an inventory of behaviors, attitudes and skills that are often part of a minister's life. Furthermore, this inventory is for you. It can help you do some self-examination and set some targets for expanding your growing edge.

It has four steps and is designed to work two ways: self-evaluation, and evaluation in the company of several others (selected laypersons and colleagues in ministry). The second is more effective since it provides helpful feedback to check your perceptions with others who know you.

Some aspects of ministry can be changed. Others cannot. This inventory is intended to help you identify those skills, attitudes and behaviors which can be altered through training, further analysis or counseling. As you move through this evaluation, look for those educational opportunities that will provide growth in areas that meet your most pressing needs or offer the greatest personal or professional satisfaction.

STEP ONE

1. Enter your name and the date on the line above.

2. Go through the document and rate all items. Each item is posed on a range described in six columns. Mark the appropriate column for each item which best exemplifies or describes your current skill, behavior or attitude. You may proceed in any order; front to back, back to front, or from the middle both ways, but skip none of them.

3. When you have done this, move to STEP TWO.

STEP TWO

Now go back over your rated items and designate, in the STEP TWO column, what you want to do with each item. This column is for determining how much improvement is needed and whether or not you want to do something about it. Use one of the following designations for each item:

- A. I am satisfied with this item and have no desire to improve, through training, at the present time.

- B. I am satisfied with this item, but wish to improve, through training.

- C. I am dissatisfied with this item and wish to improve, through training.

- D. I am dissatisfied with this item, but do not care to do anything to improve at the present time.

THE BEING DIMENSION OF MINISTRY: PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL

Self Awareness

1. Sees oneself as a child of God
2. Reflects a sense of personal identity
3. Recognizes one's strengths and weaknesses
4. Functions with integrity

Spiritual Formation

5. Values silence
6. Values the life of prayer
7. Values devotional resources
- 8.. Values meditation
9. Values worship
10. Communicates a desire for spiritual growth

Physical Wholeness

11. Cares for one's physical health

12. Gives attention to one's appearance

13. Allows time for play and recreation

Relational Sensitivity

Establishes and maintains caring relationships:

14. Within the church family

15. Beyond the church family

16. Within one's own family

Lifelong Learning

17. Reflects and learns from experiences, relationships and study

18. Responds appropriately to criticism

19. Seeks appropriate help in personal, professional and faith crises

20. Develops personal and professional goals

STEP ONE							STEP TWO
	Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Usually	Consistently	Always	A, B, C, or D
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THE KNOWING DIMENSION OF MINISTRY: BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL, SOCIAL AND ETHICAL, AND PASTORAL PERCEPTIONS

Biblical and Theological

21. Reflects knowledge of the content of the Bible

22. Applies Biblical teachings to life situations

23. Keeps current with theology
24. Displays familiarity with church history and Baptist tradition
25. Demonstrates awareness of non-Baptist traditions

Social and Ethical

26. Applies Biblical teachings to social issues
27. Keeps current with contemporary cultural developments
28. Displays awareness of traditional and contemporary ethical teachings

Pastoral

29. Understands the purpose of pastoral care
30. Reflects Biblical, theological and social perceptions through pastoral care
31. Displays knowledge of human behavior through pastoral care

STEP ONE							STEP TWO
	Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Usually	Consistently	Always	A, B, C, or D
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THE DOING DIMENSION OF MINISTRY: SKILLS FOR MINISTRY

Preaching and Worship

- 32. Prepares adequately for preaching
- 33. Integrates Biblical and other resources in sermons
- 34. Communicates effectively through preaching
- 35. Designs purposeful worship services
- 36.. Integrates a variety of resources and styles in worship services
- 37. Leads worship effectively

38. Challenges persons to an authentic personal encounter with God through Jesus Christ

Pastoral Care and Counseling

39. Provides effective pastoral care
40. Acts upon understanding of organizational dynamics
41. Acts upon understanding of personal and interpersonal dynamics
42. Clarifies expectations with the constituency
- 43.. Enables others to clarify their own convictions and values
44. Enables others to identify their gifts for ministry
45. Ministers effectively in life-transition situations

Communications

Communicates effectively through:

46. Teaching
47. Writing
48. Listening

49. Uses contemporary communication techniques
50. Makes Christian faith and symbols come alive through communication
51. Helps others to communicate effectively
- 52.. Offers criticism appropriately
53. Deals effectively with conflict
54. Manifests a forgiving and caring spirit

Community Building

55. Helps people build relationships with God

Helps people build relationships with others:

56. Within the church family
57. Beyond the church family
58. Within one's own family

- 59. Involves others in using their gifts in ministry
- 60.. Involves the congregation with the wider community
- 61. Cooperates with people of other faiths and denominations
- 62. Cooperates with one's own denomination

Management

- 63. Uses authority responsibly
- 64. Follows through on personal commitment

Establishes and maintains priorities in:

- 65. Time management
- 66. Family life
- 67. Personal finance
- 68.. Utilizes continuing education and career development opportunities to enhance ministry
- 69. Works effectively with volunteers

70. Works effectively with staff

71. Administers long-range planning and development

72. Gives effective leadership to church financial program

STEP ONE							STEP TWO
	Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Usually	Consistently	Always	A, B, C, or D
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STEP THREE

- 1.. Now compare estimates of growth needs. List on a blank sheet all B and C designations (area in which you feel improvement is needed) from your STEP TWO ratings.

2. Select and discuss or consider items in STEP THREE that show (through B and C designations) areas of dissatisfaction that might be possible continuing education targets.

3. Pinpoint gaps and/or growth potential...in skills...knowledge...theological understanding...personal awareness and behavior. Consider also linkages; that is, two or three items that might be related, or which might be fused into an integrated theme for further study or training.

STEP FOUR

1. List and discuss continuing education goals and action steps using STEP FOUR. This is best done within the evaluating group, but if circumstances do not allow this, STEP FOUR can be done by the minister alone or with a consultant. Use intentional terminology: "I will..."
2. Search for unusual and/or traditional ways to answer career growth needs.
3. STEP THREE and STEP FOUR data can be used to gain help from career counselors and/or needs assessment specialists to further clarify needs and resources.

GROWTH AND ACTION STEPS (STEP FOUR)

Below write two to four Career Growth Goals and outline action steps for Continuing Education to achieve these goals.	Options and Resources	Barriers, Blockages and Hindrances	Specific Action Steps After Considering Resources and Barriers	Target Date for Completion

TO WHOM WILL I BE ACCOUNTABLE?

Developed by the Midwest Continuing Education Team
 American Baptist Churches/USA
 From a Process Designed by Dr. John Fabian
 Center for Human Organization in Changing Environments
 Pacific Lutheran University - Tacoma, Washington