



Pastor

Competency Model

DOMAINS AND COMPETENCIES

<u>Domain</u>	<u>Competency</u>
<i>Personal Relationship with God in Christ</i>) Faithfulness
<i>Personal Character</i>) Resilience) Integrity) Emotional Maturity
<i>Leadership</i>) Cultivating a Missional Culture) Loving the Congregation) Responding to the Community) Leading Change
<i>Relationship Skills</i>) Building Relationships) Engaging Conflict) Communicating with Impact
<i>Organizational Skills</i>) Decision Making) Delegating and Empowering) Planning and Organizing
<i>Motivational Fit</i>) Motivational Fit

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IN CHRIST

FAITHFULNESS—*Demonstrates a vibrant and compelling relationship with God in Christ; responds to the power of the Holy Spirit in daily life; is obedient to Christ's mission to go and make disciples.*

Key Actions

-) *Demonstrates faith*—Responds to God's call to be a disciple; tells others about the love and power of Jesus Christ through word and deed; inspires others to live faithful lives.
-) *Pursues spiritual growth*— Seeks to strengthen personal relationship with God in Christ through prayer, study, spiritual discipline, and participation in the community of faith; grows in faith through the power of the Holy Spirit.
-) *Practices discernment and obedience*—Discerns and obeys the leadership of the Holy Spirit; seeks God's guidance for the direction of the church.
-) *Practices stewardship*—Gives joyfully and generously of money as well as of time and gifts.

Interview Questions

- Describe the importance of prayer, Bible study, and personal devotion in your life. How have you practiced those disciplines in your daily life? How do you hold yourself accountable to others in your spiritual discipline?
- What percentage of your income did you contribute to God's work last year? How did you decide on that percentage?
- Describe a situation that put your personal relationship with God to the test. What was the cause and what did you do?
- Provide a few examples of how you have demonstrated Christian faith in your personal life.
- Describe your personal relationship with God in Christ. What have you found to be the most effective way to sustain and strengthen that relationship?

PERSONAL CHARACTER

RESILIENCE—*Handles disappointment and rejection while maintaining effectiveness; recovers easily from adversity; adapts behavior effectively to respond to change; draws on God's presence to revitalize the spirit.*

Key Actions

- J *Maintains enthusiasm after disappointment or failure*—Does not allow disappointment to be defeating; affirms God's presence in disappointing circumstances; understands the challenges of transformational leadership; maintains enthusiasm and energy for the work of the Holy Spirit.
- J *Persists in efforts*—Is driven by the mission of Christ; actively seeks to overcome obstacles; is tenacious; draws on faith and the Christian community to move forward.
- J *Adjusts behavior*—Does not persist with ineffective behaviors; modifies behavior to effectively and positively deal with challenges.

Interview Questions

- Tell me about a time when you faced a challenge or obstacle in your ministry that you needed to overcome. What was the situation? How did you handle it? What were the results?
- Tell me about a time when it was necessary for you to adjust your behavior or your approach in order to be successful. What was the situation? What did you do?
- Describe a time when it was important for you to be very persistent when working toward a goal.
- Tell about a time when you faced some personal disappointment. What was the situation? What did you do?
- Describe a time when it would have been easy for you to give up on something you were trying to accomplish. What was the situation? How did you handle it?

INTEGRITY— *Adheres to Godly values in personal and professional life.*

Key Actions

-) *Acts with integrity and authenticity*—Demonstrates honesty, good judgment, and high ethical standards; is transparent in interactions with others and in all church business; acts in a way that is ethical and lawful; demonstrates consistency in actions and words.
-) *Demonstrates personal courage*—Understands the importance of doing the right thing even when it is not easy or comfortable; accepts the personal consequences of leading people out of familiar habits and toward a new future; makes personal sacrifices while providing transformational leadership.
-) *Is trustworthy*—Maintains confidentiality; does not disclose or tolerate the disclosure of information inappropriately; honors commitments.
-) *Maintains appropriate boundaries*—Ensures that personal relationships and time commitments are balanced and appropriate.

Interview Questions

- Tell about a time when doing the right thing was difficult. What was the situation? What did you do?
- Describe how you have made yourself accountable to others in the area of personal integrity.
- What situation have you encountered in your ministry that required the greatest personal courage?
- Describe a situation in which it was necessary for you to take an unpopular stand on an issue. What was the controversy? How did you handle the situation?
- Describe a time when you questioned the honesty or integrity of another individual. What was the situation and what did you do?

EMOTIONAL MATURITY—*Demonstrates the ability to understand and manage emotions; possesses a realistic sense of self; knows own heart and spirit; demonstrates maturity.*

Key Actions

-) *Demonstrates self-awareness*—Is aware of one’s own strengths and weaknesses; recognizes personal emotions and their impact on self and others; draws courage and strength from personal awareness to cultivate awareness in others.
-) *Acts without defensiveness*—Maintains an objective perspective in difficult situations; does not take personal offense to the comments or actions of others; demonstrates a sense of humor; is able to admit mistakes; empathizes with others; solicits, accepts, and internalizes feedback.

Interview Questions

- What life events have been most significant in helping you understand your personal strengths and weaknesses? How have you used that understanding to enhance your work as a disciple of Christ?
- Tell me about a time when you solicited personal feedback from members of your congregation. What feedback did you receive? How did you act on that feedback?
- In what ways have you attempted to make yourself more effective in your job or ministry? How have you become more effective?
- Describe a time when it was difficult not to become emotionally involved in a situation.
- It can be difficult not to become defensive when we face personal criticism. Tell me about a time when you felt you were being criticized by others. What was the situation? How did you handle it?

LEADERSHIP

CULTIVATING A MISSIONAL CULTURE—*Cultivates a congregational culture of faithful mission.*

Key Actions

- J *Casts a vision*—Creates an awareness of and commitment to God’s mission for the church; develops an environment of mission and transformation.
- J *Creates ownership of ministry and discipleship*—Leads the congregation in a commitment to and ownership of the church’s mission; builds leadership in others.
- J *Demonstrates and encourages outward focus*—Leads the congregation to focus outwardly and to be open to the missional nature of God’s work; encourages focus on the unchurched; seeks ways to welcome new people into the community of Christ.
- J *Develops and carries out missional strategies*— With the session, initiates plans and strategies for the carrying out of the vision; leads the congregation in carrying out effective missional strategies.
- J *Instills confidence*—Demonstrates confidence in God’s ability to lead the congregation; instills confidence in others to do God’s will.

Interview Questions

- How have you helped a congregation to define and carry out a vision for ministry?
- Describe how you have worked with a session to shape a new vision or mission focus for a congregation.
- Describe the missional strategy that you envisioned for your last congregation and how you worked toward implementing it.
- How have you helped others to gain ownership of and confidence in a plan?
- Describe a time when you stepped in to revitalize a situation within your congregation that was stagnant or failing. What steps did you take?

LOVING THE CONGREGATION—*Loves, understands, and leads the congregation.*

Key Actions

- J *Understands the congregation*—Listens to the congregation, inviting diverse perspectives; encourages open communication; seeks God’s will for the congregation; discovers the needs, gifts, goals and visions of the congregation; understands the history and culture of the church and applies this knowledge to the current situation.
- J *Loves the people of God*—Provides spiritual and emotional support; listens to and prays with those who are troubled or sick; demonstrates patience in guiding the congregation; communicates an attitude of care.
- J *Leads the congregation in vibrant worship*—Demonstrates the centrality of Christ in preaching and teaching; invites the people to hear God speaking to them through the Scriptures; creates an environment that nourishes and inspires God’s people.
- J *Makes disciples*—Helps others to grow as faithful followers of Christ; communicates the stories, vocabulary, and practices of discipleship; inspires and equips others for ministry; encourages others to seek and obey God’s call to discipleship; equips others to interpret and apply the Bible to their everyday lives.
- J *Works with others*—Works in a respectful and collegial relationship with session members, church staff, and volunteer leaders.

Interview Questions

- Tell about a time when you provided spiritual and emotional support to someone in need. What was the situation? What did you do? What was the result?
- Describe a time when you guided someone to discipleship who is now guiding and inspiring others.
- What is the greatest insight that you gained regarding your last congregation? How did you apply these insights to improve your ability to lead them?
- In the past, how did your congregation know that you truly loved and cared for them?
- In what ways have you invited diverse perspectives and open communication in your congregation?

RESPONDING TO THE COMMUNITY—*Understands and responds to the culture of the community; presents the unchanging gospel to a changing world; reaches out to the unchurched.*

Key Actions

- J *Understands the community*—Seeks to understand and become a part of the community; is sensitive to the needs and gifts of diverse populations; builds relationships with community leaders.
- J *Responds to the community*—Guides the church to respond to the community with the love and justice of the gospel; uses understanding of the community to influence the church's approach to ministry; leads the congregation toward an outward focus; effectively uses elements of the culture as a means to lifting up the gospel.
- J *Reaches the unchurched*—Leads the congregation in reaching the unchurched; focuses outwardly to embrace those who are not yet followers of Jesus Christ; seeks ways to make new disciples for Christ.

Interview Questions

- In what ways have you allowed your knowledge of the immediate community to influence your approach to ministry?
- How have you guided and encouraged the congregation to reach out to the unchurched?
- How have you shifted congregational priorities to be responsive to the needs of the community?
- Describe the steps you have taken to come to know the community in which you minister and to help others know and understand the community.
- How have you reached out to community leaders? What types of relationships have you established within the community?

LEADING CHANGE—Drives the change efforts of the church.

Key Actions

-) *Leads change in the congregation*—Leads change in the congregation for the sake of God’s mission; cultivates the imagination, creativity, and gifts of God’s people; helps the congregation to ask imaginative questions about its present and future; cultivates an environment that welcomes change; brings about real change in the congregation’s actions and behaviors.
-) *Understands the process of change*—Understands that transformation creates an environment that may be unstable; embraces the tension caused by change as a necessary part of transformation; is aware of the human emotions related to change and uncertainty; understands and communicates biblical foundations for change.
-) *Guides change and transition*—Facilitates the change process; overcomes resistance to change by leading the congregation to embrace God’s call; encourages others to embrace rather than fear change so that God’s work through them may have greater impact; provides support, motivation; and strategy to guide the change process.

Interview Questions

- What have you done to cultivate an environment that is open to change? What was the situation? What were the outcomes?
- What is the greatest change effort you have undertaken in your ministry? Describe the situation and explain how you led that effort? What were the results?
- Discuss a time when you encouraged your congregation to make a major change that was vital to spiritual growth and discipleship. How did you handle the situation? What were the results?
- Describe a time when you saw great opportunity for the church to move forward in its mission. How did you facilitate that situation?
- When were you successful in selling a concept to people who initially opposed it? How did you persuade them?

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS—*Uses appropriate interpersonal skills to work effectively with others in the church and in the community; interacts with others in a personable, honest, genuine, and collaborative manner; builds coalitions and partnerships to enhance one’s effectiveness as a transformational pastor and to create a missional culture in the church.*

Key Actions

- J *Builds relationships based on trust*—Builds effective relationships with other people; is accessible to others; establishes trust with others; works effectively with staff, officers, volunteers, community leaders, and governing body members.
- J *Gains commitment to shared goals*— Draws the church and the community together to identify common goals; builds coalitions and partnerships to support the mission; builds cohesiveness and gains commitment from others.
- J *Demonstrates inclusive behavior*—Treats people with dignity, respect, and fairness; demonstrates inclusive behavior; continually examines own biases and behaviors to avoid stereotypes; displays a passion for justice; does not become involved in power struggles or cliques.
- J *Acknowledges contributions*—Appropriately recognizes the contributions of others; affirms others in a sincere manner; values and publicly affirms the service and stewardship of the congregation.

Interview Questions

- Tell me about a successful relationship you developed during your ministry with someone who was very different from yourself.
- Tell me about a time when you were able to rebuild a broken relationship.
- Tell me about a time when you were able to gain the commitment of others toward common goals.
- Describe a time when, despite your best efforts, you had difficulty establishing a trusting relationship with someone.
- Describe a time when you built a coalition among diverse groups to accomplish a ministry goal.

ENGAGING CONFLICT—*Keeps Christ and the mission of the church at the forefront when dealing with conflict; seeks reconciliation; helps the congregation effectively move forward in mission.*

Key Actions

-) *Engages conflict*—Recognizes the presence of conflict at the core of growth and mission; recognizes the growth opportunities inherent in conflict; engages conflict to bring about change; helps leaders make effective decisions and move forward in mission; demonstrates courage in engaging conflict for the sake of mission.
-) *Seeks reconciliation*—Keeps Christ and mission in the forefront when guiding conflict resolution; brings unity out of conflict when possible; models and encourages humility, forgiveness, and love.
-) *Enlists the help of others*—Seeks outside intervention when appropriate; asks for help in resolving conflict; seeks God’s guidance to effect reconciliation.
-) *Remains open to all sides*—Objectively views conflict from all sides; listens to all parties; enlists God’s guidance in understanding and resolving the situation; welcomes diverse perspectives; collaboratively develops solutions to participate in the success of Christ’s mission.

Interview Questions

- Tell me about a time when your congregation was deeply divided. What was the issue and how did you handle it?
- How have you successfully engaged conflict to bring about growth and productive change?
- Describe a time when you found yourself in conflict with an individual or group within the congregation. What was the situation? How did you handle it?
- Tell me about a time when you were able to influence others to remain productive despite unresolved differences.
- Describe a time when you felt it was best not to become involved in a conflict situation or to allow someone else to resolve a conflict. What was the situation and what happened?

COMMUNICATING WITH IMPACT (Observable Dimension)—*Expresses thoughts, feelings, mission, and theology effectively in individual and group settings (including nonverbal communication); presents ideas effectively both spontaneously and when given time to prepare; adjusts language and delivery to the characteristics and needs of the audience.*

Key Actions

- J *Mechanics and organization*—Uses appropriate grammar and vocabulary; uses words relevant to the message and the intended audience; organizes information in a manner that aids understanding and impact.
- J *Presentation*—Speaks and writes clearly and understandably without wordiness; uses body language that is consistent with the verbal communication; adjusts to the audience (i.e., small group, large group, one-on-one discussion); delivers God’s message to the community with impact and grace; speaks from the heart.
- J *Listens and understands*—Is present when others speak; understands the need of others to be heard; listens actively and seeks to understand the intent of others; does not make assumptions; is intuitive when listening to others; appears interested, confident, and enthusiastic; maintains professional, calm, and deliberate demeanor.

Communicating with Impact is a competency that is observed during the interviewing process; therefore, there are no interview questions.

The interviewer(s) should observe and evaluate the manner in which the candidate does the following:

- Communicates thoughts in an organized manner.
- Maintains the audience’s attention.
- Adjusts his/her delivery to meet the needs of the audience.
- Ensures that listeners understand what he/she is saying.
- Listens and demonstrates comprehension of what others are saying.
- Uses appropriate grammar, vocabulary, and conventions.

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

DECISION MAKING—*Identifies problems; analyzes information to draw conclusions; considers alternatives and risks; makes effective judgments with the involvement of others; accepts responsibility for making effective decisions.*

Key Actions

- J *Identifies issues, problems, and opportunities*—Recognizes issues, problems, or opportunities; determines when action is needed; seeks God’s guidance in identifying and resolving problems.
- J *Gathers and interprets information*—Collects information to better understand problems; integrates information from a variety of sources; sees trends and cause-and-effect relationships.
- J *Generates alternatives*—Initiates problem resolution; evaluates options by considering implications and consequences; considers alternatives; keeps the church’s mission at the forefront.
- J *Involves others*—Includes others in the decision-making process; works with others to make the most appropriate decisions and to ensure buy-in and understanding; engages the session, the congregation, and the presbytery as appropriate.
- J *Commits to appropriate action*—Formulates clear decision criteria; takes risks wisely; chooses effective solutions; makes decisions in a timely manner; takes responsibility for the consequences of one’s decisions; evaluates decision and adjusts behavior as appropriate.

Interview Questions

- Describe a difficult decision you have had to make. What things did you consider when making that decision? What happened as a result of your decision?
- Describe a complex problem that you recently faced. How did you work toward resolving the problem? Whom did you include in the decision process and why?
- Tell me about a decision that involved some risk. What did you consider? What was your final decision and why?
- Describe a time when it was very important for you to understand all of the underlying issues to avoid drawing a faulty conclusion.
- Tell me about a time when you decided to involve others when making a decision. What was the situation? Whom did you involve and why?

DELEGATING AND EMPOWERING—*Appropriately transfers responsibility to others; uses the gifts of others effectively; creates a sense of ownership; establishes procedures to monitor results.*

Key Actions

- J *Reproduces leadership*—Mentors and discipled leaders so that they, in turn, go on to generate more leaders.
- J *Recognizes and employs the gifts of others*—Discerns and cultivates the gifts of others; matches individual gifts with ministry needs and opportunities; appropriately involves others in tasks that serve the mission of the church; works collaboratively.
- J *Empowers others*—Empowers and challenges individuals and groups; encourages others to accept responsibility; does not demonstrate a need for personal power or recognition; delegates responsibility with clarity about authority and accountability.
- J *Provides guidance*—Checks for understanding; provides resources and guidance consistent with the specific needs and skills of each individual or group; keeps God’s mission for the church in front of others.
- J *Follows up*—Follows and supports the efforts of others; acknowledges contributions and celebrates the success of the congregation in conducting Christ’s work in the community.

Interview Questions

- Share one success story about how you have mentored and empowered someone to become a true disciple who could then lead others.
- Describe a time when you were able to cultivate the personal gifts of an individual so that he/she was better prepared to serve the mission of the church.
- Tell me about the last big decision that you delegated to someone else to make. What was the situation? How did you monitor and follow up?
- As a pastor, what have you felt compelled to handle personally and what have you been comfortable delegating to others? Provide examples.
- When delegating an important task, it is important to convey trust and confidence in the person’s ability to do the job. Provide an example of how you communicated trust and confidence in someone to whom you recently delegated an important task.

PLANNING AND ORGANIZING—*Establishes appropriate procedures to complete work efficiently and effectively.*

Key Actions

- J *Prioritizes*—Identifies critical activities and assignments; adjusts priorities, securing buy-in from others; seeks God’s direction to guide daily activities; schedules time appropriately.
- J *Leverages resources*—Identifies resources (people, materials, money) needed; coordinates with internal and external partners; ensures that resources are appropriately assigned.
- J *Maintains focus*—Uses time effectively; prevents irrelevant issues from interfering with task completion; stays focused on the goal of accomplishing Christ’s mission.
- J *Takes responsibility*—Recognizes the responsibility of the pastor for the day-to-day operation of the church; possesses or acquires the basic business skills and concepts (finance, budgeting, operations, etc.) necessary to ensure that church affairs are managed efficiently and with integrity; interacts purposefully with the session, church committees, and the congregation; attends to the business of the church to ensure its financial and organizational strength and growth.

Interview Questions

- At times, it may be difficult for us to stay focused on our mission when there are many things that demand our attention. Tell me about a time when it was difficult for you to focus on the most important tasks of your work. What was the situation and how did you handle it?
- Describe a time when you had to coordinate resources (people, processes, funds, etc.) as part of some complex initiative. What was the situation? How did you ensure that everything was handled effectively?
- What have you done to ensure that the administrative tasks of your church were handled efficiently?
- Tell me about a time when you faced conflicting priorities in your ministry. How did you determine the top priority?
- Describe a time when the day-to-day requirements of managing your responsibilities seemed overwhelming. What did you do?

MOTIVATIONAL FIT

MOTIVATIONAL FIT—*The extent to which the key demands of the call are consistent with personal satisfaction and motivation. A transformational pastor is motivated and driven to live and spread the word of God within and outside of the congregation that he or she serves. A transformational pastor finds personal satisfaction in the following:*

-) Loving God
-) Possessing a servant's heart
-) Loving the church
-) Loving the people of God
-) Being intrinsically motivated
-) Being outwardly focused
-) Taking on the challenge of transforming the church
-) Thinking missionally and driving missional thinking in the congregation
-) Empowering others to be disciples for Christ

Note: Interviewers gather information to evaluate the candidate's match to the role of pastor for a particular congregation. Consideration should be given to information gathered with these questions as well as throughout the interview to determine if the candidate's personal desires and motivations match the needs of the specific congregation for which he/she is being considered.

Interview Questions

- What aspect of working with your current (or previous) congregation did you find the most personally satisfying? Why? What did you find least satisfying? Why?
- When have you been the happiest in your ministry? Why? When have you experienced disappointment in your ministry? Why?
- What have been the most challenging aspects of leading your current (or most recent) congregation? Why? How did you address those challenges?
- What personal traits or characteristics do you have that will enable you to lead this congregation toward a missional culture? Provide examples to show how you have demonstrated those characteristics in the past.
- Based on your understanding of the congregation to which you have applied, what do you anticipate to be the greatest obstacles that you will face? Based on your past experience, how do you plan to address those obstacles?