

Search Team Planning Retreat

The best way to start the process well is for the search committee to have a two-day retreat at a nearby hotel or bed and breakfast. The purpose of this time is for the search committee to get away and hear from God and give concentrated focus on determining a plan of action. This can also be accomplished through two separate half-day Saturday meetings as well. **Requiring members to read this resource before the retreat will help make the time more profitable.**

Instead of having to use time to explain the process, members should show up already having a general understanding of the process. The time can then be better used for strategy and collaboration. Each PST member should also bring a laptop with a digital copy of this manual for quick access to the internal and external links listed.

During the retreat, you will go over this resource; determine roles; strategize, write up a church bio, job description, and profile of the “ideal candidate”; determine a search budget; and sign confidentiality agreements. Your board officers or search committee chair should determine a retreat schedule and collaborate with the committee to select a date that works best for everyone. Although it is preferred that all members be present, not everyone may be able to attend. To keep the process moving forward, the fact must be accepted that not all members will be able to participate in each meeting. The board officers should have a pre-meeting huddle the day before to come up with an agenda and game plan, provide hard-copy manuals for everyone, and access the needed resources. Following is a proposed schedule you can amend:

Search Team Retreat

Friday Evening

5–6:30 pm	Dinner together.
6:30–7 pm	Prayer (use copies of the guide in the section “Mobilizing Prayer”).
7–10 pm	Manual orientation: the group goes over the retreat agenda and each part of the succession resource and determines a committee purpose statement. (See example in the chapter entitled “The Pastoral Search Team” though the one listed there is if the only the board serves as the PST. It will need to be modified if the PST is a mixed search committee. See letter B. Focus on the “Board/Pastoral Search Team Commitment.”)

Saturday

8–9:45 am	Assign committee roles and responsibilities and determine what kind of vote is desired for different decisions (see the chapter entitled “The Pastoral Search Team” to see additional information on this topic).
9:45–10 am	Break.

10–11:45 am	Write church summary/bio. See the appendix entitled “Church, Neighborhood, & Community Profile.”
11:45 am–1 pm	Lunch together.
1–1:30 pm	Review of biblical qualifications and characteristics form. See the appendix entitled “Desirable Qualities of a Pastor.”
1:30–2:30 pm	Group discussion regarding biblical qualifications and desired qualities to isolate common denominators.
2:30–3:30 pm	Group writes pastoral job description. See the appendix entitled “Job Description.”
3:30–3:45 pm	Break.
3:45–4:15 pm	Group writes profile of ideal pastor. See the appendix entitled “Pastor Profile.”
4:15–4:30 pm	Group reviews, explains, and signs the “Board/Pastoral Search Team Commitment.” containing the confidentiality agreement if they have not already done so and discusses consequences of a breach.
4:30–5 pm	Group determines meeting frequency, location, and time. They also begin discussions that will be revisited later concerning the search budget. See chapter entitled “Search Team Meetings Sample Agenda” and the appendix entitled “Transition Budget” for more information. <i>Note: in some cases, the board may decide the transition budget apart from the PST.</i>
5–6 pm	Prayer together.
6–7:15 pm	Dinner together.

Dismissal