## Sorting/Ranking the Resumes

The Pastor Search Committee will need to establish an adequate amount of time for receiving resumes. The Committee should select a date to begin working with the resumes. This does not mean that resumes will not be received after that date. It simply gives the Committee a set time when they will begin working with the resumes they have received.

Depending on the size of the church, the sheer number of resumes can be overwhelming. The question becomes how to reduce the volume of resumes to a number that is manageable. One method is to make copies of every resume for each member of the Search Committee. Using the profile that the Committee has created, the entire Committee will work through the resumes and jettison those that do not line up with the profile. A second method that is vital for the Committee to employ in ranking resumes is to have a good job or position description in place.

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Once the resumes have been reduced to a manageable number, each committee member will work independently with those resumes, separating the resumes into three stacks: “YES,” “NO,” and “MAYBE.”. The goal of the Committee at this point is to move the process forward toward a consensus list of viable candidates. This will not be an easy task. Study and prayer will be required. This step should not be rushed. Once this has been completed, the Committee will come back together and share their choices. The five to ten resumes that show up with the most frequency will comprise the short list.

**Reviewing Resume Guide**

Look at personal information to see if there are gaps of time not reported (like employment, marriage, locations.)

**Personal:**

* Does the candidate give a clear indication of a call into ministry? Is there a clear indication of call to this church ministry role?
* Is the candidate married? If so how long have they been married? Do they have children? Some candidates have adopted children, this is a place to check the age of children and length they have been married.
* Where does the candidate currently live? His current location could say something about the culture he has ministered in and would impact the church’s consideration of relocating the family.

**Professional:**

* How many different churches has the candidate served with?
* Does the candidate show accomplishments at each church?
* Are there lapses of time between ministries?
* Pay attention to the ministry area, how many different places has the candidate ministered? How long has he served in each ministry position? (Some may say they have been in ministry 25 years but their average tenure is only 3 years. This may indicate that the candidate may not be a long term minister.)
* What size churches have they served? Has the candidate been on a larger church staff?
* What is the candidate’s denominational involvement with their state convention or local association?

**Educational:**

* Does the candidate indicate completion of some type of formal education?
* Verify degree completion with institutions where candidate has been enrolled. As you look at the schools, are they affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention? By searching the internet your committee can determine the type of school the candidate has received his education from.
* Did the candidate graduate? Is the candidate currently enrolled in an institution? Has the candidate allowed time to lapse for his education journey?
* What is the candidate’s education or training? Is the person a lifetime learner?

**References:**

* Does the candidate list references?
* If he does list references, how does the candidate know the references? How long have they known him?

**One question the committee needs to ask about each resume, “Why do we need to move this person to the next level in our process?”**

**Overview of the Resume Review Process**

## A. First Review of Resumes

After the deadline has expired to accept resumes, the committee will begin their First Review of these candidates. One person from the Pastor Search Committee will need to make copies of each resume for every member of the committee. Another person should be given the task of sending an email to every candidate to thank them for sending their information to the committee. Once everyone on the committee has received their copies of the resumes, set aside some time for each person to read over them, pray through this process, and return with their top candidates (give at least a week or more depending on the number of candidates) to the next meeting.

**Information for individual committee members to use to review resumes:**

*Look at personal information to see if there are gaps of time not reported (like employment, marriage, locations.)*

*Pay attention to the ministry area, how many different places has the candidate ministered, how long has he served at each ministry position (some may say they have been in ministry 25 years but their average tenure is only 3 years, showing the candidate may not be a long term minister)*

*What size churches have they served? Has the candidate been on a larger church staff in the same position?*

*What is the candidate’s denominational involvement with their state convention or local association?*

*Where does the candidate currently live? His current location could say something about the culture he has ministered in and would impact the church’s consideration of relocating the family.*

*What is the candidate’s education or training? Is the person a lifetime learner?*

*One question the committee needs to ask about each resume is, “Why do we need to move this person to the next level in our process?”*

At least a week after each member receives their resume packets, set up two stacks of resumes. One for those candidates that are “likely” to move to the next step in the process and one stack for those “not likely” to make the next step. After the committee comes to an agreement on which stack these resumes belong, begin a prayer time over those that are in the “not likely” stack. Ask God to guide these which have been taken out of your prospective stack to where He needs them. Someone will need to contact those individuals in the “not likely” stack to inform them they are not moving to the next level.

In some cases the number of resumes could be too large to copy each one. The time used to make individual copies for each search committee member would be wasteful. One way to handle this first review task would be have two stacks, one for those who could “likely” be a candidate and one for those “not likely.” After the first review of the resumes, those candidates that are in the “likely” stack will need to be copied for the team. At this time the team begins a more in depth process of moving toward God’s preferred candidate.

## B. Second Review of Resumes

At the second review of the “likely” resumes, each team member will spend time alone carefully reviewing this smaller group of resumes. As the team begins to narrow the field, they will want to spend time in personal prayer and contemplation of each of these more likely individuals.

As the team is sifting through resumes they will give impressions regarding about each of these candidates. One option for the team is to give each individual resume a score from their most likely to least likely (1 being least likely to 10 for most likely.) The individual team members could come back to the next Pastor Search Team meeting with each resume scored and the collective score could be used as a way to get the selection down to a more manageable number of candidates. The objective is to get the individuals to a number where surveys could be mailed for a third reviewing in the narrowing process*.* A good outcome for this step would be agreement of the team for their Top Ten individuals. The team will also begin the process of calling references of these top candidates to acquire more information about each individual. This step could require an additional meeting before the third review of resumes begins because a discovery from their references could keep a person from being considered in the next step of the search process.

When the team is in agreement each of the top candidates will be sent a questionnaire to be used in the next step of the process. The information sent to these top individuals should include a brief introduction of the church, explanation of the next steps in the search process, and deadline to get the questionnaire back to the committee.

At this point the individuals who are not the Search Team’s top candidates need to be sent a letter or e-mail thanking them for their interest and explaining that the committee has chosen not to include them from the next step of the team’s search process.

## C. Third Review of Resumes

After the deadline for the top candidates’ surveys, the Pastor Search team will reassemble to receive a copy of each candidate’s answers to the questionnaire. The team should set their next meeting to hear feedback from each team member’s perception of the top candidates. Once again the process could use a scoring system (if you have 10 top individual’s questionnaires then score them similar to the first system and ask them to be prepared to report at the next meeting.) The team should be given at least a week to read over and think through the answers from each candidate.

At the second meeting each team member will bring their report of their top candidates. It is not important at this point to get the candidates into their top 1, 2, or 3*.* The outcome is only to help the team to agree on their top 3 candidates (not in order) for the next step. It is now time to contact each of the top 3 to set up a time and place for the first face to face interview.

## D. Fourth Review of Resumes

The outcome of this step is to rank each individual candidate in the priority order. It is extremely important that each Pastor Search Team member is in attendance for these interviews. The team will have a similar set of questions for each person interviewed. It would also be important at this point to include the wife of the candidate in the process. (In this workbook there are questions to be used in interviewing both the candidate and his wife.) If your meeting location is the church, for privacy sake, make sure you plan a time when there are no other activities at the church. At this point the process is to determine where each person ranks so that the team can come to agreement on their number 1, 2 and 3 individual.

After the interview it would be best for the team to schedule their next meeting to talk through the interview and how the candidate would be placed in the search process. It is of most importance to get the agreement of the team for the placing of candidates. The next step will be working with the number one person until they cease to be a candidate, in that case the number two candidate is moved to number one.

## E. Working with the Number One Candidate

At this point in the process it is very important to take good notes and gather pertinent information for the team and the candidate. A few things in this step are:

**For Candidate**

Background Check

Constitution and By Laws for candidate

Budget

Compensation and Benefits Package

Written Job Description

Moving agreement and arrangements for the candidates family