



A Complete Hiring System



© 2018 CHURCH FUEL, A PART OF THE THRIVENT FAMILY. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Preface

“The most important decisions that business people make are not *what* decisions, but *who* decisions.” - Jim Collins

There are few things that will sidetrack your church more than hiring the wrong person. And there are few things that help it grow like hiring the right person to do the right job.

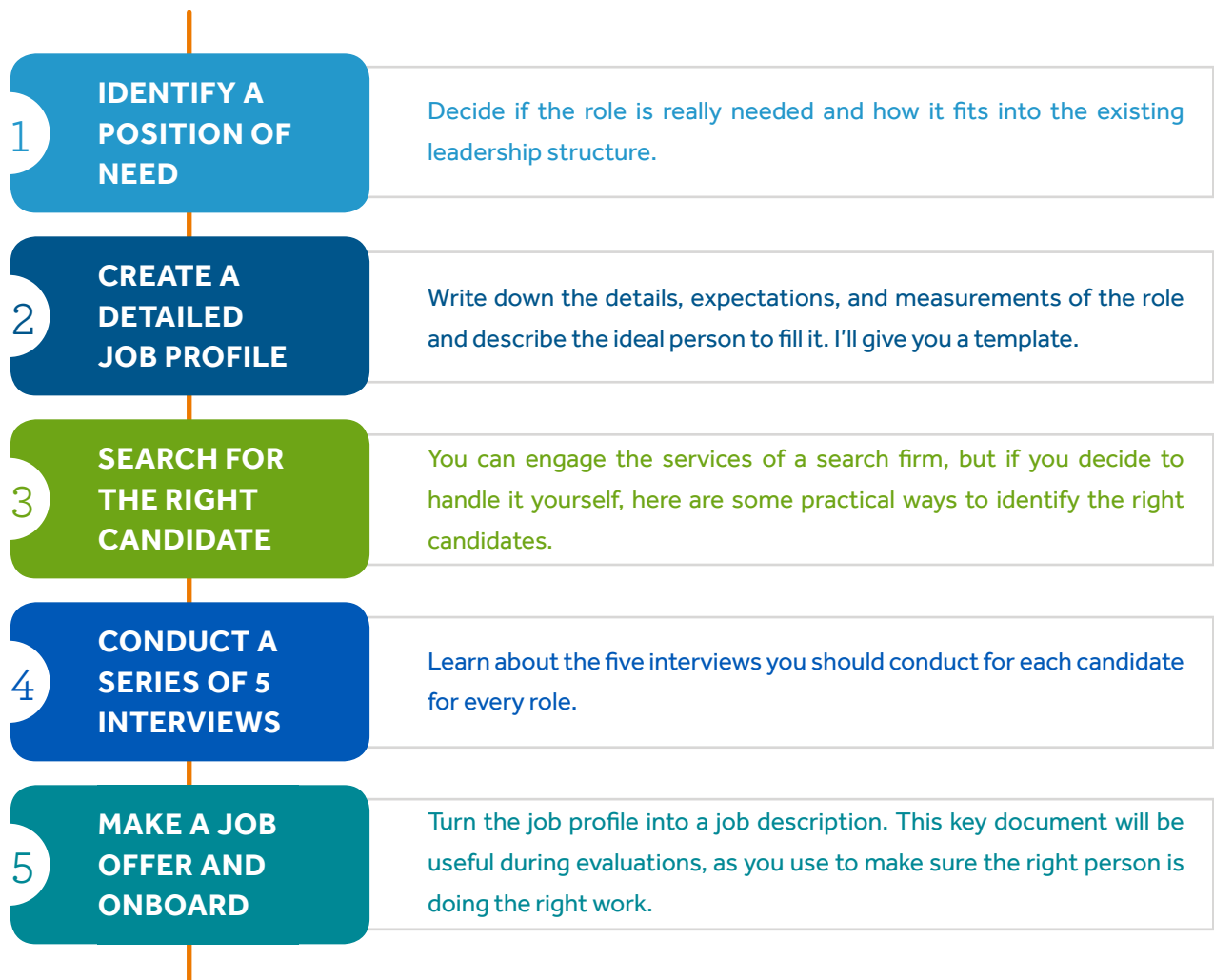
When you have the right people working in the right roles doing the right tasks, there's an amazing synergy around the vision of the church. A clear and focused staff will help your church reach people for Christ and help them grow in their faith. But too many times, we bring in someone to do a job only to realize it wasn't a good fit. Hiring mistakes can set us back years.

We can close the gap (if not all the way then definitely a lot) with a better hiring process. Instead of hiring someone you know quickly to fill an immediate need, you can slow down and work a system that will lead to a much better decision. This is a process you can go through every time you need to hire someone. It's a system for bringing new people into the team.

A better hiring process will lead to better hires. You can use the simple system I'm going to show you to build a contact list of everyone in your community. You don't have to buy this list or pay someone to contact these people . . . you will own this list. You build it and you can use it time and time again.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Michael Lukaszewski is the Founder and CEO of Church Fuel. Previously he served as COO of The Rocket Company and as pastor of a fast-growing church in the Atlanta area.

The Process



STEP ONE

Identify a Position of Need

It might seem like there are always staffing needs, but before you begin the process of filling a role, you need to think long and hard about the specifics of the job and how that role fits in your org chart. When you think about the need, you must think in specifics, answering questions like . . .

- What will this person actually do?
- How is it being done now?
- Who will they work for? Who will they work with?
- How will this new hire affect the team dynamic?

Do you really need to hire someone?

“We need to hire someone” is often a reaction based on feeling. Many times, we want to hire people to do things volunteers can do. A poor volunteer system or leadership development system causes us to think hiring people is the solution.

Leaders who can’t (or don’t) empower others will often feel overworked and want to hire people. This is faulty logic.

If someone on your team comes to you and says, “we need to hire someone,” ask them to write a detailed proposal. Write down what they would do, how much they would make, and why it’s important to the growth and health of the ministry. If you can’t clarify the details, you’re not ready to start looking.

How will this hire help us grow?

You probably don’t want to hire someone simply to fill an immediate need. Chances are, that need will be mitigated through people and systems. You want to hire people to meet opportunities. You want to hire people intentionally, not out of a response to a busy season or a catastrophe.

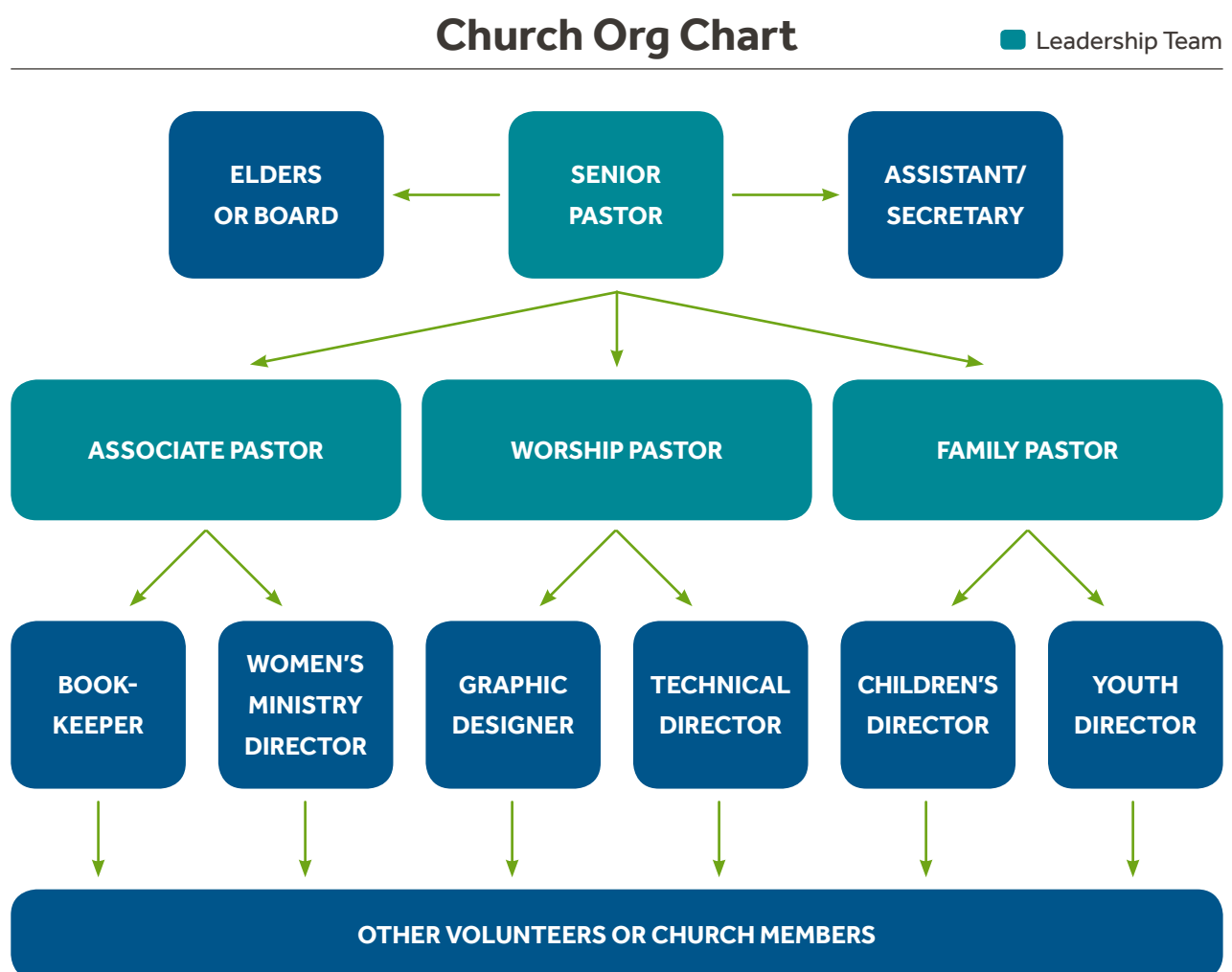


Do we have a clear organizational chart?

Never hire someone without a clear organizational chart. You need it, but they do too. A new employee needs to understand how they fit into the leadership structure of the church. A lack of clarity will create muddy waters and a lack of effectiveness.

Your org chart should be something of a hit list and a prayer list. As a leader, you should be on the lookout for people to fill needs that fit your mission and vision, and you should constantly pray for God to send the right people.

So before you start asking around or posting on websites, make sure you have a clear org chart. Here's a sample:



STEP TWO

Create a Job Profile

This is one of the most important steps in the process. Too many times, we hire “good” people who are friends, but they lack focus. Without that clarity, hard workers will spend their time doing things that aren't really important. And leaders will get frustrated without a clear definition of a win.

So your job is to create a clear job profile that answers key questions. This might be more detailed than you're used to, but in this step two things are happening. First, you're forcing yourself to think through the role and goal of this position. Secondly, you're setting up a new hire for a win.

This job profile should cover things like:

- **Your church's mission and vision (be specific).** Lots of people should agree with your mission, but not everyone will buy into your vision.
- **The role of the position.** Explain how this role relates to the rest of the team.

- **Goals and expectations.** Communicate your expectations for this position in advance, before you start talking to anyone.
- **Key performance indicators.** This is common in the business world, but for some reason, we get all touchy-feely with ministry positions. But the bottom line is there are performance expectations for this role. So clarify them in advance.
- **Candidate profile.** Describe the ideal candidate. Try to weed people out from even applying with your language.
- **Job details.** Describe the office environment, work hours, etc.

I know this seems like a lot of information, but if you do this hard work on the front end, you will save yourself a lot of heartache on the back end. Below is a sample job profile for a High School Pastor position. Use it as a template.



Cross City Church Job Profile

POSITION: HIGH SCHOOL PASTOR

STATUS: FULL-TIME, SALARY

—○ VISION AND MISSION OF CROSS CITY CHURCH

Cross City Church exists to lead people from where they are to where they want to be. Our vision is to reach 10,000 people within 10 miles over the next 10 years.

—○ THE ROLE OF THE HIGH SCHOOL PASTOR

Crossville is a city of 255,000 people and the median age is 33. A significant number of people in our community and church have teenage children. There are seven high schools within our ministry area with approximately 10,000 high school students. The High School Pastor will be the primary leader of this ministry.

—○ YOUR TEAM

- This position reports to the Family Ministry Pastor.
- This position relates to the other family ministry staff, leaders in the high school ministry, and high school students.
- Participate in weekly staff meetings, family ministry team meetings, and some leadership retreats.

—○ GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS

- Jump right into the Family Ministry team, as well as the programs and ministries for high school students.
- Bring skills and experiences to provide quality leadership to existing programs, people and students.
- Improve the quality of our student ministry service, evidenced partly by increased attendance and participation.
- Build a leadership pipeline that results in committed volunteers who love Jesus and love students.

—○ PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS

- Recruit, train and disciple adult leaders who can lead students from where they are to where God wants them to be.
- Serve as the primary communicator at C3 Wednesdays, our weekly student ministry service.
- Communicate clearly and effectively with parents, volunteers and leaders.
- Plan key events around milestones in the life of a student.



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The student ministry growth strategy mirrors the growth strategy of the church, which is:

- Engage the community and invite them to church.
- Ensure a quality experience that triggers involvement and spiritual questions.
- Connect people to small groups, where discipleship is likely to occur.

With that strategy in mind, the high school pastor will be evaluated on the following three metrics:

1. Increase attendance at the student service from 300 people to 500 over the next three years.
 - Plan 3-5 "big days" that are hyper-focused on reaching new students
 - Create a culture of inviting so students bring their friends to church
 - Create an active presence on social media.
2. Grow participation in small groups from 150 to 300 people over the next three years.
 - Increase the number of small group leaders by 50% to accommodate new growth.
 - Create a training and long-term care program to ensure the health of leaders and volunteers.
 - Champion the vision and purpose of small groups to students and give them opportunities to engage in new groups.
3. Re-organize the volunteer leadership structure.
 - Create an advisory team by the end of year one.
 - Create a volunteer training and discipleship system by the end of year two.
 - Hire an associate or assistant by the end of year three.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

- You love Jesus.
- You love the local church.
- You love teenagers and their families.
- You embody the core values of Cross City Church.
- You have a strong work ethic and a "get it done" mentality.
- You have an attitude of constant improvement.
- You are teachable.
- You love working with people and you're not a lone ranger.
- You can manage projects.
- You are a planner.
- You have great references.
- You've been working with students in a local church setting for at least five years.
- If you are married, you are a good spouse. If you have kids, you are a good parent.

Formal education is not required. However, it is likely that they will hold a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. The successful candidate will have a proven track record of ministry in the local church.



Three specific skills stand out:

- *Working with a team.* You know how to pull great people together to accomplish significant tasks. You recognize that a team is stronger than an individual and involve other people in the process. You are a leader.
- *Communication.* You are strong in written and verbal communication. You know how to make things better and how to make good decisions that will reflect relationships over profits with our members.
- *Leading people.* Your primary ministry is not directly with students but with adults who work closely with students. Obviously, you must love students, but you will accomplish far more by building a team of adults. Your love for people must trump your love for teaching.

—o **YOUR SCHEDULE**

- You would work Monday to Thursday, and on Sunday—about 40-45 hours a week. Our offices are closed on Friday.
- You would participate in weekly team meetings and monthly strategic meetings.
- You'd stay in touch with your supervisor (Family Pastor) on a daily basis.
- You could travel approximately 20-30 nights a year for various retreats, camps and conferences.

—o **YOUR SALARY**

The starting salary for this position is \$52,000 a year. As a staff member of Cross City Church, you are also eligible for the following benefits:

- Health Insurance for you and your family (the premium is paid by the church).
- Vision and dental coverage is available (you pay the premium)
- Matching 401(k) contributions up to \$5,000 a year
- 21 days of vacation time each year, which grows to 28 days as outlined in our Employee Handbook

ABOUT CROSS CITY CHURCH

On September 17, 1972, a group of 17 people gathered with the desire to start a new church in the town of Smithville, Virginia. For 11 nights in a row, the group met for evening services led by Dr. James Meets, a circuit riding Methodist preacher. After the church was officially formed, they continued to meet at homes, eventually renting the local high school auditorium for Sunday services. In 1988, the church purchased land and build a building at their current site.

Cross City Church places a high value on children, students and the next generation. Their annual Kids Zone (similar to VBS) reaches over 600 children in the community. Students from seven different high schools attend the student service on Wednesday nights. In late 1999, the church constructed a family ministry building that holds more than 500 students. This family ministry building provides space for worship, gatherings, special events and more. The church is well known in the community and the student ministry has a great relationship with the school system. Smithville is ideal for family-life. It has a small town feel with big city convenience. Boston is just two hours away. Money Magazine recently named Smithville as one of the "Best 100 Places to Live In America." It has a population of about 250,000.

STEP THREE

Search for Candidates

Now that you know how the position fits on your team and you've done the hard work of creating a job profile, it's time to begin searching for candidates.

Before I go on, let me say that you might want to engage the help of a professional.

A search firm or consultant sounds expensive, but in 99% of the cases, it's far less expensive than making the wrong hire.


But if you're setting out to do this on your own, you'll want to create a search system. Here's what I recommend:

- Put up a blog post or a landing page describing the job. Provide as much information as possible up front.
- Embed a form on the page so people can send their information. Wufoo and Google Forms are good tools.
- Ask pre-screening questions on your form. If you like their answers, you'll move to a formal interview process. I've shared some ideas on the next page.
- Email the page to every pastor you know. Post on social media. Post on job boards. Share the link with your church (they may know people). Get as many eyeballs as possible to this page.

When people fill out the form, make sure you take them to a confirmation page or send them a confirmation email. You need to be clear about how you will follow up? Will everyone get a personal response or will you contact them if interested.

Either way is okay—just be clear.





Ask pre-screening questions on your form. If you like their answers, you'll move to a formal interview process.

Pre-Screening Questions

1. What forms of social media do you use?
2. What compelled you to apply for a position?
3. How does our company mission fit with your personal calling?
4. What is your story?
5. What are you currently learning? From whom?
6. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
7. What books have you read in the past 12 months?
8. What do you like to do for fun?
9. Where do you currently work and what do you do?
10. What have you learned in your current position?
11. What were your major accomplishments in this role?
12. What do you love about your job? Not love about it?
13. What are you looking for in your next job?
14. What are your results from The Predictable Success Quiz?

STEP FOUR

Five Interviews

Once you've publicized the job and have a list of potential candidates, it's time to start the interview process. But one interview is not enough. You should actually do *five* interviews.

Whoa. I know that sounds crazy, but it's not as overwhelming as it seems.

Every candidate for every position goes through the same process, completes each interview and answers the same questions. You don't come up with new questions or a new process for each candidate or for each job—you do this same process every time.

As you can imagine, the process itself and your decision making get better and better every time you go through it.

Interview #1: Screening

The purpose of this interview is to determine if you want to seriously consider this person for the role. The goal here is to eliminate people as quickly as possible.

Ask the same four questions of each candidate. Stay on track and keep pushing for specific examples. Ask, "how," and say, "tell me more."

You can do this in person or over Skype video. It's okay to do it by phone, but if you can look at the person, it's better.



Here are the questions to ask during this interview:

1. What are your career goals?
2. What are you really good at professionally (push for 8-12 positives with examples; press for a time when they were decisive) ?
3. What are you not good at or not interested in doing professionally?
4. Who were your last five bosses, and how will they each rate your performance on a 1-10 scale when I talk to them?

Stay on these questions, but dive into them. If someone says, "I just want to help people" to the career goal question, keep pushing. That's not a good enough answer. If they give shallow or expected answers, keep digging. You're looking for specifics.

Interview #2: Patterns

Past behavior is the best predictor of future performance. If you want to know how someone will perform in a role, look at how they performed in their last role. Sure, things may be different and your culture might not be the same as their last church

culture, but by and large, people approach work the same way. So in this interview, you are looking for patterns of behavior to make predictions about how someone is likely to perform in the future.

For each of the candidate's previous jobs, ask these questions:

1. What were you hired to do?
2. What accomplishments are you most proud of? Exceptional people tend to talk about outcomes connected to expectations. Mediocre people tend to talk about events, people or job aspects not related to results.
3. What were some low points during that job?
4. Who were the people you worked with? Further questions to press here include: What was it like to work with your boss? What will they say is your biggest strength or weakness? How would you rate the team you inherited? What changes did you make? Did you hire or fire anyone? How would you rate the team when you left?
5. Why did you leave that job?

Go through this series of questions for every chapter or story in their life. Walk through career history chronologically. This should take two to three hours.

Past behavior is the best predictor of future performance. If you want to know how someone will perform in a role, look at how they performed in their last role.



Interview #3: Results

This interview is focused on the desired outcome of the position. Your mission is to talk about expectations of the job and drill down on how the candidate has performed in related areas in the past. You're not just looking to see what they think they will do, but what they have done in similar environments with similar objectives.

1. The purpose of this interview is to talk about _____ (name a specific outcome or competency).
2. What are your biggest accomplishments in this area during your career?
3. What are your insights into your biggest mistakes and lessons learned in this area?

While these interviews and these questions should stay the same every time, you can involve different people in different phases. And if you're bringing in someone from out of town, you can do Interview #2 and Interview #3 in the same day. Just involve different people and change up the environment.

Interview #4: References

Once you have a strong candidate, it's time to talk to their previous boss or co-workers. So this isn't a candidate interview, it's an interview of their references.



I can't stress this enough: *always do this step.*

Here are specific questions you should ask.

1. In what context did you work with the person?
2. What were the person's biggest strengths?
3. What were the person's biggest areas for improvement back then?
4. How would you rate his or her overall performance in that job on a 1-10 scale? What about his or her performance causes you to give that rating?
5. The person mentioned that he/she struggled with _____. Can you tell me more about that?

Interview #5: Relationships

This really isn't an interview, but an opportunity to hang out in a non-interview setting to assess fit and culture. Other team members and spouses are involved, and this should happen outside a normal setting.

Remember, every person you hire adds to your team culture. Yes, your culture will heavily influence them but this goes both ways. There are few things that will disrupt a healthy leadership culture more than the wrong person at the table.

You don't have to be best friends with everyone that works at your church, but it's shouldn't be awkward to hang out with them. Take them to dinner or dessert. Go to a baseball game. Hang out at a cookout. Find something relational and outside of the office and involve other people in a social setting.

Going through all of these steps can't guarantee you've made the right choice, but as you can imagine, it's far more likely you make the right call after this process.

There are few things that will disrupt a healthy leadership culture more than the wrong person at the table.

STEP FIVE

Offer and Onboard

Now that you've settled on the right person and they are interested in joining your team, it's time to make a formal job offer. You want to do this in writing and clarify all the details of employment. A simple letter will do the trick. Here's a sample:

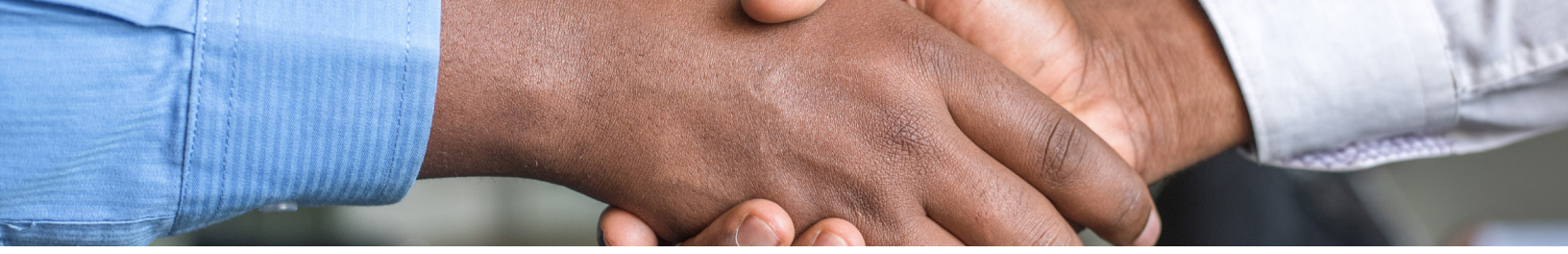
Dear [Name],

We are excited to enter into the following employee agreement with you serving as the High School Pastor. Here are the details of your salary and benefits:

- Your start date will be [date]
- Employment contingent on signing a confidentiality agreement
- You will work about 45 hours a week.
- Your direct supervisor will be [name and title]
- Your starting salary will be [salary]
- We will conduct a 90-day review and a six-month review.
- You will be eligible for benefits outlined in the employee handbook
- You will receive [number of days] of paid time off each year.
- You will attend monthly meetings, quarterly retreats, and annual retreats, all of which are vital to our team chemistry.

[Senior Pastor, Cross City Church]

[Employee]



Onboarding Process

G.I. Joe used to say that knowing is half the battle.

When it comes to bringing on a new employee, hiring is just half the battle. Their first 90 days on the job are critical to everyone's success and happiness.

That's why an onboarding process is so important.

You might have guessed by now that you want to create an onboarding process to use every time you bring someone on the team.

Here's a simple checklist you can use:

YOU DO

- Review and sign employee handbook Review and sign Confidentiality Agreement
- Complete Financial paperwork, including direct deposit, benefits, and pastoral housing allowance form
- Attend the new member's class
- Watch Fellowship One training videos
- Fill out 30 and 90 day feedback forms

WE DO

- Create email address
- Create Fellowship One Login
- Set up voicemail extension
- Provide access Dropbox and Google Docs
- W4 and I9
- Set 90 day review meeting
- Update the website with picture, bio and contact information

Turn the Profile into a Job Description

Remember that job profile you worked so hard on in Step Two?

That hard work is still going to pay off now that you've hired someone to do the job. It's time to update the org chart and turn that job profile into a job description.

When I talk to pastors and church leaders, I meet so many people who are not doing anything close to what they were originally hired to do. In a few cases, those changes were intentional. But in most cases, people just drift to new tasks that may or may not help the church fulfill it's mission.

A clear job description, regularly reviewed, will ensure that each person on your team is doing the right things.

Even Senior Pastors need this.

When it comes to bringing on a new employee, hiring is just half the battle. Their first 90 days on the job are critical to everyone's success and happiness.





A good hiring system will help you make good decisions.

One of the best formal evaluations is simply going through someone's job description and talking about performance and expectations. Reviewing these documents and talking honestly about it is a great way to keep everyone on the same page.

Now What?

I can't stress this enough: This hiring process should be used every time you hire a new person.

You should certainly tweak it to fit your style and culture, but once it's ready, lock it in and leave it alone.

You will be tempted to skip steps to hire someone you know. You'll be tempted to move fast because a need is so apparent. But more times than not, you'll regret those decisions.

A good hiring system will help you make good decisions.