



# **Pastor**

## ***Competency Model***

## USE OF THE COMPETENCY MODEL

This competency profile for Pastor was developed through an extensive analysis involving pastors and elders from several Presbyteries who participated in individual interviews as well as focus groups. The purpose of the analysis was to ensure a thorough understanding of the skills, behaviors, and motivations necessary to successfully fulfill the role of pastor for various sized congregations. The result of the analysis was the identification of fifteen competencies that tend to be exhibited by the most effective transformational pastors. This competency model should be used to guide the interview and selection process for pastors.

Pastor Nominating Committees (PNC's) will be provided information regarding the use of the *Targeted Selection*® (*TS*) interviewing concepts prior to interviewing. *Targeted Selection* is a behaviorally based interviewing process that focuses on past behavior. The basis of *TS* is that past behavior predicts future behavior. During a *TS* interview, candidates are asked questions about how they have handled various situations in the past. These questions are related to the fifteen competencies that have been identified as critical to success in the role of pastor. Sample behavioral questions are included at the end of this competency profile. Typically, candidates are asked three questions related to each competency so that they have the opportunity to provide three specific behavioral examples. Interviewers are trained to evaluate the data obtained during a *TS* interview, to reach group consensus, and to make hiring decisions based on objective data.

If you are a member of a PNC, ask your COM liaison about interview training before you schedule interviews with prospective pastors. Your liaison will also be able to help you to develop a customized interview guide using the *TS:Access*® software.

# DOMAINS AND COMPETENCIES

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## Domain

## Competency

*Personal Relationship with God in Christ*

- Faithfulness

*Personal Character*

- Resilience
- Integrity
- Emotional Maturity

*Leadership*

- Cultivating a Missional Culture
- Loving the Congregation
- Responding to the Community
- Leading Change

*Relationship Skills*

- Building Relationships
- Engaging Conflict
- Communicating with Impact

*Organizational Skills*

- Decision Making
- Delegating and Empowering
- Planning and Organizing

*Motivational Fit*

- Motivational Fit

## PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IN CHRIST

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**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.

# PERSONAL CHARACTER

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**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

- *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.
- *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.
- *Adjusts behavior*—Does not persist with ineffective behaviors; modifies behavior to effectively and positively deal with challenges.

**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.

**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.

# LEADERSHIP

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

## Key Actions

- *Casts a vision*—Creates an awareness of and commitment to God’s mission for the church; develops an environment of mission and transformation.
- *Creates ownership of ministry and discipleship*—Leads the congregation in a commitment to and ownership of the church’s mission; builds leadership in others.
- *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.
- *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.
- *Instills confidence*—Demonstrates confidence in God’s ability to lead the congregation; instills confidence in others to do God’s will.

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

## Key Actions

- *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.
- *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.
- *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.
- *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.
- *Works with others*—Works in a respectful and collegial relationship with session members, church staff, and volunteer leaders.

**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**

- *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.
- *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.
- *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.

**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.

## 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**

- *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.
- *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.
- *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.
- *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.

**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.

**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**

- *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.
- *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.
- *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:

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

# ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

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**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

- *Identifies issues, problems, and opportunities*—Recognizes issues, problems, or opportunities; determines when action is needed; seeks God’s guidance in identifying and resolving problems.
- *Gathers and interprets information*—Collects information to better understand problems; integrates information from a variety of sources; sees trends and cause-and-effect relationships.
- *Generates alternatives*—Initiates problem resolution; evaluates options by considering implications and consequences; considers alternatives; keeps the church’s mission at the forefront.
- *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.
- *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.

**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

- *Reproduces leadership*—Mentors and discipled leaders so that they, in turn, go on to generate more leaders.
- *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.
- *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.
- *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.
- *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.

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

**Key Actions**

- *Prioritizes*—Identifies critical activities and assignments; adjusts priorities, securing buy-in from others; seeks God’s direction to guide daily activities; schedules time appropriately.
- *Leverages resources*—Identifies resources (people, materials, money) needed; coordinates with internal and external partners; ensures that resources are appropriately assigned.
- *Maintains focus*—Uses time effectively; prevents irrelevant issues from interfering with task completion; stays focused on the goal of accomplishing Christ’s mission.
- *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.

## MOTIVATIONAL FIT

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**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.

## Sample Questions:

(Faithfulness):

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?

(Integrity):

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?

(Emotional Maturity):

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?

(Cultivating a Missional Culture):

How have you helped a congregation to define and carry out a vision for ministry?