

Suggestions for

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PERSONNEL
COMMITTEE

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The Personnel Committee

THE PURPOSE OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE of a Baptist church is to assist the pastor and church in matters related to personnel administration and management. It may include such areas as employment, salaries, benefits, and personnel services.

Although the pastor may have a vital part in all the meetings of the personnel committee, he is relieved of many routine duties related to personnel through a functioning committee. Though the work of the committee concerns practical administrative details, the undergirding principles of Christian understanding and devotion should always be foremost in its particular ministry.

The members of the personnel committee are selected by a church nominating committee followed by a formal presentation of the names to the church for election. The personnel committee, like other church committees, should present its recommendations to the church for approval.

It is extremely important that the church nominating committee chooses wisely the members to serve on this

committee. Although some aspects of the work of the personnel committee may seem to be technical, it can be performed well by men and women who have good judgment, are objective, and have demonstrated the quality of being able to work well with others.

Suggested Duties of the Personnel Committee

The duties of the personnel committee, as suggested in this pamphlet, may be applied to any size church staff. However, as the staff increases in number the work of the personnel committee will increase correspondingly.

The following list encompasses the general range of responsibilities that may be assigned to this committee:

1. *Employment.* This responsibility usually includes recruiting, interviewing, and placing the applicant on the job following official action by the church. The chairman of the personnel committee may perform part or all of the steps leading to employment. Or, he may assign the task to another member of the committee. The pastor, minister of education, and others may enter into the employment procedure in either a major or a minor way as they so wish. It is always desirable that the person in the church who is to supervise the work of the new employee be given an opportunity to interview the applicant and share in the decision of employment.

The personnel committee should have adequate information about each job in the church if it is to communicate clearly the duties to an applicant. A secret to happy personnel relations is for the worker to discover that his

job is exactly the same as described to him during the interview.

Another accepted practice in developing good personnel relations is to consider the possibility of promoting a qualified person, already employed, to a higher position when such a vacancy occurs.

In order to be consistent in employment practices, it is suggested that this committee formulate a policy to use as a guide. The policy may include qualifications involving age limits, church affiliation, education, experience, etc. This is especially true in securing clerical and maintenance workers.

Decisions pertaining to the work day and the work week usually are regarded to be within the province of the personnel committee.

2. *Salaries.* The personnel committee may be assigned the responsibility for initiating and maintaining the church-approved salary program. This would include the pastor, minister of education, minister of music, age-group workers, office and manual workers. Effective committee performance in this area requires a knowledge of the description of each job, especially in the office and manual group, and a knowledge of the salaries paid workers in the community for comparably described jobs. With this information, and resultant salary adjustments, if required, the personnel committee is better able to attract and secure qualified workers when vacancies occur.

The writing of a job description of each position is a

requisite to efficient salary administration. A job description includes statements describing the major duties of the person assigned a particular position. Job descriptions reveal various levels of difficulty. Salaries should be based on the job.

Another responsibility which may be assigned the personnel committee by a church is to work with the pastor in going afield to seek the names of qualified persons to serve as minister of education, minister of music, youth worker, etc. This involves the careful study of personal data, biographical, educational, service, and other vital information. The committee also assists in personal interviews before the committee is ready to make its recommendations to the church.

It is well to consider the writing of procedures as a guide in the administration of the salary program. This could cover such items as beginning salary, salary reviews, periodical salary adjustments, maximum salary, Christmas bonus, and terminations. Such written statements help to establish conformity to approved church action and uniformity of salary administration, regardless of the turnover in the personnel committee membership.

A salary program is dynamic. It needs to be re-studied at least once a year.

3. *Employee benefits.* These are items such as hospitalization, insurance, retirement pension plan, vacation, holidays, etc. The personnel committee may include a study of the present program of benefits offered to the paid workers by its church. It would be helpful also to study

the benefit program of other churches. This method of research will focus attention especially on those benefits a church has not included but which merit serious and careful consideration.

Of course, the personnel committee would need to work closely with those responsible for the programming of the church budget in all matters pertaining to increased costs such as may well be involved in adding benefits or expanding coverage on benefits already established.

Eligibility for benefits needs to be clearly stated as a policy. Exceptions must be discouraged if good personnel relations are to be maintained.

A local insurance agent will give assistance in counseling members of the personnel committee regarding insurance and hospitalization plans and costs. The committee may recommend contributory plans in which the employee would share in the cost.

The Relief and Annuity Board, Dallas, Texas will send information, upon request, concerning its pension plan now available to other members of the staff as well as the pastor. The workers of many Baptist churches have elected to enter Social Security. The church and employee share on a percentage basis of a worker's gross salary. Ordained ministers who have elected to enter Social Security have done so under the self-employment provision.

Vacation policies vary somewhat. The trend in industry is toward liberalizing vacation policies to give one week after six months of service or two weeks after a year of service. Additional time is given for tenure of service such

as three weeks after fifteen years and four weeks after twenty or twenty-five years. Here again research on the part of the committee may be helpful in preparing a church vacation policy.

4. *Employee Services.* The work of the personnel committee may include assistance in areas such as providing week-day parking space for the cars of employees, locating a room, apartment, or house for new workers, arranging in advance for medical service in the event an employee becomes ill or is injured while at work and arranging for the borrowing of money from a local bank when emergencies arise.

Personnel policies and practices, which have been carefully considered and tailored to fit the needs of a church, eliminate largely the necessity of making emergency decisions each time an individual case is presented. The personnel committee can be invaluable to the pastor in sharing his heavy administrative load.

Sample Job Description MINISTER OF EDUCATION

Principal Function:

The minister of education is responsible to the pastor and the church for the promotion of the educational program of the church.

Responsibilities:

1. Enlist and train leadership.
2. Plan for and promote Sunday school and Training Union growth and efficiency.

3. Organize and promote a church-wide visitation program.
4. Serve as chairman of the calendar of activities committee.
5. Assist the officers of the Brotherhood and Woman's Missionary Society organizations in the promotion of their work.
6. Supervise the work of the office staff, the church hostess, and maintenance supervisor.
7. Assist, as directed, the chairman of the various church committees.
8. Cooperate with the minister of music in the music program of the church.
9. Maintain personnel records of all regular workers; execute church approved personnel policies.