

SECTION

2

**EVALUATING
YOUR CURRENT
GOVERNANCE
STRUCTURE**

Overview

THERE'S A SAYING, "If you aim for nothing, that's exactly what you'll hit." Adopting a new form of local church governance will only be of maximum benefit if you establish a compelling case of making a change along with a clear description of where this change will take you. In other words, begin with a destination in mind.

It is strongly encouraged that church leaders first invest the necessary time and prayer to determine what are the purpose, mission, vision, and values (PMVV) of the ministry before contemplating any transition in church governance. The District Field Directors and Church Health Community can provide you with additional resources and tools to make that assessment. Once you have an accurate understanding of what is or isn't working, as well as an awareness of "how to do church" more effectively in your context, you are then ready to start the search for the kind of government structure you need to get from "here" to "there".

Later in this section is a "Church Governance Evaluation Form" to help you launch that discussion with your current leadership team. It is tempting to hurry through or bypass this part of the journey, but time well spent on the front end of the task will yield considerable dividends later. Thoughtful preparation now will make it more likely that the new design will find support and be accepted in a smooth transition. It will also increase the lifespan of the new structure, enabling it to serve you well for an extended period of time.

An Important Reminder...

The only genuine and reliable motivation for making a comprehensive organizational change is the prayerfully tested prompting of the Holy Spirit. Change – no matter how essential and positive – is always a challenging and stressful process. In many cases a whole new way of "doing church" is replacing an old but very familiar system.

It is imperative that you have laid a solid spiritual and relational foundation on which to build before you proceed. Attempts by a few key leaders to impose a new framework on a distrustful congregation are doomed to fail. A culture of higher and healthier trust needs to be cultivated and nurtured throughout the transition.

We strongly suggest that your leadership group include an assessment of trust as part of this evaluation. Six key factors can be used to measure and deepen the trust factor:

CHARACTER – speaking truthfully and acting with integrity
COMMUNICATION – sharing information regularly
CONCERN – showing genuine love for and interest in others
CONNECTEDNESS – spending time with others
CONSISTENCY – manifesting predictability and reliability
COMPETENCE – demonstrating skill in what you do

Church Governance Evaluation Form

- 1. As a governing board, identify your purpose and mission in the local church.

- 2. Make a complete list of the responsibilities that your Governing Body cares for in the left column.

RESPONSIBILITY	RATING
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

- 3. In the right column (above), on a scale of 1-10 with one being the lowest and ten being the highest, identify your level of satisfaction for the way in which each responsibility is handled.

4. Based on your assessment, what area(s) do you want to address at this time?
5. What makes this area or these areas such a priority concern for you?
6. What sorts of changes would be helpful in this area or these areas?
7. Why have you identified these changes?
8. Brainstorm the potential strategies that may be implemented in bringing about change along with the pros and cons of each.

Understanding Key Issues

<p>STRENGTHS What is working well?</p>	<p>WEAKNESSES What is missing or needs improvement?</p>
<p>OPPORTUNITIES What possibilities do you see?</p>	<p>THREATS What obstacles have you identified?</p>

Describe accurately your current reality:

Reflection Checklist for Church Governing Boards

✓ Consider the big picture:

1. What has God called you to do?
2. What are your hopes and dreams?
3. Which of your responsibilities are you handling well?
4. Which ones need attention?
5. What obstacles are you facing?
6. What opportunities do you see?

✓ Issues sorted by importance/urgency:

1. Brainstorm a list of possible goals.
2. What's really important?
3. What's urgent, but not important?
4. Which issues feel most pressing to you right now? Why is that?
5. If you could improve just one ministry area, what would it be?

✓ Priority issues identified and concurrence established:

1. Where do you want to go?
2. What priorities will you focus on?
3. How strongly do these priorities connect with your values?
4. Who needs to embrace these priorities?
5. What changes are needed to obtain concurrence?
6. How will you cultivate agreement on the priorities?

✓ Commitment to address issues obtained:

1. How committed are you?
2. What are you willing to invest in this?
3. What will you stop doing to free up time and energy?
4. What will you start doing to focus your efforts?
5. What will you continue doing?
6. Who can help encourage and assist you?
7. What accountability structures will help you maintain focus?