

# Ideas for Conducting a Review of a QB Pastor

## 1. Some Important Purposes of a Pastoral Review

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1. To encourage a pastor and provide positive feedback.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of the ministry of a pastor.
3. To improve the functioning and ministry of a pastor.
4. To hear how a pastor is finding their ministry and the resources the church offers.
5. To evaluate the effectiveness of the church's support of the pastor and bring improvement.
6. To assist a pastor in setting new pastoral ministry goals.
7. To identify training and development needs of the pastor.

## 2. Biblical Foundations

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1. The parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30) clearly indicates that we are accountable to God for the effective use of the resources God has given each of us.
2. In Eph. 4:11-16, Paul says that the church has a responsibility to ensure that each part of the body functions effectively ("does its work") through loving and honest feedback and relationship ("speaking the truth in love").
3. The Pastoral Epistles are good examples of Paul providing the kind of feedback to Timothy and Titus that would emerge from a Review.

## 3. What You will Need

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1. *A Review group.* Usually about 2-4 people in the best size. It's helpful if someone with experience with Reviews can be part of the group. This could be an external person if no-one in the church is suitable. If the pastor has a supervisor, that person would normally be part of the group. The group needs to be people that the pastor trusts (even if they don't always agree with the pastor).
2. *A process for conducting the Review.* There are at least three main types of Reviews.
  - A mini-Review in which the church leadership (or its representatives) checks on a new pastor after 3 to 6 months of ministry with a view to encouraging them and working through any problems.
  - An annual Review (minor Review) in which feedback is sought from the pastor and church leadership with a view to assist the development of the pastor and the church.
  - A major Review (possibly every 3 to 5 years) in which feedback is sought from a wide range of people with a view to both assisting the development of the pastor and the church and deciding whether the pastor should be recalled.
3. *Information for the Review group.* A position description, the goals of the pastor (if available), the goals of the church (if available), and some feedback from the church and the pastor (the amount of feedback needed will depend on the type of Review). An effective review needs some criteria against which the ministry of the pastor can be measured.

## 4. Review Process

*Note: A period of review can be anxiety producing for the person being reviewed, so keeping the process relatively simple and completed in a short time frame (usually a month) is helpful. For those being reviewed, support during the process is often beneficial.*

	Mini Review	Annual Review	Major Review
Choice of Review group	A small group usually chosen from within the leadership	2-4 people including supervisor (if relevant)	2-4 people including main lay leader and supervisor (if relevant)
First meeting of Review group to decide on process	Go through purposes of Review (see above). Decide on process and information needed. See below for questions.	Go through purposes of Review (see above). Decide on process and information needed. See below for questions.	Go through purposes of Review (see above). Decide on process and information needed. See below for questions.
Collect and distribute information	Usually informal talk with other leaders and with those most impacted by ministry. Position description and any goals.	Formal questionnaire for pastor and a few leaders. Position description, the goals of the pastor (if available), the goals of the church (if available).	360 degree questionnaire with feedback from supervisor, peers, spouse/family, some of those ministered to, and pastor. Position description, the goals of the pastor (if available), the goals of the church (if available).
Conduct Review interview	Meet before the interview to reflect on information gathered and decide who will ask the questions. Be honest and encouraging. Don't shy away from difficult issues but be gentle. Listen carefully. Take notes.	Meet before the interview to reflect on information gathered and decide who will ask the questions. Be honest and encouraging. Don't shy away from difficult issues but be gentle. Listen carefully. Take notes.	Meet before the interview to reflect on information gathered and decide who will ask the questions. Be honest and encouraging. Don't shy away from difficult issues but be gentle. Listen carefully. Take notes.
Write report and check it with pastor and Review group	Prepare a short report for church leadership and pastor. Consider all suggestions and rewrite where needed.	Prepare a report for church leadership and pastor. Consider all suggestions and rewrite where needed.	Prepare a report for church leadership and pastor. Consider all suggestions and rewrite where needed.
Present final report to leadership and pastor. Decide on any further follow-up.	Discuss report at leadership meeting. Ensure there is a mechanism to monitor agreed outcomes.	Discuss report at leadership meeting. Ensure there is a mechanism to monitor agreed outcomes.	Discuss report at leadership meeting. Inform church of results of Review. Ensure there is a mechanism to monitor agreed outcomes.
Evaluate Review process	Reflect on strengths and weaknesses.	Reflect on strengths and weaknesses.	Reflect on strengths and weaknesses.

## 5. Possible Questions for a Mini Review

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### Questions for the Pastor:

1. What have your first six months been like?
2. How is your family adjusting to the change? Do your spouse and family feel at home in the church and community?
3. What are you discovering about the uniqueness of this congregation? What surprises have you experienced?
4. Do you feel that the people are responding to your ministry? Are there areas where you feel resistance?
5. Do you feel your goals correspond with those of the congregation? What would you like to see happen here because of your ministry?
6. What do you think are areas where changes could or should take place in the church and community?
7. Are there areas in your ministry where you feel the need of more help? If so, what sort of help?
8. Are you satisfied with the terms of your Position Description?
9. How do feel you are fitting in the ministry team?

### Questions for the Leaders

1. What are some discoveries you are making about your pastor and family?
2. Is there additional information about your pastor that you would like?
3. What are some of the important realities about this congregation that you would like to emphasise to the pastor?
4. In general, how do you see the congregation responding to the pastor's ministry?
5. How do you perceive the pastor is fitting in to the ministry team?
6. From your present standpoint, how valid is the Position Description you formulated and the skills required? What modifications, if any, would you like to make?
7. Identify your pastor's strengths and weaknesses in fulfilling the priorities of this Position Description. Be specific.
8. Is there an area where you would like to see improvement?
9. Do you have any suggestions as to where your pastor needs to place an emphasis during the next six months?
10. Do you have any suggestions as to how to facilitate better communication between the pastor and congregation?
11. Are there any other areas you would like to discuss at this time?

## 6. Possible Questions for an Annual Review

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### Questions for the Pastor:

1. **SUCCESES.** What have you really enjoyed about the last year? What have been the major achievements in your own ministry at the church over the year?
2. **DIFFICULTIES.** Where have you not done as good a job as you would have liked? Why is this the case? What did you find difficult or disappointing or frustrating in your ministry over the last year? Why?
3. **GOALS FOR THE REVIEW PERIOD.** How did you go with your goals for the year? If you did not set goals or are new to your role, the key responsibilities of your position description should be used. Please insert a copy of your goals OR key responsibilities from your position description.
4. **CONTRIBUTION.** What do you feel is the major contribution(s) you make to the growth and development of the church?
5. **FEEDBACK.** What important feedback (positive and critical) have you received about your ministry during the year (from your supervisor, mentors, ministry teams, etc.)? How has this impacted your ministry?
6. **PERSONAL MINISTRY GROWTH.** In what ways have you grown in your leadership and ministry over the last year? What has helped this occur? How are you planning to develop further?
7. **RESOURCES AND CONDITIONS.** In what environment do you prosper? Are there any resources or support or conditions you feel would make your ministry more effective?
8. **RELATIONSHIPS.** How do you contribute to the strength and harmony of the pastoral and/or leadership team? In what ways do you build relationships with people in the church?
9. **PERSONAL LIFE.** How is your life outside of your church ministry going? Are you growing spiritually? How are you going with your family and friends?
10. **ANYTHING ELSE.** Is there anything else you would like to say to or discuss with the Review Panel?
11. **NEW GOALS.** What ideas do you have for personal ministry goals (through your ministry at \_\_\_\_\_) for the next year? (The Review Panel may suggest further goals.)

### Questions for the Leaders

1. List the core values of the church (no more than six). If you are not sure of these, consider behaviours and practices of the church people for clues. In what ways does the pastor reflect or contradict these values?
2. What is the vision of the church? (That is, what is “the better tomorrow” the church is moving towards.) In what ways does the pastor assist?
3. What do you observe are 3 of the pastor’s strengths?
4. How have you seen the pastor’s ministry grow over the last 12 months?
5. Check out the pastor’s position description and/or goals. What has been achieved? Where could there be further improvement?
6. How has the pastor contributed to the church’s leadership team (if relevant)?
7. Please mention any other specific ways that you think that the ministry of the pastor could be enhanced.

## 7. Possible Questions for a Major Review

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Select from the questions in 6. above. In addition, use the questions below for a 360 degree survey.

*Rating Scale: 1. Always true | 2. Very true | 3. Mostly true | 4. Sometimes true | 5. I don't know*

1. From your perspective, how well do the following statements describe the pastor's spirituality and character?

- a. Enjoys God's grace and lives peacefully and freely
- b. Has a heart for obeying and serving God
- c. Treats people with love and grace
- d. Relies on prayer and prays frequently
- e. Makes wise choices and decisions
- f. Is reliable and trustworthy
- g. Understands Scripture well and shares it as appropriate
- h. Is known as a servant
- i. Readily submits to authority

2. From your perspective, how well do the following statements describe the pastor's ministry?

- a. Does a good job in their ministry area
- b. Builds teams well
- c. Copes well with disappointments and setbacks
- d. Encourages the people they work with
- e. Puts sufficient time and energy into their ministry
- f. Structures and organises things well
- g. Seeks to improve and develop their ministry
- h. Has sufficient expertise to be effective in their role

3. From your perspective, how well do the following statements describe the pastor's contribution to healthy team?

- a. Is humble and readily admits faults and failures
- b. Is teachable and keen to learn
- c. Relates to other staff and/or volunteers well
- d. Understands people well and relates appropriately
- e. Is known to be a hard worker who readily takes on responsibility
- f. Has vision and passion for the future of their ministry

4. From your perspective, how well do the following statement describe the pastor's personal life?

- a. Models healthy family relationships (if relevant)
- b. Works on personal physical health
- c. Is emotionally healthy
- d. Develops relationships with non-Christians
- e. Balances life well between personal needs, family needs and ministry needs
- f. Has good support (e.g. an effective mentor and prayer support team)
- g. Participates in the worship and prayer life of the church
- h. Effectively maintains energy and passion

5. What are the pastor's greatest strengths and contributions from your perspective?

6. What constructive advice would you like to offer the pastor?

7. Share a story that illustrates the contribution that the pastor has made to your life and ministry, or to the life of another, or to the ministry of the church community or to the wider community.

8. Do you have any other comments or insights concerning the pastor that will help in the review process?

## 8. Providing Feedback from a Pastoral Review

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*Every situation is different so these are just ideas that may be helpful to think about.*

1. It is important for the Review Group to know to whom they will report. Often the full report would go to the leadership group and would contain an overview of the data and conclusions along with some recommendations. If the Review Group is reporting to the whole church they need to be careful about how much information is provided. Often the Review Group will report to the leadership and then the leadership will provide a modified report to the church.
2. The format and extent of the Review feedback will depend on the nature of the Review. A mini Review may only require some feedback to the pastor and a report to the Leadership that the Review has been conducted successfully. On the other hand, a Review to ascertain whether a senior pastor will receive a new call by the church, may require formal reporting and a recommendation with reasons to the church.
3. Check the church constitution to see whether it contains any requirements for reporting.
4. With all significant Reviews a written report is needed to ensure that the conclusions are noted and acted on. This report should be seen and agreed to by both the Review group and the pastor being reviewed. The pastor may correct factual misinformation in the report but would usually not be able to change conclusions or recommendations. The pastor should receive a copy of the final report. If there are any significant differences of opinion on issues, this could be noted in the report.
5. Reviews look both backwards and forwards. Makes sure that both components are reflected in the report. Categories could include:
  - a. The purpose of the Review and how it was conducted
  - b. Strengths/contributions of the pastor;
  - c. Recommendations for growth/development of the pastor;
  - d. Changes needed for the pastor and/or the church;
  - e. Goals for the next period (if relevant);
  - f. Final comments.
6. Review reports presented to the leadership should contain no surprises for the pastor. All the major recommendations should be discussed with the pastor either during the Review process or at a meeting following the Review (to go through the draft report).
7. Make sure that the report is filed properly (often in the minutes of a leadership meeting) and that there is a mechanism to ensure that the recommendations are implemented.