

FUNDAMENTALS OF RECRUITMENT...

CRAFTING A COMPREHENSIVE RECRUITMENT STRATEGY



Recruiting new members for your Church Council is a BIG deal so why not give it the attention it deserves! You gotta make a plan and then STICK to it year after year to ensure you're finding the right people at the right time for the right roles.

1. **Have a Timeline** – This one sounds like a no-brainer but it's amazing how often boards and committees put off recruitment until the last minute. Having an appropriate 'timeline' is essential. Recruitment can take longer than we think and the sooner you begin looking and asking, the longer your nominees have to carefully and prayerfully consider the ask. But in a perfect world, recruitment is an ON-GOING process. Your current Council and Nominating Committee should always be on the lookout for potential candidates.
2. **Create a Nominating Committee** – In short, this Committee would oversee most of the recruitment process. Have a clear and comprehensive mandate so that your Council AND congregation are fully informed and know their roles. Ideally, this committee would consist of retiring office bearers, the Vice Chair of Council and the Senior Pastor.
3. **Have a Clear and Fair Vetting Process for Nominees** – This can be where things get tricky (and sometimes controversial), so the best way to avoid confusion, hurt feelings or suspicion is to set out your criteria for a council member and communicate it clearly to your congregation. Also, it's important to keep your 'screening' process up-to-date as new and unique situations can come up that may offer new perspectives. Here are some tips when crafting your process:
 - a. **PRAY, PRAY, PRAY!** – Ask God for wisdom and ask Him what HE wants in a deacon or elder. He may surprise you!
 - b. **Define your church's criteria for a Council Member** – This can start with the practical/objective things like how long each person has been a member of your church, to noting other ministries they've been involved in, to listing the gifts and passions of the nominee. Then move on to the more complex or subjective criteria, like demonstrated evidence of Christ's rule in each person's life (*what is their prayer life like? do they read the bible and attend worship regularly? do they contribute financially to the church and/or other ministries, etc.*), to consideration of any pastoral care issues that may exist. As you can see, the second list is one where much wisdom and careful consideration is needed so if needed, go back to Step 1! 😊
 - c. **Figure out what your priorities are** – *What skills or expertise do you need on your council to help you achieve those priorities? Who is your church now and who do you*

want to be in the community in the next five years or so? What Elders or Deacons are finishing up their terms and what gaps will be created once they are done? This will help the Nominating Committee immensely in their work of finding the right people at the right time.

- d. **Schedule visits with each nominee** – While this may seem way too time-consuming, it will prove to be a valuable tool for the Nominating Committee in their vetting process. An “interview” will help the Committee get a sense for who this person is and if he/she will be a good fit for the office they have been nominated for. Part of the ‘Interview’ process could be asking the Nominee to answer some appropriate questions before you meet with him/her. Things like: *When and how did you become a Christian? What does it mean to be Reformed? Where have you seen God at work in your life? How has God prepared you for the office of Elder or Deacon? What is your vision for our church?* These questions dig a bit deeper and require a bit more time for reflection. And perhaps some of these ‘answers’ could be shared in the final document supplied to the congregation before voting occurs so members can get a better sense of who a person is and why they would make a good addition to your Church’s Council.
 - e. **Never, EVER, compromise!** – While it can happen that not enough ‘qualified’ persons will allow their name to appear on the ballot, it’s important to hold fast to your Recruitment Strategy as well as what your church holds as the irrefutable qualities needed in a Council Member. It’s far better to pick the right person over the available one. God ALWAYS provides *what* we need exactly when we need it.
4. **And the TRUTH shall set them free!** – Sometimes people say “No” to a nomination because they don’t really understand what they are being asked to do. Create ways and then carve out time to educate your members, and especially nominees, on what the ‘job descriptions’ are for an Elder or Deacon. Here are some ideas*:
- a. **Hold an “Open House”** – Invite members to a meeting so they can see firsthand that the work that you do MATTERS and is moving your church’s mission and vision along;
 - b. **Have written job descriptions for an Elder and Deacon** (and each position within Council) – Keep these up-to-date and have them on hand to share with those considering or interested in more information. There are some great resources [here](#) and [here](#);
 - c. **Hold an information session and/or have an info table/booth** – Doing this well in advance will keep recruitment in the forefront and help members seriously consider if this is something God is calling them to.

*Find out more ways to educate and engage your members in our resource [“Fundamentals of Recruitment – Informing Your Congregation.”](#)

Did you find these tips helpful?

What has YOUR church done to make recruitment a cinch in your church? What has worked? What was a total bomb?!

Let us know – eknight@crcna.org.

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Diaconal Ministries Canada exists to inspire, empower, and equip deacons as they animate their congregations to join in God’s transforming work in their communities.

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