

# **S.T.A.R.**

## **Search Committee Interview Skills Training Manual**

**Church Name**

**City, Texas**

**Date, 2011**

**Trainer:**

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**Director of Leadership Development**

**Episcopal Diocese of Texas**



**Episcopal Diocese of Texas**

### **Mission**

We are one Church reconciled by Jesus Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit,  
called by God through worship, witness, and ministry,  
building the Kingdom of God together.

*Prayer for a New Rector*

*Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on  
Name of Church*

*and so guide the minds of those who shall choose  
a rector for this parish, that we may receive a faithful pastor,  
who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

Book of Common Prayer, p. 81

**PLACEHOLDER**

**Church**  
**City, TX**  
Date, 2011

## **S.T.A.R. Training for Search Committee**

### **AGENDA**

#### **Opening Prayer**

1:00 – 1:30 p.m.

#### **Discuss the following questions:**

- What are this congregation's core values?
- What is this congregation's mission?
- What is this congregation's vision for the future?
- What is this congregation looking for in a rector?
- What is the rector profile?
- How does this profile reflect particular behaviors?

1:30 – 1:45 p.m.

#### **Clergy Interview Guide and Key Background Review**

1:45 – 2:45 p.m.

#### **Focus Areas for Interviewing & Behavioral Dimensions**

- Review Focus Areas
- What are behavioral dimensions? Review

#### **Small Group Work**

Each group selects focus areas and behavioral dimensions from those assigned to the group that align with the church's need

2:45 – 3:00 p.m.

#### **BREAK**

3:00 – 3:20 p.m.

#### **Small Group Reports**

Each group reports chosen dimensions and focus areas that become the initial areas the group will use for developing questions

3:20 – 4:00 p.m.

#### **Asking questions based on the S.T.A.R. method**

- Guide for Creating Behavioral Questions
- Elements of a STAR
- False STARS
- Vague Answers
- Follow Up Questions to Build Complete STARS
- Rating
- Individual Team Member's Sample Dimension Question Sheet
- After Interview Communication/Impact Assessment Team Rating Sheet
- Final Record After Team Visit
- Reaching Consensus as a Team
- Whole Search Committee Discussion After 2 Team Visits

4:00 – 4:30 p.m.

#### **Homework for Search Committee members, Search Committee work to develop an Interview Guide, Q&A, Search Process Review**

#### **Closing Prayer**

## **S.T.A.R. TRAINING for SEARCH COMMITTEES**

The Episcopal Diocese of Texas is committed to assisting its congregations in being prepared to undertake the most productive searches possible for new rectors. The work of a search committee is simply to find the best candidate to be the next rector of their church. This candidate should be a good fit for the culture and need of the church at the time of the search. This training method will assist search committee members to do this work well.

Prior to search committee training, it is very important that churches have clearly defined their identity through core value and mission statements. In addition, leaders of a church should be able to articulate clearly the vision for the near future of the congregation. This information informs a future rector profile which should define the characteristics, demonstrated behaviors and accomplishments of the optimum candidate for the position. Once a church has completed this work it is time to gather a committed and capable search committee who will actually do the interviewing and recommendation of a final candidate to the vestry.

**The STAR method of interview skills training helps members of a search committee focus on the specific criteria for a rector. In addition, it provides a method whereby the committee members can hone their ability to interview and gain relevant and extremely important information which can ultimately inform their evaluation of the candidates.**

The STAR method was derived from a secular human resources interview skills training program. However, it has been completely overhauled and adapted to meet the life of a congregation. It is based on the premise that future performance can be predicted by past behavior.

The contents of this notebook can be edited and changed to address the specific needs, culture, and vision for a church. It has many questions which can be used verbatim or edited to best fit the need of the congregation. In addition, it focuses on the multiple areas in which questions can be created using the STAR method. It is best utilized as a framework for a search committee's interviewing, discernment and evaluation process.

# THE INTERVIEW

## 3 Parts

1. Opening, informal, background, casual intro into more formal questions  
Passion question
2. STAR QUESTIONS – highly structured portion of the interview
3. Candidates time for questions of his/her choice

Interviews often last 4-5 hours, including a meal at the beginning or at the end. Make sure to invite the spouse, if there is one, in advance for the meal. The search committee should pay for any costs incurred in this visit. (of course these costs should be supported by the search committee's budget).

The interview should be held at a neutral location.

Follow up should be made to the interviewee as soon as the whole search committee has had a chance to discuss the results of the interview session. The candidate should be told if they will remain on the list, or be thanked for their time and told that they will not be under further consideration.

# CLERGY INTERVIEW GUIDE

## ◆BEFORE THE INTERVIEW (pre-interview preparation)

- Each team member review:
  - ◇ The candidate's information
  - ◇ Pre-selected questions, dimension definitions and key actions
- Tailor the questions to the candidate's experience
- Appoint respective jobs for the team, including the opener, note taker, etc.

## Part 1

### ◆OPENING (5 minutes)

- Greet the candidate
  - ◇ Start with prayer.
  - ◇ Each person introduces him/herself.
  - ◇ State that the team appreciates the candidate's interest in the church and the rector's position.
  - ◇ Complement the candidate on his/her experience and accomplishments.
  - ◇ Thank the candidate for adjusting his/her schedule for the interview.
- Explain the interview's purpose:
  - ◇ To get acquainted.
  - ◇ Learn more about the candidate's background and experience.
  - ◇ Help the candidate understand the particulars of the position and the uniqueness of the church.

### ◆KEY BACKGROUND INFORMAL REVIEW (20-30 minutes – see p.6-considered informal time)

- Ask about the candidate's submitted materials
  - ◇ Review candidate's materials (resume, advance information sent to the search committee) and ask any questions, note highlights and note relevance to this church's position opening.
- Jobs and experience
  - ◇ Review information about the candidate's prior work.
  - ◇ Note any background that is unclear or areas for which you would like more information.
- Gaps
  - ◇ If there are gaps in the candidate's employment or educational history, make a note to discuss them during this background review.
- Passion Question
  - ◇ An open-ended question about the interviewee's passion around their ministry/work

## Part 2

### ◆THE FORMAL INTERVIEW (up to 2 hours)

- Describe the interview structure by explaining that you will:
  - ◇ Review the candidate's jobs and ministry experiences, ask for specific examples of actions he/she has taken in these jobs/experiences and results from these actions.
  - ◇ Ask the candidate's theological and philosophical positions pertaining to the church and ministry.
  - ◇ Answer any questions about the church and the rector's position without getting into any financial considerations for the position.
  - ◇ Take notes during the interview.

### ◆ PLANNED S.T.A.R. QUESTIONS (7-10 minutes per dimension or focus area)

### ◆ OTHER QUESTIONS

## Part 3

### ◆ CANDIDATE'S QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CHURCH (+/- 1 hour)

### ◆ CANDIDATE SHARES OTHER INFORMATION HE/SHE WOULD LIKE THE SEARCH COMMITTEE TO KNOW

### ◆ CLOSE – WITH PRAYER AND ASSURANCE OF FOLLOW UP NOTIFICATION (letter or phone call)

# KEY BACKGROUND REVIEW

## Team Member Sheet

CANDIDATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**MOST RECENT  
POSITION/LOCATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

◆What (are/were) your major responsibilities in your (current/most recent) position?

◆(Do/Did) you supervise anyone? How many? What were their positions? What about volunteer positions?

◆What interests you the most about this possible new opportunity?

◆What gives you pause about the possibility of this new opportunity?

◆Why (do/did) you want to leave?

◆What aspects of ministry are you most passionate about and why?

Communication Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

Impact Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

## (The Passion Questions)

The following 2 questions are open ended, leaving the interviewee to select the situation they are probably most proud of doing. The answer will give the interviewers a great deal of information on which to dig deeper and reveal actions and results. It will speak to the motivation behind the actions rather than the skill set as is discerned through behavioral dimension questions. They are good opening questions, focusing the individual on accomplishments and usually positive feelings.

1. **Situation, Task**

Tell us something that you have accomplished in your career about which you are most proud.

**Action**

Specifically, how did you accomplish it?

**Result**

What has been the result of this work?

**OR**

2. **Situation, Task**

Share with us something that you accomplished in ministry that was an important achievement for you?

**Situation, Task**

What were some of the specific actions you had to take in order to do this?

**Result**

What were some of the results of this work?



## **FOCUS AREAS FOR INTERVIEWING DURING A SEARCH PROCESS**

The following focus areas cover most aspects of the work of a rector. Questions could be designed around as many areas as deemed appropriate. The questions are best designed with STAR components and decided in advance of interviews. Those areas noted with ( ) are defined behavioral dimensions and are included in this notebook.

### **Personal Life**

Prayer/Devotional Life and Self Care  
Family Life-Balance of Work and Home Life  
Stress Tolerance **(S)**  
Personal Mission Statement

### **Theology**

Demonstrating Personal Theology **(P)**  
Episcopal Church/National Policy  
Ministry of the Priest  
Ministry of the Laity  
Abortion, Birth, Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, Divorce, Death

### **Spiritual Gifts**

Personal Giftedness  
Giftedness of Others and Empowerment for Utilization  
Personal Passion for Particular Ministry  
Actions Motivated by Spiritual Gifts **(G)**

### **Leadership Style**

Leading through Values, Mission and Vision **(V)**  
Initiating Action **(A)**  
Building Trust **(T)**  
Gaining Commitment **(C)**  
Delegating Responsibility/Setting Boundaries/Expectations **(D)**  
Work Standards and Expectations of Others  
Building Parishioner - Staff Loyalty/Listening/Acknowledging/Building Relationships **(L)**  
Coaching/Contributing to Team Success **(CC)**

### **Management Style**

Communication **(CM)**  
Decision Making  
Building Strategic Working Relationships  
Managing Conflict  
Team Building

### **Organizational Development**

Meeting Leadership/Small Group Development **(M)**  
Organizational Design/Restructuring to Address Mission, Vision  
Vestry Development  
Small Group Development

## **Worship/Liturgy**

Preferences

Preaching (PR)

Experience with Different Styles

Openness/Opinion of Diversity in Liturgy

Control/Delegation/Involvement

Expanding Worship Opportunities beyond Sunday

## **Pastoral Care**

Decisions About When to get Involved in Parishioner's Pastoral Needs

Overseeing Comprehensive Ways to Cover Congregation's Pastoral Needs

Training/Deployment of Others to do Pastoral Care

## **Christian Formation**

Experience/Value Placed on Christian Education for Children, Adults, Bible Study/Vacation Bible School, etc.

Personal Involvement in Teaching

Experience with Programs for Christian Formation (DOCC, EFM, etc.)

Involvement/promotion of Spiritual Development Opportunities

(Cursillo, EFM, Faith Alive, Discovery, Alpha, spiritual direction, etc.)

## **Evangelism**

Personal Involvement in Inviting Others into a Congregation

Training Parishioners for Inviting Others into a Congregation

Oversight/Involvement of Systematic Invitation, Welcome, Assimilation of Newcomers

Experience with Setting and Achieving Objectives in Evangelism

## **Stewardship**

Experience/degree of Personal Involvement in Annual Campaigns

Experience with Capital Campaigns/building New Facilities

## **Day Schools**

Experience with Day Schools on Church Premises

Mother's Day Out Programs

## **Youth Ministry**

Experience with Development of a Youth Ministry

Degree of Personal Involvement with Youth Ministry

Selection/Oversight of Youth Ministry Staff

## **Outreach Ministries**

Experience/degree of Personal Involvement

Developing Outreach Opportunities

Foreign and Domestic Missionary Work

## **Living in a Community With Changing Demographics**

Experience living in a community where demographics are changing

Experience as an ordained person/leader of a church in a changing community

Needs/Expectations for self and family living in a community such as the one the church is located

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## Behavioral Dimension L

### Building Parishioner-Staff Loyalty/Listening/Acknowledging/Building Relationships

*Definition-Effectively meeting parishioner needs: building productive relationships; taking responsibility for a level of satisfaction and loyalty on the part of the parishioner by being open, accessible, listening.*

#### Key Actions

- ❖ **Uses key Principles of Listening** – Establishes good interpersonal relationships by helping people feel valued, appreciated, and included in discussions (which enhances self-esteem, empathizes, involves, discloses, supports).
- ❖ **Acknowledges the person** – Actively greets parishioners and gives them his/her attention
- ❖ **Clarifies the current situation-** Asks questions to determine needs; listens carefully, provides appropriate information, summarizes to check understanding.
- ❖ **Takes the “heat”** – Handles upset parishioners/staff by hearing them out, empathizing, taking responsibility to assist the person to resolve the issue

#### Sample Job Activities

- ❖ **Interacts** with parishioners who, when interacting, acknowledges their presence in a warm and friendly manner
- ❖ **Acts** attentively and is able to ask questions and respond to persons will skill during conversations
- ❖ **Works** to effectively defuse the emotions of disgruntled parishioners/staff by using good listening techniques and offering assistance when appropriate

#### Possible Interview Questions

L1. Sooner or later clergy will have to deal with a parishioner who makes unreasonable demands. Think of a time when you had to handle an unreasonable request from a parishioner. What was the request and what did you do?

L2. What skills/qualities/giftedness do you have that contribute to building productive relationships with people? Can you recall a time when you had to focus on your skills/qualities/giftedness to address a particular situation with a church leader or member? What was the situation and what happened as a result?

L3. Tell me about a time when you were the focus of a parishioner’s displeasure. What did you do? What ultimately happened as a result of your action?

L4. Describe a situation when you chose to involve others to help solve a parishioner’s crisis. What was the crisis and how did you engage others in helping? What ended up happening?

## **Behavioral Dimension L** (continued)

L5. Tell me about an experience where your careful listening impacted your actions in response to a highly emotional situation. What ended up happening?

L6. Describe a time when it was particularly important to establish a good relationship with a staff member. How did you do this? How was the relationship developed as a result of your actions?

L7. Describe the actions you take to foster relationship building between staff members. Share with us an example of a time when these actions made a big difference in handling a difficult situation. What were the ultimate results?

L8. Tell me about a time when you knew a key parishioner was unhappy with the church. What action did you take to resolve the situation? What resolution was there if any?

Your Notes:

## Behavioral Dimension T

### Building Trust

*Definition – interacting with others in ways that build confidence, faith in the relationship and trust.*

### Key Actions

**Operates with integrity**- demonstrates honesty; keeps commitments; behaves in a consistent manner.

- ❖ **Discloses own positions**-shares thoughts, feelings, and rationale so that others understand personal positions.
- ❖ **Remains open to ideas**-listens to others and objectively considers others' ideas and opinions, even when they conflict with one's own.
- ❖ **Supports others**- treats people with dignity, respects, and fairness; gives proper credit to others; stands up for deserving others and their ideas even in the face of resistance or challenge.

### Sample Job Activities

- ❖ **Keeps** promises and commitments
- ❖ **Treats** individuals with Christian love, acceptance, fairly and equally
- ❖ **Handles** confidential information well
- ❖ Accurately **communicates** the strengths and limitations of the church
- ❖ **Allows** people to learn from mistakes as they work in the church but takes action to encourage persons' personal and spiritual growth
- ❖ **Empowers** people to take on responsibility to carry out important tasks, encourages them, and works hard to not tell them what to do, censure or do the work for them

### Possible Interview Questions

T1. Share with me an example of a situation when you knew it was critical to build a parishioner's/staff member's trust. What did you do to build that trust and what were the results of your actions?

T2. Tell me about a time when you had to objectively consider a church leader's/staff member's ideas, be open to them, even though they conflicted with yours. What were the ideas? How did you disclose your opinion? What were the results of your willingness to consider the other person's ideas?

T3. Sometimes parishioners act in an unethical manner. Give me an example of a situation when you saw a parishioner do something you thought was very inappropriate. What did you do to respond as their priest? What happened as a result?

## Behavioral Dimension T (continued)

T4. It's often easy to blur the distinction between information meant to be kept in confidence and information meant to be shared. Can you give me an example of a time when you were working with a lay leader and you faced this dilemma? What did you do? What ultimately happened?

T5. Tell me about a situation where you publicly supported a parishioner/staff member who was being criticized for his/her ideas. What happened? What difference, if any, did your support create?

T6. Give me an example of a time when you chose to delegate a great deal of responsibility to a staff member/parishioner. What was the situation? How did you convey your trust? What was the outcome?

T7. Share with us an example from your life experience that conveyed a powerful message about trust in God. What was the experience and what was the message? Were you aware of any response to your message? How did you know-what was the response?

T8. Describe for me the routine ways in which you affirm your staff members. What do you do? Tell us about a particular situation when you felt it critical to affirm/support a staff member and what happened as a result of you doing so.

Your Notes:

## Behavioral Dimension C

### Gaining Commitment

*Definition - Using appropriate interpersonal styles and techniques to gain acceptance of ideas or plans; modifying one's own behavior to accommodate tasks, situations, and individuals involved.*

#### Key Actions

- ❖ **Opens discussions effectively**-describes expectations, goals, requests or future statements in a way that provides clarity and excites interest
- ❖ **Develops others' and own ideas** – presents own ideas; seeks and develops suggestions of others
- ❖ **Facilitates agreement** – uses appropriate influence strategies (such as Biblical support, the church's values, mission, vision) to gain genuine agreement
- ❖ **Closes discussions with clear summaries**- is able to establish next steps

#### Sample Job Activities

- ❖ **Uses authority of rector** (e.g. "because I said so") only as a last resort to enforce a decision
- ❖ Is the **bearer of the church's mission**, values and vision and works to remind the congregation and people in decision making positions of the foundational importance of these statements
- ❖ **Encourages/allows forums** for the congregation to share ideas
- ❖ **Remains actively aware** of the progress of the congregation in achieving its goals, objectives and can articulate its progress toward those ends

### Possible Interview Questions

C1. What techniques have you used to gain acceptance of your ideas or plans for your congregation? Give me an example of a time when you used one of these techniques. How could you tell that acceptance of your ideas/plans had been gained?

C2. Not everyone agrees with decisions made by leaders. Tell me about an unpopular decision you had to make as a priest (rector, assistant rector) and how you gained acceptance from the vestry or a committee that was responsible for helping you carry the decision out.

C3. What are the most successful methods you have used to help individuals grow in their commitment to Jesus Christ? Give some specifics. Tell us about a parishioner, their journey, current status in their spiritual growth and the role you played.

C4. Tell me about a situation when you encountered a parishioner whose theology, in your judgment, was really misguided. What did you do? What happened as a result?

C5. Tell me about a way you have provided a means or encouraged the sharing of ideas to improve a current program at your church. What have you done to help assure that these ideas get put into action?



## **Behavioral Dimension C** (continued)

C6. Give me an example of a time when you influenced some parishioners/ staff members to carry out a ministry in a new and different way. What was the situation and what ultimately happened?

C7. Tell me about a time when you influenced a parishioner to take on a difficult assignment. What did you do to convince the person to take on this responsibility? What was the outcome?

C8. Give us a real life example of a situation that demonstrates how you facilitated agreement about a very significant action that needed to take place. What was the action, how did you facilitate the agreement, and what ultimately was the result?

Your Notes:

## Behavioral Dimension D

### Delegating Responsibility/Setting Boundaries/Expectations

*Definition- Allocating decision making authority and /or task responsibility with corresponding expectations to empower others for maximum individual and organizational effectiveness.*

#### Key Actions

- ❖ **Shares appropriate responsibilities**-allocates decision-making authority and/or task responsibility in appropriate areas to empower individuals for ministry
- ❖ **Defines parameters**-clearly communicates the parameters of the delegated responsibility, including decision making authority and any required actions, constraints, or deadlines
- ❖ **Provides support without removing responsibility**-suggests resources and provides assistance or coaching as needed, expresses confidence in the individual
- ❖ **Stays informed**-establishes appropriate procedures/clear communication channels to keep informed of issues and shared responsibility work.

#### Sample Job Activities

- ❖ Delegates assignments to the appropriate individuals based on their God given gifts, talents, abilities and passions
- ❖ Provides guidance and instruction when delegating
- ❖ Respect areas of decision making that have been delegated, stands behind their decisions
- ❖ Clearly communicates the authority to the person/committee/ group involved so that there is no misunderstanding. Establishes accountability measures

#### Possible Interview Questions:

D1. Tell me about a time when you didn't provide enough instruction for a task that you delegated to a parishioner/staff member resulting in poor follow through. How and when did you find out that things weren't going well? What action did you take to correct it?

D2. Recall a task you have delegated to a committee or person at your church. What accountability procedure did you require of that committee/person? Describe how this committee/person has responded to this requirement.

D3. Tell me about the last major project/task/ministry you delegated. How did you decide to whom you would delegate? What did you do to establish clear directives? What happened as a result?

D4. Talk about your theology of empowerment from a priest/leader's perspective. Give an example of a time when you empowered someone to do a significant project and ultimately the result of that empowerment.

## **Behavioral Dimension D** (continued)

D5. Give me an example of how you have communicated your trust and confidence in a recent delegation of responsibility to a committee or leader. What did you delegate and how well did that committee/person handle the delegation of responsibility?

D6. Tell me about one of the most difficult problem-solving assignments that you've delegated. Why was it difficult? What ultimately happened?

D7. Tell me about an action you have taken with your congregation that demonstrates your theology of empowerment of individuals to do ministry. What difference have you witnessed as a result of this empowerment? Be specific.

D8. Tell me about a situation when you empowered a staff member with a great deal of authority to oversee a situation. How did the staff member handle the empowerment? What was the result of your trust in this individual?

Your Notes:

## Behavioral Dimension M

### Meeting Leadership/Small Group Development

*Definition- Insuring that a meeting serves its objectives while using appropriate interpersonal styles and methods and considering the needs and potential contributions of others. Able to utilize these skills in the support and training of small groups and their leaders.*

#### Key Actions

- ❖ **Develops other's and own ideas** – seeks, makes, and develops suggestions; makes procedural suggestions.
- ❖ **Establishes good interpersonal relationships** –helps people feel valued, appreciated, and included in discussions (enhances self-esteem, empathizes, involves, discloses, supports)
- ❖ **Closes discussions with clear summaries** – helps to summarize meeting outcomes and establish follow-up
- ❖ **Facilitates agreement** – tries to build agreement on outcomes and actions
- ❖ **Opens discussions effectively** – helps to establish the purpose and importance of the meeting
- ❖ **Arranges for the training of small group leaders** – supports healthy small group ministries by making available training and support for leaders of the groups

#### Sample Job Activities

- ❖ Asks for the opinions/ideas of meeting participants
- ❖ Maintains the self esteem and value of every person at the meeting
- ❖ Summarizes agreements reached on issues or concerns during meetings of any size, including as small as 2 persons
- ❖ Intervenes during meetings to settle arguments or interpersonal problems among staff/leaders/members
- ❖ Oversees the development of small group ministries and the support of their leaders

#### Possible Interview Questions

M1. Tell me about a recent meeting you led with staff/leaders/members in which it was critical to achieve specific objectives. What were the objectives? How did you conduct the meeting? How did you end the meeting to assure outcomes and follow up?

M2. Tell me about a meeting in which you participated where interpersonal or personal agendas dominated. What did you do to intervene? What was the result?

M3. Describe a meeting that has recently taken place and the manner in which you acted as the leader. Also describe methods you use to assure input of the participants. Describe how your leadership style positively and negatively impacts the outcome of meetings you lead.

## Behavioral Dimension M (continued)

M4. When have you pursued continuing education and training in the management and leading of small groups in churches? What was the training and how did you incorporate it in the life of your church? What have been the ultimate benefits to your congregation? Share with us some specifics.

M5. Describe a recent situation where conflict was dominating a meeting. What was the situation, how did you deal with it and what were the results of your leadership to handle the conflict?

M6. Describe the manner in which you actively solicit the input of your staff. Can you recall and tell me about a situation when brainstorming of ideas was necessary? What was the challenge and what ultimately happened?

M7. What are the actions of a vestry or leadership group that frustrate you the most? Describe a meeting where some frustrating actions took place and what you did to address the situation. How did the vestry/group respond?

M8. Describe a meeting you led in which a participant suggested an inappropriate idea. How did you respond? How did the participant react?

M9. Describe the training you have done for leaders of small groups-Bible studies, spiritual growth, etc. What routine, if any, do you follow for ongoing support of these leaders? What difference has that made? Can you share with us an example story of how your training has impacted a leader and a small group's development?

Your Notes:

## Behavioral Dimension S

### Stress Tolerance

*Definition – Maintaining stable performance under pressure or opposition (such as time pressure or job ambiguity); handling stress in a manner that is acceptable to others, maintains one's sense of well being and prevention of clergy burn out.*

### Key Actions

- ❖ **Maintains focus** – stays focused on work tasks and productively uses time and energy when under stress.
- ❖ **Maintains relationships** – Presents a positive disposition and maintains constructive interpersonal relationships when under stress.
- ❖ **Copes effectively** – Develops appropriate strategies as needed to alter conditions that create stress and sustains physical and mental health.

### Sample Job Activities

- ❖ Effectively **handles** a heavy workload
- ❖ **Copes** appropriately with conflicting work demands
- ❖ **Remains flexible**, open and positive in the face of changing needs and parishioner demands
- ❖ **Works** very long days, and sometimes under duress of a pastoral crisis
- ❖ **Is available** (on call) to minister as needed
- ❖ **Faces** spiritual, ethical or value conflicts or dilemmas
- ❖ **Handles** weekly worship leading/preaching expectations of the public
- ❖ **Balances** personal life with a priest's highly demanding workload

### Possible Interview Questions

S1. Every job produces different levels of stress. What was the most stressful aspect of your position at a church where you have served? How did you react to this? What was the result?

S2. We all have times when the responsibilities of our jobs are overwhelming. Give me an example of a time when you felt overwhelmed at church. How did you react? What ultimately happened?

S3. Sometimes angry parishioners make personal accusations. Tell me about a time when this happened to you. How did it affect you? How did you react? What was the parishioner's response to you?

S4. Tell me about an experience when you had to handle the unethical behavior or very poor judgment of a staff member. What action did you take? What ultimately happened?

S5. Recall a time when you felt overburdened by your work and you took an action, other than taking vacation, to deal with the stress. What did you do? Did it help relieve the burden?

## **Behavioral Dimension S** (continued)

S6. What actions do you take on a regular basis, weekly, daily, etc. to deal with stress? Describe this routine and how these actions give you real ways to cope.

S7. Describe the most stressful interaction you have ever had with a church leader. What happened? How did you handle it? How did the interaction end?

S8. Give an example of a situation where a parishioner had an unreasonable expectation of you as a clergy person. What happened? What did you do about it? What resulted from your action?

Your Notes:

## Behavioral Dimension G

### Actions Motivated By Spiritual Gifts

*Definition – The carrying out of ministries which are motivated by a profound sense of God-given giftedness of ability to accomplish them.*

#### Key Actions

- ❖ **Identification of Spiritual Gifts**-works to help Christians discover their unique spiritual gifts through prayer, bible study, discussion, the use of specially designed inventories and other methods
- ❖ **Encouragement of the use of Spiritual Gifts** – encourages persons to utilize their gifts for ministry through raising awareness of opportunities, appointing persons to appropriate positions, networking this knowledge with staff and others who can assist in proper placement
- ❖ **Personally Demonstrates Use of Spiritual Gifts** – utilizes personal gifts in one's own ministries to edify the congregation

#### Sample Job Activities

- ❖ Assures that the church has a process for helping persons discern their spiritual gifts and properly placing them in ministry where their gifts can be utilized
- ❖ Develops a keen awareness of parishioner's areas of giftedness and affirms and supports them
- ❖ As Rector, depends and utilizes his/her spiritual gifts to build up the Body of Christ
- ❖ Incorporates the theology of spiritual gifts in leading the congregation

### Possible Interview Questions

G1. Share with us what you discern to be your spiritual gifts. Can you describe a way that you have utilized one of them to define a ministry in which you have been significantly involved? What is the gift, how has it impacted that specific ministry, and what good have you seen come of it?

G2. What process, if any, has your church provided for individuals to discern their spiritual gifts and to use them for proper placement in ministry? Can you share with me an example of an individual who has utilized his/her spiritual gift and the difference it has made in that person's life and that of your congregation?

G3. Can you recall a time when you helped to discern the giftedness of a staff member? What action did you take to discover this information? How did you utilize this knowledge to shape that person's job description and what positive results did you see as a result in that person's job performance?

G4. Describe for me a situation when a person was obviously not gifted for the ministry he/she was involved in doing. What action did you take to address the situation and what was the result of your interaction with this person?



## **Behavioral Dimension G** (continued)

G5. Tell us about a time when you hired someone to be on your staff and the criteria you used for hiring that person. What information did you require of that potential employee, how did you evaluate that information and what has been the performance of that person?

G6. Tell us about a time when a person's obvious spiritual giftedness led you to ask him/her to lead a significant ministry. What did you do to convince the person to take on this role and what ultimately resulted?

Your Notes:

## Behavioral Dimension PR

### Preaching

*Definition: The ability to deliver sermons and spread the Word of God in public forums.*

#### Key Actions

- ❖ **Studies the Bible and other relevant materials in preparation**-takes time to study and develop understanding of Scripture and other literature in order to be grounded in knowledge on which to build sermons
- ❖ **Organizes and prepares message for presentation**-takes significant time to pray and formulate the message for the content of the sermon
- ❖ **Communicates sermons in an effective way**-is able to speak in public forums to large groups of people in compelling and memorable ways

#### Sample Job Activities

- ❖ **Weekly** preparation and delivery of sermons
- ❖ **Frequent** preparation of other speeches, public presentations

#### Possible Interview Questions

PR1. Preaching and public speaking is a huge part of your work. What actions have you taken to keep your preaching at its best? How have these actions benefited you and your ability to preach?

PR2. What training, methods, programs have you pursued to assist you in developing your skills for preaching? How did you take advantage of them and how has your preaching developed as a result?

PR3. Tell us about your preaching. What is your style? Share with us an experience/story you have told from the pulpit that demonstrates your personal theology and has impacted and formed you.

PR4. Tell us about a time when you knew your preaching style needed some improvement. How did you know, what action did you take to improve it and how did you know you were doing a better job of preaching after you addressed the need to improve it?

PR5. Tell us about a time when you felt you gave the best sermon of your life. What was the sermon about? What made it special? How did you know you had delivered a good sermon?

Your Notes:

## Behavioral Dimension A

### Initiating Action

*Definition: Taking prompt action to accomplish objectives; taking action to achieve goals beyond what is required; being proactive. Clearly understanding when it is necessary to bring others into decision making to take action.*

### Key Actions

- ❖ **Responds quickly** – Takes immediate action when confronted with a problem or pastoral crisis
- ❖ **Initiates collaborative action when appropriate** – Gathers staff/leaders/members to collaborate and decide on action to address problems/challenges/needs of the church
- ❖ **Takes independent action when necessary**– Has a clear sense as rector when it is necessary and appropriate to take independent action, not including the church's staff/leaders/members to address problems. Appropriately communicates those actions to staff/leaders/members.
- ❖ **Goes above and beyond** – Takes action that goes beyond parishioner's expectations

### Sample Job Activities

- ❖ **Responds** and takes action to address pastoral crises of members. This also includes notifying and engaging organized ministries that might be empowered to respond to sudden needs
- ❖ **Recognizes** a need of the congregation and initiates conversation and action by appropriate staff/leaders/members to resolve the need
- ❖ **Looking** for and recommending more effective ways to manage the church
- ❖ **Questions** the status quo, always looking for ways to improve the ministries of the congregation
- ❖ **Willing** to assist others on the ministry team, to step outside of ones primary responsibilities to help when important to the objectives of the group

### Possible Interview Questions

A1. Tell me about a time when you motivated a committee/vestry to take action on an item you considered important. What did you do? What was the result?

A2. Can you recall a time when you stepped outside of your primary responsibilities to help a staff member/vestry/group achieve some very important goals? What was the situation? Why did you choose to help? What reaction did you get to your unusual participation?

A3. In your opinion, what has been your biggest achievement as the rector (as rector) at your church? What steps did you take to insure success? What has been the outcome?

A4. Recall a time when you initiated action on your own to address a need of the church. What was the action? How did you determine that it wasn't necessary to include staff/leaders/members in on the decision to act?

## Behavioral Dimension A (continued)

A5. Describe an action you took at your church that you initiated on your own that you later regretted not having others in on the decision. What happened? What caused the regret on your part?

A6. What actions do you routinely take to gain the trust/commitment of new prospects who are considering joining your congregation? Give an example and talk about some of the results you have achieved through these routines.

A7. Describe a situation where you went beyond the “call of duty” to make sure that something very important to the mission of your congregation was accomplished. What did you do that was beyond the realm of your normal activities? What happened as a result?

A8. Tell me about a time when you were faced with necessary staff changes. Describe the situation, others you brought into the decisions if necessary, and ultimately, the responses from the remainder of the staff when the changes were made.

A9. What actions have you initiated that changed the routine liturgical expression of your church’s worship? What have you done to gain acceptance of the congregation for these changes? How have you handled those who don’t handle change well?

A10. Describe a time when you recognized the need to review the status of a ministry of your church. How did you go about evaluating the ministry? What happened as a result of that evaluation? How did you communicate the results of the evaluation to the leaders/ congregation?

Your Notes:

## Behavioral Dimension V

### Leading Through Mission, Values and Vision

*Definition – Keeping the church's vision for the future, its sense of purpose and values at the forefront, which guides people's decision making and action.*

#### Key Actions

- ❖ **Communicates the importance of the mission, values and vision** – helps others understand the church's mission, values and vision and their importance
- ❖ **Moves others to action** – translates the mission, values and vision into day-to-day activities and behaviors; guides and motivates others to take action that supports the mission, values, vision
- ❖ **Models the mission, values and vision** – takes action, makes decisions, and shapes staff/leaders/members' priorities to reflect the church's mission, values and vision
- ❖ **Affirms staff/leaders/members who model mission, values and vision** – recognizes in tangible ways those persons/groups in the church who base their actions on the mission, values and vision of the congregation

#### Sample Job Activities

- ❖ **Create** enthusiasm and acceptance of the churches mission, values and vision making it meaningful and concrete to the staff/leaders/members
- ❖ **Set the tone** through own actions in creating an environment where ideas can be shared, questions can be asked, and individuals are accountable for their own actions
- ❖ **Encourage** open discussion of plans for future action of the church and the reasons behind the plan
- ❖ **Ensure** that staff/leaders/members' goals and performance are aligned with the church's mission, values and vision
- ❖ **Clarify** for others what they can do to demonstrate the church's mission, values, vision

#### Possible Interview Questions

V1. Have you ever been in a situation in which you had to motivate others to take actions to support a new vision or strategic plan for a church? How did you do it? What was the result?

V2. What actions have you taken to make your church's mission or vision meaningful to members of the congregation? What strategies worked, and which have not?

V3. Tell me about a time when you helped your staff/leaders shape priorities/goals to reflect the church's mission, values and vision. What actions did they have to take to set the priorities/goals? What ultimately happened as a result of defining and acting out on the priorities/goals?

## **Behavioral Dimension V** (continued)

V4. Tell me about a time when you communicated a major change in your church's mission, values or vision to others. How did you do that and what was the response?

V5. Describe what you have done to keep your church's mission, values or vision a critical factor for decision-making and action-taking in your congregation. What progress, if any, has resulted?

V6. Gaining commitment to a new vision or strategic plan can be very challenging. Tell me about a time when you could NOT motivate others to actively support a new vision. Why were your efforts unsuccessful? What did you do with your frustration?

V7. Tell me about a time when you had to encourage your staff/leaders/members to re-evaluate what they were doing in light of the mission, values and vision of the church. What did you do to bring this to their attention? How did you motivate them to act? What was the result?

V8. Describe a situation in a congregation where you served as a priest and there was no clear direction for mission, discerning values or vision for the future. What did you do to bring this situation to a place where it was addressed? What were the results of your actions?

Your Notes:

## Behavioral Dimension P

### Demonstrating Personal Theology

*Definition – The ability to demonstrate one’s personal theology through everyday actions, conversation, teaching, preaching and leading.*

#### Key Actions

- ❖ **Articulates personal theology** - in conversation, teaching, preaching
- ❖ **Walks the talk** - everyday interaction with individuals demonstrates the tenets of this person’s theology
- ❖ **Personal disciplines** - takes periods of time in one’s schedule to pray, study, retreat, seek opportunities for support and growth in the knowledge and understanding of theology
- ❖ **Makes decisions based on theology** - decision making is grounded in the tenets of one’s personal theology
- ❖ **Sets example** - personal theology exhibited by lifestyle habits

#### Sample Job Activities

- ❖ **Demonstrates** the core beliefs of one’s theology through the hiring, developing and supporting of staff
- ❖ **Shares** with clarity and conviction personal theology in preaching, teaching, leading
- ❖ **Counsels** individuals in pastoral situations in a manner consistent with personal theology

#### Possible Interview Questions

P1. Share with us what you believe to be the core tenets of Christianity. Can you recall an incident as a priest when your belief system was challenged? How did you respond and what ultimately resulted from the situation?

P2. Recall for us a time when you were interacting with a parishioner/staff member when you had to draw deeply from your belief and trust in God to act in a Christian manner when your humanity wanted to respond otherwise. What was the situation and what ended up happening?

P3. Talk with us concerning your personal theology and the theological stance of the Episcopal Church. How well do they interface? What do you consider to be our Church’s theological strengths? What actions, if any, has the Church taken that disagree with your personal theology? How have you handled these situations as a leader of a congregation? What has been the result of your actions?

P4. Tell us how your personal theology has shaped the manner in which you lead your congregation. Recall for us a specific situation when your theology had to strongly come into play. What was the situation and what ultimately happened as a result?

P5. Describe for us one of your favorite recollections of teaching theology to a group in your church. What exactly were you teaching, what happened that might have surprised you, and what resulted to make it a memorial event?

## **Behavioral Dimension P** (continued)

P6. Recall a situation where your personal theology convicted you to act in a certain manner that was not popular with your congregation. What was the situation, what did you do as a result of your conviction, and what was the result?

P7. How has your personal theology shaped your personal and professional life disciplines? What are some of the disciplines you observe and what difference have they made in your life in very tangible ways?

Notes:



## Behavioral Dimension CM

### Communication

*Definition – Clearly conveying information and ideas through a variety of ways to staff members, leaders, members of the congregation and others.*

#### Key Actions

- ❖ **Comprehends communication from others** – attends to messages from others, acknowledges and responds in a timely fashion
- ❖ **Sensitivity to the different communication styles of others** – recognizes and seeks to understand the variety of ways that people communicate
- ❖ **Adjusts preaching, public speaking to the audience** – frames messages in line with the audience experience, background ability to listen, learn, be inspired
- ❖ **Ensures accessibility** – works to make sure that communication channels are clear, two way, and openly accessible

#### Sample Job Activities

- ❖ **Speaks/preaches** clearly and effectively to large groups of people
- ❖ **Responds** effectively to the constant communication demands on his/her time by staff, lay leaders, members and others seeking decisions, counsel, etc.
- ❖ **Works** daily and pays attention to the variety of communication styles of co-workers and church members in order to establish good communication and interaction

#### Possible Interview Questions

CM 1. Working with a staff can create communication misunderstandings. Describe a situation with a staff person that escalated because of misunderstanding. How did you address this misunderstanding and what did you do to assure that this type of misunderstanding would not happen again?

CM 2. Clergy are privy to a great deal of confidential information. Often staff who work closely with clergy are aware of these confidences. Share a situation when a staff person broke a confidence. What was your response? What eventually was the result of this situation?

CM 3. Public speaking is a huge part of your work. What actions have you taken to keep your speaking skills at their best? How have these actions benefited you and your ability to speak in public?

CM 4. Share the ways that you have maintained accessibility with you parishioners yet balanced those demands with your need for privacy. What actions have you taken? What have been the results in your daily routines?

CM 5. Describe a situation when you realized that you and a lay leader seemed to be simply speaking different languages and were misunderstanding each other. How did you address the situation? What was the result of your actions?

## **Behavioral Dimension CM** (continued)

CM 6. Describe a program or training you have provided for parishioners to help them be comfortable in sharing the Gospel. What was the approach and what were the results?

CM 7. What training, methods, and programs have you pursued to assist you in better understanding and communicating with others? Can you recall a time when you utilized this training and it clearly made a difference in your interaction with a staff member or another person in your church? What happened?

CM 8. Often people who are in emotional pain don't know how to reach out and communicate to the church that they need help. What ways have you developed that help you or your staff to recognize these hurting individuals? Describe a situation you have experienced, what happened and what the result was after recognizing the person's need and addressing it.

Your Notes:

## Behavioral Dimension CC

### Coaching/Contributing to Team Success

*Definition: Providing timely guidance and feedback to help others strengthen specific knowledge/skills needed to accomplish tasks and solve problems. Contributing to the work of a team in order to help it move forward to complete its goals.*

#### Key Actions

- ❖ **Encourage/facilitate the establishment of goals** – make as a priority the staff's establishment of goals, both individually as a group
- ❖ **Involvement of all persons on the staff** – utilizing the variety of gifts/talents/abilities of each person on the staff in order to achieve goals. Listening to staff members in the determination of goals, plans and decision making.
- ❖ **Lead with clarity of expectations** – clarify expected behaviors and levels of proficiency by seeking and giving information. Checking for understanding of expectations among the staff
- ❖ **Provide feedback and reinforcement**-give timely, appropriate feedback on performance, reinforcing efforts and affirming progress

#### Sample Job Activities

- ❖ **Works** with others to strengthen their performance and improve their skills in particular areas
- ❖ **Determine** how much guidance an individual needs to complete a task successfully
- ❖ **Overseeing** periodic performance reviews of staff members
- ❖ **Evaluate** and diagnose problems/helping to create shared solutions
- ❖ Supporting members of the staff in ways that will encourage them, particularly when it comes to difficult interaction with members of the congregation
- ❖ **Share** important/relevant information with everyone on the staff-keeping communications up to date

#### Possible Interview Questions

CC1. Can you give us an example of a time when you lead a group of parishioners or your staff to set very significant goals? How did you come up with the goals, what ultimately happened?

CC2. Can you share with us a specific situation you had with a staff member who needed to improve and work into his/her potential? What did you do to help this person improve? What were the results of the interaction you had with this staff member?

CC3. Tell us about a situation when you knew it was critical to have your entire staff's input about a situation, or planning for the future. What exactly did you do to allow for that input from everyone? What results did you see from this comprehensive approach to dealing with a situation?

## Behavioral Dimension CC (continued)

CC4. There are situations in the life of a church that call for the rector to speak to the entire congregation. Can you recall a time when you felt it would be important for you to do so? What was the situation and what happened as a result of the meeting(s) with the congregation?

CC5. Recall for us a time in your ministry when you felt it very important to explain your expectations to a lay ministry group in your church. What was the situation and what were your expectations? What happened as a result of laying out the expectations?

CC6. Have you ever asked for feedback on any aspect of your work as a priest? Share with us a specific situation when you asked for feedback/assessment of your job performance. How did you utilize this feedback?

CC7. Can you remember a time when you were faced with a very difficult decision you had to make that impacted many aspects of your congregation? What was the situation, the decision that you made and how did you communicate and encourage the ownership of your decision with your staff/vestry/congregation?

CC8. Share with us a time when you had to work very closely with your staff to solve a challenge. What was the challenge, how did you work with your staff to address the challenge? What ultimately resulted from your team work?

CC9. Share with us experience you have had with personal staff performance reviews. Can you recall a situation when you had a staff person's review that was very difficult? What was the situation and the result of that review?

Your Notes:

# SMALL GROUP WORK

## 40 minutes total

Your small group is assigned the following to review:

Behavioral Dimensions: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Focus Areas: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

## Independent Work: 5-7 minutes

**Directions:** Quietly take this time to read over the complete information about the Behavioral Dimensions assigned to your group. In addition, think about the focus areas and their possible relationship to your church. Determine 3 of each that you think are essential to include in your conversations with prospective rector candidates and why you think they are important:

Your Notes:

## Group Conversation: 35 minutes

**Directions:** Go around your group and have each person share the Behavioral Dimensions and Focus Areas they have chosen. Decide as a group the 3 Behavioral Dimensions and 3 Focus Areas that you all consider essential. Be prepared to report this information with rationales when you return to the whole group.

### Your Group's Choices

◆Behavioral Dimensions:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

◆Focus Areas:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

# GUIDE FOR CREATING BEHAVIORAL DIMENSION QUESTIONS FOR SEARCH COMMITTEES

1. First consider the **behavior** about which you want to ask a question. You can combine it with any **focus area** creating a question that has the STAR components of situation/task action, result.

**Sample behavioral dimensions:**

Leading Through Mission, Values and Vision  
Initiating Action  
Meeting Leadership  
Delegating Responsibility  
Stress Tolerance  
Etc.

**Sample focus areas:**

Christian Formation  
Pastoral Care  
Stewardship  
Day Schools  
Spiritual Gifts  
Etc.

2. Start the question with a **positioning statement** such as:
  - ◇ Let's focus now on a different area
  - ◇ Think about a decision you've made
  - ◇ In your work at
  - ◇ All of us have gone through times when things didn't go the way we planned

**Question stems** are open-ended interrogative phrases that represent the initial data-seeking portion of the question. Basic fact-finding stems begin with words like **when, what, where, who, how, how often, and how much.**

3. Include a **question stem** in the body of your questions such as:
  - ◇ Tell me about a time when
  - ◇ Describe a time when
  - ◇ Give me an example of
  - ◇ Walk me through a time when you
  - ◇ Tell me about a recent
  - ◇ Describe a significant example of

Some interviewers take a more congenial approach, using stems such as, **“Can you tell me about a time when...”** and **“Will you share an example of...”**

4. Then ask for a **question focus** such as a situation, action and/or result

The **question focus** completes the stem and seeks a specific example of a situation, action or result that relates to the dimension definitions in the key actions.

**REMEMBER THAT YOU WILL BE DIGGING FOR S.T.A.R.s**

The **Situation or Task, The Action, The Result of the Action**

## THE ELEMENTS OF A STAR

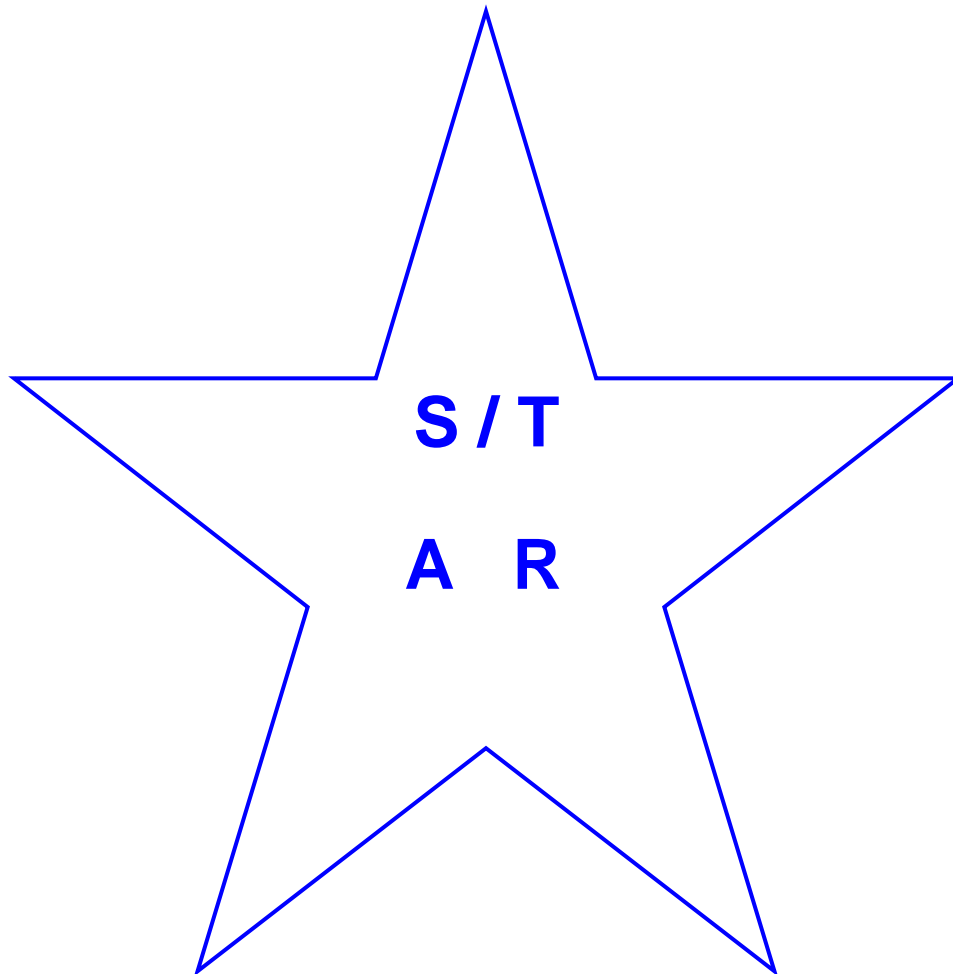
When you gather examples of behavior in an interview, you want to make sure you are getting the whole story-the situation in which the candidate acted, what he or she did, and the results of these actions. An easy way to remember to get the whole story is to use the word STAR to describe a complete behavioral example.

- ❖ The **S**ituation or **T**ask facing the candidate
- ❖ The **A**ction the candidate took
- ❖ The **R**esults or changes caused by these actions

What was the situation?

What action did you take?

What resulted from your action?



## FALSE STARS

Interviewing would be easy if every candidate gave you a STAR every time you asked a question. Unfortunately, they don't. Sometimes they answer in false STARS.

False STARS are statements with lots of glitter but no substance. They are responses that are vague, state an opinion, or are theoretical or future oriented. They are false because they seem to give you the behavioral answer but really skirt around it.

➤ **There are 3 basic types of false STARS:**

- ❖ **Vague statements** – sound good but provide no specifics of what the person actually did.
- ❖ **Opinions** – a candidate's personal beliefs, judgments or views. They tell us how a candidate thinks or feels about something, but provide no information about what the person actually did.
- ❖ **Theoretical or future-oriented statements** – tell what a candidate would do, would like to do, would have done, not what he or she actually has done.

One of the tricky things about false STARS is that they sound good when the candidate is giving them. Some candidates are so vague that you can read anything you want into their statements if you let that happen. If the candidate makes a generally good impression, it's easy to fall into the trap of interpreting a vague statement in a positive way.

Candidates are very good at telling what they would do in a situation, but find it very difficult to give examples of when they did it. Others give you a textbook (theoretical) answer because they honestly think that is what you are looking for. Candidates who speak in false STARS usually aren't being dishonest or evasive. It's easy to answer in false STARS and some candidates think it is more impressive to do so.

***How do you respond to false stars?***

### **DIG DEEPER. DIG FOR GOLD.**

"Thank you for your answer, but would you share with us (the action) you took and what happened as a result?"

"That's very interesting. Could you tell me more about (the action) and what happened afterward?"

"That was quite a situation. What did you do and what resulted from your action?"



## VAGUE ANSWERS

**Question:** “Tell us about a time that you felt overwhelmed with demands made on your ministry. What action did you take to give yourself some relief and what have you done to prevent getting overloaded again? What difference has it made in your life, if any?”

**Answer:** “There weren’t many times that I wasn’t able to handle my work load.”

**Question:** “Preaching and public speaking is a huge part of your work. What actions have you taken to keep your preaching at its best? How have these actions benefited you and your ability to preach?”

**Answer:** “My sermons are considered pretty good and I keep my congregation happy by making them short and to the point.”

**Question:** “As a leader you have probably had situations with staff members who did not work up to their potential. Can you share with us a specific situation when you dealt with a staff member who needed to improve? What did you do to help you staff person realize their need to improve? What were the results of the interaction with that staff member?”

**Answer:** “I rarely have trouble with staff members. I only hire people I can trust and I just haven’t had many problems”.

## If Only...and, Someday, Maybe

**Question:** Tell us when you sought out some continuing education about a particular subject that would impact your ministry. What was the subject, how did you go about pursuing it, and ultimately, how has it helped your ministry?

**Answer:** “I plan to get started on an advanced degree next year. I know that will help me in certain areas where I want to improve my skills.”

**Question:** “Would you share an experience you have had with a lay leader who was extremely difficult to handle? What was the situation, how did you manage it, and ultimately what happened as a result?”

**Answer:** “One time I got a great deal of resistance from a vestry member about allowing the AA to use our building and it created a problem on our vestry. Next time I will just go ahead and make the decision myself because that will avoid the conflict on the vestry.”

**Question:** “How has your personal theology shaped your personal and professional life disciplines? What are some of the disciplines you observe and what difference have they made in your life in tangible ways?”

**Answer:** “ I have promised myself that I will read the Daily Office everyday and I intend to do it.”

## PARTIAL STARS

When candidates do provide STAR information, they often provide it in bits and pieces-the situation and action, but no result; the situation and result, but only vague actions. Any time a candidate fails to describe part of the STAR or describes it so vaguely that you don't understand it fully, you've gotten a partial STAR and must follow up to fill in the missing information.

The first step in filling in partial STARS is the same as in turning false STARS into STARS: recognizing what the candidate has given you and what you still need. In the case of a false STAR, it is recognizing that the response contains little, if any behavioral information. In the case of a partial STAR, it is recognizing which STAR parts the candidate has given you and which ones you still need.

Recognizing what you are getting in candidates' responses comes with practice and interview experience.

**Remember, gaining a complete answer is an objective in order to get as much information as possible. The STAR response does not have anything to do with the VALUE of the response as it relates to the criteria you are looking for in the candidate.**

The VALUE will be noted in a numerical rating. (Page 44)

## RECOGNIZING STARs EXERCISE

The following statements are complete STARs, partial STARs, or false STARs.

**Read each statement, determine which type of STAR it is, and circle your answer.**

**If it is a partial STAR, circle each of the missing parts.**

1. When the Vestry expressed interest in small group ministry, I called on the lay ministry team to get started on it right away.

- a. complete STAR
- b. false STAR
- c. partial STAR that:

*needs a situation/task*  
*needs action*  
*needs result*

2. I've been planning to start work on small group ministry.

- a. complete STAR
- b. false STAR
- c. partial STAR that:

*needs a situation/task*  
*needs action*  
*needs result*

3. I think the key to pastoral outreach is compassion-understanding what goes on inside people and being able to respond with empathy.

- a. complete STAR
- b. false STAR
- c. partial STAR that:

*needs a situation/task*  
*needs action*  
*needs result*

4. When the power went out and the air conditioning stopped, I was sure it would be down the rest of the day. So, rather than having the VBS teachers and students swelter, I encouraged them to go home. An hour later the power came back on and I regretted having sent them home because they were having so much fun.

- a. complete STAR
- b. false STAR
- c. partial STAR that:

*needs a situation/task*  
*needs action*  
*needs result*

5. I was part of the group that visited with the Quin Foundation because we needed the loan for church improvements. They were demanding of us, but we ultimately got the construction loan at a very good interest rate.

- a. complete STAR
- b. false STAR
- c. partial STAR that:

*needs a situation/task*  
*needs action*  
*needs result*

## FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS TO BUILD COMPLETE STARs

### Situation or Task

Questions	Action Questions	Result Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Describe a situation when...</li> <li>◆ Can you tell us about a time. . . ?</li> <li>◆ What were the circumstances surrounding . . . ?</li> <li>◆ What was the most memorable time when that happened?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Exactly what did you do?</li> <li>◆ Describe specifically how you did that.</li> <li>◆ What did you do first . . . second?</li> <li>◆ Describe your specific role in the project.</li> <li>◆ Walk me through the steps you took.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ What was the result?</li> <li>◆ How did it work out?</li> <li>◆ What problems/successes resulted from.. .?</li> <li>◆ What feedback have you gotten?</li> </ul>

#### Follow -Up Questions to Turn False STARs into True STARs

- ◆ Can you give me a specific example of when this recently happened?
- ◆ Describe one particular time when...
- ◆ Walk me through the process step-by-step, explaining what your role was.
- ◆ Exactly what part did you play?

#### Follow -Up Questions to Obtain Additional STARs

- ◆ How about another example of . . .
- ◆ Compare this situation to one in which you . . .
- ◆ Can you describe another time when you . . . ?

## RATING

Each person on the visiting team rates the candidate for the quality of the responses to the questions as it relates to the criteria the team is looking for in a future rector.

Rates are compared with other team members after the interview is completely finished. The team will meet within 24 hours of the interview to compare notes and to determine a team consensus rating, if possible, for each behavioral dimension and focus area question asked of the candidate.

1. Identify complete STARS throughout the Interview Guide
2. Rate each dimension with a number; consider the most significant STARS; place your rating in a designated space on your dimension Page in your Interview Guide.
  1. Much More Than Acceptable
  2. More Than Acceptable
  3. Acceptable
  4. Less Than Acceptable
  5. Much Less Than Acceptable

### OPTIONAL RATING METHODS

Use “+”s and “-”s to indicate the effectiveness of behaviors. This does not mean that you will base the dimension rating on a mathematical formula. Instead, use the behavior ratings solely as a guide when determining the dimension ratings. For example, if a candidate participated in a capital campaign and exhibited very positive behavior but exhibited one very negative behavior, the importance of the negative behavior might lower the rating.

See the next page for specific ways to rate with + and - .

### REMEMBER

Discernment comes first! This rating method should reflect the congregational needs and not your personal agenda. It will be important to pray and discern as a team and a committee through prayer and discussion about the priest God is calling to your church.

## AFTER INTERVIEW COMMUNICATION/IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEAM RATING SHEET (Optional)

*This sheet records the team's impression of the candidate's communication and impact*

**Directions:** After your interview is complete and the team is discussing it, use this sheet to rate the candidate on Communication and Overall Impact.

Candidate:

Team:

Date:

### Communication

Did the candidate express his/her thoughts in a clear, understandable way?

#### Key Actions

Rate the candidate with a + or – for each of the following aspects of Communication:

+	–	
		Organized the answers
		Maintained the team's attention
		Adjusted to the team questions
		Ensured our understanding
		Adhered to accepted conventions in group conversation
		Understood/pursued ways to understand our questions

**Overall Communication Rating:** \_\_\_\_\_ (1 lowest to 5 highest)

### Impact

Did the candidate create a good first impression, commanding attention and respect, showing an air of confidence without arrogance, listened well?

#### Key Actions

Rate the candidate with a + or – for each of the following aspects of Impact:

+	–	
		Dresses appropriately
		Displays professional demeanor
		Speaks clearly, confidently
		Respectful, attentive listener

**Overall Impact Rating:** \_\_\_\_\_ (1 lowest to 5 highest)

## SAMPLE

### Dimension Question Sheet for Interview Guide

*The following is a sample form that can be used by the team for evaluation concerning a particular behavioral dimension discussed in the interview.*

#### **Building Parishioner-Staff Loyalty/Listening/Acknowledging/Building Relationships (L)**

Effectively meeting parishioner needs: building productive relationships; taking responsibility for a level of satisfaction and loyalty on the part of the parishioner by being open, accessible, listening.

##### **Key Actions:**

**Uses key principles of listening.** Establishes good interpersonal relationships by helping people feel valued, appreciated, and included in discussions (which enhances self-esteem, empathizes, involves, discloses, supports).

**Acknowledges the person.** Actively greets parishioners and gives them his/her attention.

**Clarifies the current situation.** Asks questions to determine needs; listens carefully, provides appropriate information, summarizes to check understanding.

**Takes the “heat”.** Handles upset parishioners/staff by hearing them out, empathizing, taking responsibility to assist the person to resolve the issue.

**L1.** Sooner or later clergy will have to deal with a parishioner who makes unreasonable demands. Think of a time when you had to handle an unreasonable request from a parishioner. What was the request and what did you do?

**SITUATION/TASK**

**ACTION**

**RESULT**

**L2.** Tell me about a time when you were the focus of a parishioner’s displeasure. What did you do? What ultimately happened as a result of your action?

**SITUATION/TASK**

**ACTION**

**RESULT**

Ratings: Communication\_\_\_\_\_ Impact\_\_\_\_\_ Dimension # \_\_\_\_\_

## **REACHING CONSENSUS AS A TEAM**

Its highly unlikely that all interviewers will post the same dimension ratings for all the dimensions. In fact, some significant differences in dimension ratings are to be expected. The process of sharing behavioral data, discussing the rationale for each rating and reaching a consensus rating for a dimension is one of the most interesting and revealing parts of the interview process.

1. One interviewer starts by describing the STARS he or she collected and the rationale for the dimension rating.
2. The other interviewers ask clarifying questions to make sure they understand each of the behavioral examples and the rationale for the dimensional rating. They also make sure each STAR is correctly classified under the appropriate dimension.
3. In turn, each of the remaining team members presents his or her ratings and rationales, providing appropriate behavioral information to support them, while the other interviewers ask clarifying questions and share conclusions or connections.
4. All interviewers discuss the conclusions that can be drawn from the data and come to an agreement on the consensus rating for the dimension.

When reaching a consensus decision of a rating for a dimension, weigh all the information discussed about the dimension and try not to be overly influenced by the data you personally collected. It may well be that another interviewer was able to obtain more important or meaningful information.

When discussing dimension ratings, you'll use the Dimension Definitions and the Key Actions list as your standard. You'll compare your data to this standard for the target job.

### **SAMPLE RECORD**

<b>DIMENSION/FOCUS AREA</b>	<b>TEAM A</b>	<b>TEAM B</b>	<b>CONSENSUS</b>
Analysis/problem assessment			
Personal Theology			
Individual leadership/influencing			
Initiative			
Stewardship			
Day Schools			
Building loyalty			
Teamwork/collaboration			
Tolerance for stress			
Delegation			



<b>DIMENSION/ FOCUS AREAS</b>	<b>TEAM A</b>	<b>TEAM B</b>	<b>CONSENSUS SCORE &amp; COMMENTS</b>
<b>PREACHING</b>	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	
<b>INITIATING ACTION</b>	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	
<b>STEWARDSHIP</b>	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	
<b>DEMONSTRATING PERSONAL THEOLOGY</b>	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	
<b>LEADING THROUGH MISSION, VALUES AND VISION</b>	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	
<b>YOUTH MINISTRY</b>	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	
<b>BUILDING LOYALTY</b>	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	
<b>TEAMWORK/ COLLABORATION</b>	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	
<b>TOLERANCE FOR STRESS</b>	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	
<b>DELEGATION</b>	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	Codes: STAR? Team Score:	

# TRIAD PRACTICE

## Worksheet 2

**Directions:** Gather in triads of three persons. Have one person ask the question, one person answer the question, and one person note if they completed the STAR, or if it was a false, partial or vague answer. Ask two questions of each person, then rotate rolls.

### Round 1

One interviewer, one candidate, one listener who records STAR parts

#### Questions:

1. Share with us what you discern to be one of your spiritual gifts.  
Can you describe a way that you have used it in the context of ministry? How has your gift impacted the ministry and what positive results have you seen come of it?
2. Recall a time when you recognized that a significant change needed to be made at the church. What was the change needed and who did you talk to about the change?  
What, if any, action happened as a result of your conversations?

*As a group, discuss if the candidate gave complete STARs, etc. If not, what could have been said to complete the answer? Do not numerically rate the answer, only listen for STARs.*

### Round 2

Switch Roles

#### Questions:

1. Would you share with us an example of a time when you felt over-whelmed in a ministry you had committed to do. How did you react to this situation? What resulted from your reaction?
2. Recall for us a time when you were interacting with a fellow parishioner and you had to draw deeply from your belief and trust in God to act in a Christian manner, you're your humanity would have made you respond differently. What was the situation and what ended up happening?

*As a group, discuss if the candidate gave complete STARs, etc. If not, what could have been said to complete the answer? Do not numerically rate the answer, only listen for STARs.*

## TRIAD PRACTICE (continued)

### Round 3

Switch Roles

#### Questions:

1. Can you share with us a time when you had to lead a group to set very significant goals? How did you come up with the goals, what ultimately happened as a result of this work?
2. Share with us a time when your involvement in a ministry significantly impacted your spiritual life. What was the situation? Describe how it affected your spiritual life and what has been the long term effect?

As a group, discuss if the candidate gave complete STARS, etc. If not, what could have been said to complete the answer? *Do not numerically rate the answer, only listen for STARS.*

Return to the whole group space when this activity is completed.

# Maintaining Confidentiality in Search Committees

**Roy Oswald**

Many people enjoy "being in the know," being the first to learn a piece of news as an insider, even if they don't intend to pass it on to others. But sometimes it's hard to resist the temptation to tell others about something, even when the news may be harmful or derogatory to someone. Everyone must be reminded of this human tendency when the search process begins, and those who select the committee should look for candidates who are known to demonstrate discretion.

The need for confidentiality should be reiterated to committee members after they are selected for the search committee and throughout the search process. Search committee members must be reminded that the trusted friends with whom they might share information could also be friends or relatives of candidates or their references. In fact, it will be most helpful if the entire congregation is well prepared from the beginning to accept the need for confidentiality and to feel offended at any breach of the principle during the search process.

All information about candidates must remain strictly within the search committee. Spouses, board members, other members of the congregation, even the interim pastor and people outside the congregation may be eager to learn the names of candidates or information about them, such as age, gender, location, experience, and interests. This is all confidential information that should not be shared outside the committee. From the time the congregation begins to receive candidates' names and information about them, the confidentiality policy should be reasserted and the commitment of all search committee members to observing it secured.

In addition, search committee members must respect and protect the right of each member to express his or her opinions and observations freely. Conversations within the committee about candidates, things going on in the congregation, and other pertinent matters must be kept as confidential as the information about the candidates themselves. Search committee members can be candid with one another only if they are certain that their comments will not be shared outside of the committee. For example, if a committee member expresses reservations about the individual who is finally selected as pastor and this information is made public, the relationship between these two individuals, and even the pastor's ability to enter the congregation without controversy, could be compromised.

Search committee members must learn to distinguish information and decisions about candidates from general information on the search process. Still, it is probably best to agree that only the committee chair will comment publicly on the search, in writing and orally. The chair should report at Sunday services and in the newsletter what the committee is doing: for example, preparing the congregation profile and defining the characteristics and talents the committee will look for in a new pastor, processing the first list of candidates it receives and developing a list of people to investigate more deeply, conducting phone interviews, seeking background information, preparing for site visits to candidates' home congregations, and arranging for one or more finalists to be brought for a visit.

Members of the search committee--in fact, all members of the congregation--should be alert to the spreading of information that should be kept confidential. Anyone who hears such information should notify the search committee chair, who should then try to stop the spread of such information by identifying its source (if possible) and asking the person or persons involved to act more responsibly. If it turns out that a baseless rumor is being spread, measures can be taken to end its circulation. If a search committee member is the source of a leak, the committee should discuss how to proceed (i.e., whether the seriousness of the matter suggests the offender be dropped from committee membership).

In the case of a serious breach of confidentiality, the search committee chair will also have to notify the judicatory executive of what occurred and discuss how to proceed. If the chair fails to do this, the transition companion or any concerned participant in the search should take this step.

A final means of maintaining confidentiality in the search process is for every member to return to the chair or destroy all information they have received about candidates, together with any notes they have made during the search process. Some committees plan to have paper shredders or a bonfire at their closing celebration; others ask members to destroy materials in private. Having the material destroyed will help ensure that the confidentiality that the congregation has worked so hard to maintain will be preserved.

In the end, the highest praise a search committee can receive is the comment: "I never knew any details of the search, and now I'm happy to meet the new pastor without any preconceptions."

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## MINISTRY DESCRIPTIONS

### Search Committee Chair

- ◆ Organizes, calls and leads all meetings of the total search committee. (Teams can meet to organize their visits in advance of interviews and to do post interview evaluation without the chair present.)
- ◆ Serves as chief communicator about the work of the search committee to the congregation via brief updates in the church's newsletter and oral reports to the congregation at all services. These high level updates should be at a predictable frequency (once a month is recommended).
- ◆ Serves as the point person who communicates with Canon Normand's office on all business related to the search including sending and receiving the names of clergy to be considered.
- ◆ Assures congregational information has been distributed to candidates in a confidential and timely fashion.
- ◆ Communicates via phone with all of the clergy persons given by Canon Normand's office to determine their interest and willingness to be interviewed.
- ◆ Will serve on a representative team of the search committee to make the presentation to the vestry about the recommended candidate in order for the call to be issued.
- ◆ Promotes and expects confidentiality of all persons involved in the search process.

### Senior Warden

- ◆ Assures a budget is established by the vestry to support the work of the Search Committee.
- ◆ Serves as ex-officio of the search committee with voice but no vote, not visiting or interviewing candidates.
- ◆ Occasionally attends full search committee meeting to discern progress being made.
- ◆ Stays in close contact with the Search Committee Chair for updates.
- ◆ Assures high level reports of the committee's work are made to the vestry.
- ◆ Arranges with the Chair of the Search Committee to make a significant presentation to the vestry of the name of the chosen candidate with the rationale for that selection in order that the vestry can issue the call.
- ◆ Once the call is issued, works with the Search Committee Chair to arrange for a visit by the chosen candidate to the Church. At the time of that visit negotiates a salary package with the candidate.
- ◆ Makes the announcement to the congregation of the accepted call at a simultaneously arranged time for the sending congregation to get the news.

## MINISTRY DESCRIPTIONS

(continued)

### Team Members

- ◆ Make participation on the search committee their highest priority of ministries.
- ◆ Work prayerfully and collaboratively with the other members to do the tasks assigned.
- ◆ Make themselves available to travel in order to be a part of a team to interview a candidate and visit his/her congregation on a weekend.
- ◆ Be accountable for assigned responsibilities.
- ◆ Listen to other team members, pray for the work of the group, be honest and thoughtful, remembering that each team member represents the congregation as a whole.

It is recommended that the search committee divide into teams of 4 or 5 persons in order to make visits and interview candidates. A larger team could be intimidating to the candidate and a smaller team not representative enough of the search committee.

## STEPS WHEN YOU HAVE ARRIVED AT ONE MAIN CANDIDATE

After you have made all of your visitations and you are ready to vote as a Search Committee do the following:

1. Take a straw vote. Allow each person to justify why they voted the way they did. (not necessary to justify if unanimous).
2. Take a second vote. If a strong majority (5+ out of 7) and the search committee is willing for it not to be unanimous, this second vote counts.
3. If it is a yes, and the search committee is willing to accept this vote, prepare a presentation for the vestry.
4. Search Committee chair arranges with the Sr. Warden to make a presentation to the vestry. The vestry may need to call a special meeting to hear the presentation. That presentation should be made by the search committee chair, but may be made by a team from the search committee.
5. The presentation: Align the rector profile, vision, core values for the church with the qualities of the person the search committee is asking the vestry to call.  
Answer all questions of the vestry, but the presenters should only mention the name of the candidate, NOT any other candidates. This presentation should be well done and may take 30-60 minutes. Be thorough in terms of types of questions the search committee asked, etc. all with the intention of securing the trust of the vestry in the search committee's choice.
6. Vestry votes to accept the recommended person in order to issue a call to that person.
7. Once that call is approved by the vestry the Sr. Warden calls Canon Normand to let her know that the vestry will issue a call to the individual.
8. Sr. Warden calls the candidate and asks that person to visit the campus, meet the vestry, (a reception, light dinner is in order). The search committee can be included in this activity. While the candidate is visiting, the treasurer, sr. warden will meet privately with the candidate to negotiate a financial package.
9. Vestry will vote on the final package arrangements to approve or continue negotiation.
10. Sr. Warden notifies the final package to the candidate. The candidate decides whether or not to accept the call.
11. ONCE THE CANDIDATE HAS ACCEPTED THE CALL, the congregation can be notified. This notification should be in cooperation with the announcement of the departure to the candidate's congregation if there is one, all simultaneously. **DO NOT TELL THE CONGREGATION A CALL HAS BEEN ISSUED UNTIL A CALL IS ACCEPTED!!** Very important!
12. All other candidates that were considered are notified by the Search Committee Chair that a call has been accepted, thanking them for being considered.



## HOMEWORK

**First or Second Search Committee meeting after STAR training:** Complete the choices for all your questions. Write the questions so that they can be coded. Make sure that the questions are in line with the Rector Profile, Core Values, Mission and Vision. Establish the key talking points about your church. These might include an understanding of the congregation's strengths, weaknesses, greatest needs, etc. Discuss what your preferred candidate would look like and relate questions accordingly.

**Second or Third Search Committee meeting after STAR training:** Go through each individual question the committee has selected and discuss what the ideal response would be. Also, determine the ratings that your committee wants to utilize as a part of your scoring system. Prioritize your questions and decide what questions will be done during the 1<sup>st</sup> visit and the 2<sup>nd</sup> visit.

**Preparation needed for the Next Meeting:** An Interview guide must be created for each search committee member (see sample in notebook). Each guide should include the pre-selected questions and scoring sheets for the individual and the team.

**The Meeting after the Interview Guide is Complete:** Practice, Practice, Practice. Role play (Priest, note taker, interviewer, listener, etc) as a whole group the STAR interview Process with your committee's selected questions. Each member will take the Interview Guide designed for that candidate to the interview. The members will utilize these guides for taking notes, rating, and eventually comparing candidates.

### **Remember:**

The team will review/evaluate their experience with a candidate **within 24 hours** of the end of the interview. At this review time they will build consensus of ratings and make sure that important information and responses to questions have been documented.

Each team needs to designate which individual will ask questions, scribe, listen. This can be rotated or handled in any way the team deems appropriate. It is very important to plan in advance how the interview will be handled.

Treat the candidate with tremendous respect. Communicate regularly with candidates still being considered even months after the interview to convey your continuing interest. Any person no longer under consideration needs to be notified as soon as possible.

Confidentiality is critical.