

Competencies for Consulting with Churches

1. Build a trust relationship with the leadership of a Christian organisation

- a) Identify the appropriate decision making (governing or leadership) body in a church or organisation
- b) Communicate the consultation process
- c) Cultivate organisational commitment to the consultation process
- d) Explain ethical boundaries
- e) Confirm commitment to a consultancy covenant
- f) Be aware of an initial assessment of the systemic dynamics of a Christian community

2. Define the objectives of a church consultancy

- a) Identify existing organisational issues and concerns
- b) Use exploratory tools to prioritise the objectives of a consultancy
- c) Document and communicate agreed objectives
- d) Foster realistic expectations
- e) Maintain content and process boundaries around objectives

3. Gather, organise and process relevant data

- a) Determine the types and amounts of data required to make valid observations
- b) Determine appropriate data collection processes
- c) Utilise a variety of data gathering tools and processes
 - Construct and administer questionnaires
 - Facilitate small groups focused on issues
 - Conduct personal interviews
 - Facilitate congregational meetings
 - Facilitate processes for collective discernment
 - Invite and process individual submissions
- d) Respond appropriately to unexpected, irrelevant, or invalid data
- e) Administer consulting processes to foster openness, creativity and participation

4. Make valid organisational observations

- a) Identify organisational strengths
- b) Recognise invalid data in terms of the objectives
- c) Analyse all constructive data
- d) Apply statistical methods to process data
- e) Synthesise key themes and directions
- f) Reflect on observations within theological, organisational and transformational frameworks
- g) Communicate key observations in a meaningful written report

5. Construct practical recommendations

- a) Distil valid recommendations from data
- b) Consider creative alternatives
- c) Focus action that generates positive development
- d) Create a measurable implementation plan
- e) Communicate the recommendations and plan in a clear written report
- f) Present recommendations to the leadership or governance body for adoption

6. Oversee implementation of recommendations

- a) Identify a capable internal implementation team
- b) Equip an implementation team members with essential skills
- c) Advise an implementation team on process
- d) Assist with overcoming organisational resistance to change
- e) Monitor the implementation of recommendations

7. Evaluate a consultancy process

- a) Initiate feedback from church leadership
- b) Reflect on levels of organisational change
- c) Link evaluation to objectives and recommendations
- d) Share process learning with other consultants

8. Disengage well from the organisation or church community

- a) Recognise the time for closing a consultancy process
- b) Plan any post-consultation contact and clarify expectations
- c) Resolve any relationships of tension before leaving
- d) Celebrate appropriately with key stakeholders
- e) Take leave from a community appropriately

9. Work effectively with associates

- a) Collaborate with a consultancy partner in preparation and intervention
- b) Relate effectively with a supervisor
- c) Utilise personal debriefing processes with a support professional
- d) Maintain a support network of individuals who understand the nature of consultancy work within Christian communities.
- e) Maintain membership of a learning community of consultants

10. Grow in self awareness as a consultant

- a) Clarify personal values and boundaries
- b) Remain psychologically, physically and spiritually healthy under stress
- c) Know and manage personal biases
- d) Be aware of cultural and organisational dynamics
- e) Increase capacity to facilitate in an atmosphere of anxiety and ambiguity
- f) Recognise and manage aroused defensive or aggressive feelings
- g) Resolve ethical issues with integrity
- h) Make personal observations on performance as a consultant
- i) Initiate and receive honest personal and professional feedback from a consultancy partner
- j) Integrate observations into a personal learning plan
- k) Know and operate within personal limits
- l) Maintain privacy and confidentiality

Specialist Areas

A Transitional Consultancies

B Staff, Team and Leadership Reviews

C Lay Governance Development

D Strategic Planning

E Cultural Audits

E Conflicted Congregations

F Recovery following a traumatic event or leadership misconduct