

## Setting Objectives in Consultations

### The role of objectives

1. Clear objectives provide the direction and framework for a consultancy. They define the observations that will be made and ultimately the recommendations which will be presented.
2. Specific objectives assist with the design of consultancy process. Objectives determine the nature and type of diagnostic tools to use and the kind of data to gather. Being realistic and focussed in the objectives guides the process.
3. Careful objectives frame the boundaries around a consultancy. As well as shaping what occurs, they perhaps just as importantly shape what won't be reported on or recommended. They provide fences around information gathering, the observations in the report, and the areas that will be addressed.

### Who sets the objectives?

1. The church leadership group usually sets the objectives in a group workshop facilitated by the consultants. It is important to get full agreement to the objectives before designing the consultancy process itself.
2. Occasionally the group commissioning the consultancy is not the same as the group called together for the objectives session. Sometimes governing leaders desire the presence of staff, ministry leaders or other key individuals in the objectives setting meeting. If this is the case, be clear on who you are reporting to at the end of the process (this group or the governing leaders).

### Outline of the Objectives Evening / Meeting

1. Meal – It is a good idea to share an informal meal together to meet and get to know the leadership group.
2. Introduce yourselves and meet the group – Facilitate a process where you learn a little about everyone and they feel comfortable with you. (E.g. How long have you been part of this church? What roles have you had in the church?)
3. Introduce both the consultancy process (if there has not been an information meeting) and the process you will use this evening.
4. Facilitate the process for identifying the objectives:

#### Tools for **Discerning** Objectives

- a. SCOT (Strengths, Concerns, Opportunities, Threats, )
- b. Strategic Issues Analysis
- c. Health Assessment Tools such as NCLS / NCD Results
- d. Vision – Discernment Process
- e. Narrative (Story telling – stories that celebrate church, stories that people share of something that concerns us, of issues, of things not going so well)