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## Introduction to Lead Pastor Performance Reviews

The District Office team is pleased and thankful that you as a Board of Elders are undertaking a performance review for your Lead (Senior) Pastor. We believe in performance reviews **when they are properly motivated and are done well and wisely.**

We focus in this document on the Lead Pastor since, in our preferred governance model, the elders review the performance of the Lead Pastor and the Lead Pastor (or their designate) reviews the performance of all other staff.

You will find several performance review instruments on **myCPD**, the private side of our website. Most of these instruments can be adapted for the Lead Pastor to use with other staff. All Lead Pastors and elders are provided secure access to the website. If you require access, contact Erin Knott at [erink@pacificdistrict.ca](mailto:erink@pacificdistrict.ca).

## Effective Performance Reviews

Our convictions surrounding effective pastoral reviews are that they:

1. **Are not random and subjective.** Rather, your lead pastor must be evaluated against some more objective standard, namely, their job description. Additionally, evaluation may be tied to other previously negotiated assignments or responsibilities, special projects, follow up from previous years' reviews, etc.  
**Note:** The job description, of course, must be shaped to your pastor's unique competencies so that expectations are realistic and your pastor can serve out of the core of their gifting from God. The District Office utilizes a profiling instrument named the *Grip-Birkman Assessment* that can be useful here, if you as a Board of Elders are unclear about your pastor's essential strengths.
2. **Are developmental.** Their primary purpose is to help the pastor become a more effective servant of Jesus and more skilled at fulfilling their calling as a pastor. Great care must be taken to ensure that the appraisal feedback is motivating, not discouraging.
3. **Are generous with affirmation.** Progress, established goals that have been met, and accomplishments are recognized and celebrated.
4. **Are focused on no more than two areas of challenge** where the board is inviting their pastor to grow and improve.

## Introduction to Lead (Senior) Pastor Performance Reviews

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If the board determines that there are numerous challenge areas for the pastor to address, in our opinion it is wiser to prioritize those areas (rank them in order of importance to the board) and relay them two at a time over several years rather than to discourage the pastor by unloading them all at once and requesting improvement in all areas simultaneously. This could be overwhelming to your pastor and thus in no one's best interests.

5. **Are cumulative**, that is, they are linked from year to year as the pastor follows up on the requests for improvement from the past year, if any. Progress and accomplishments are noted and celebrated.
6. **Report themes and consensus feedback**, not individual negative comments that may reflect the bias or perception of a single individual. Regrettably, appraisal processes can be misused by angry or petty or otherwise emotionally unhealthy participants. Elders must guard against that possibility!
7. **Utilize a process that involves several sources of input** Here's one example:
  - first, the Lead Pastor's own written self-evaluation is gathered;
  - second, written input from others such as elders, other pastoral staff members, ministry leaders and team members, and church family members is gathered using an appraisal instrument such as we've posted on our website. Elders are responsible to determine who shall provide input
  - third, the information is collected, interpreted, and summarized as described above (observing themes, affirming strengths, identifying up to two challenge areas);
  - fourth, the summary is crafted into a letter or brief report for the Lead Pastor;
  - fifth, the board as a whole approves the content of the report or letter;
  - and finally, two or three elders meet with the Lead Pastor to verbally summarize the contents of the letter and leave a copy of the letter with the pastor. An additional copy of the letter is placed in the pastor's employment file.
8. **Provide an opportunity for the Lead Pastor to respond** to the performance review and have them sign the form or letter provided indicating that they are aware of its contents. A Lead Pastor that has a signed performance review is not able to argue later that the Board of Elders failed to bring performance problems to their attention.