



Church Planters Assessment Workbook





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Preparation for the Assessment

The assessment is designed to familiarize you with the behaviors, gifts, attributes and skills necessary for the tasks of church planting. The assessment also has an **interview component** which is the most valuable instrument for evaluating whether or not you are suited for church planting. Think of the assessment as a mirror for you to look into regarding your own ministry fit.

The assessment is a time for you and your spouse to conduct an informed self-reflection of your skills, experiences, spiritual gifts and temperament in order to determine your suitability to plant a church.

The following items should be accomplished prior to the assessment:

1. You and your spouse should interact in a general way about the call to plant a church.
2. Review the Doctrinal Statements of the Bible Fellowship Church (BFC) – “The Articles of Faith” on www.bfc.org .
3. You should have submitted a *Prospective Planter’s Profile (PPP)* to the director of Church Extension and completed, with your spouse, the church planter’s “DCPI Pre-Assessment” booklet. These are available on www.churchplantingbfc.org or by contacting office@churchplantingbfc.org. Alternatively, you may also fill out an application with the [Ministerial Candidate Committee of the BFC](https://www.bfc.org/join-the-bfc/steps-to-becoming-a-pastor-in-the-bfc/) available on <https://www.bfc.org/join-the-bfc/steps-to-becoming-a-pastor-in-the-bfc/>.
4. You should have read through this *Church Planter’s Assessment* workbook.

The following items are not requirements prior to the assessment:

1. Suggested reading: Aubrey Malphur’s book, *The Nuts and Bolts of Church Planting* or one of Ed Stetzer’s books, *Planting Missional Churches* or *Planting Churches in a Post-Modern Age*. Also, read the *BFC Church Planting Guide* – listed on www.churchplantingbfc.org
2. You may have been given some personal inventory tests to complete. Please send them to the director if assigned.

Introduction

Some may ask the question, “Why do I need to go through an assessment? I’m called to plant a church.” This question is better considered in light of the many church plants that fail, and the fact that their failure is not necessarily because the church planter lacked spirituality or a personal call. In many cases, plants fail because of mismatching the planter with the geographical area or the affinity group, the lack of training, a poor support system, or the man was best suited for another area of ministry. The assessment, although not perfect or fool-proof, cannot only assist Church Extension in seeing what the planter will need in terms of support and training, but will also allow the planter and his spouse, if married, to better understand whether they are God’s team for church planting.

The assessment will objectify the “call” and test it to determine if the candidate is called to be a church planter or better suited for other service in the Kingdom. Scripture encourages us to do such a testing for the purpose of clarity and stewardship (Proverbs 26:10; Ecc. 8:5; I Jn. 4:1; I Tim. 5:22; Acts 15:22; 16:2).

This is not an exam or test but rather a process to help you and Church Extension understand your call and your competencies for church planting. This is a safe environment and you should know that all matters are confidential in the assessment. You, the director and assistant director of Church Extension, and Board of Church Extension are the only individuals who will have access to your assessment. During this assessment, be honest with yourself and look seriously in the mirror. This assessment should help you to better focus your call to church planting.

The assessment has four major parts to assist you in making the decision to become a church planter as well as give Church Extension the information it needs in order to pursue calling you to plant churches with the BFC.

Part #1 - The Call and Competencies Sections

This will normally be a morning session of about two hours. The director and/or assistant director of Church Extension will go through certain things that do and do not qualify a “call” to minister and specifically plant churches. He will then go through what spiritual gifts, traits & attributes, and personal skills are needed for church planting. The director will also review the types of church plants that exist, the differences between a church planter and a pastor who plants a church and the “Cost to the Family” section. **You do not need to fill in the “Cost to the Family” section unless you desire to do so.**

Part #2 - Review and Discussion of the Inventory Tests

If the applicant has completed any Inventory Tests, the director and/or assistant director will review them with the candidate and his spouse at a later date.

Part #3 - The Interview

The director and assistant director will interview the candidate and his spouse, if married. The questions for the interview are listed in Part #3. The candidate and his wife, if married, should read through the questions, *write down the answers in the booklet* and come prepared to give his

answers.

Part #4 – Evaluator’s Review and Recommendations

The director and/or assistant director will discuss their evaluation and observations of the assessment and produce a summary of the assessment along with a set of recommendations.

Part #5 - Presentation of Recommendations to Applicant

The director will discuss the recommendations with the candidate and his spouse. Whatever next steps are needed, the director will make the appropriate plans.

In closing, look for the leading of the Holy Spirit and take time to see what God wants to tell you through this assessment. Without clarity of call and evidence of the competencies needed for church planting, you will find church planting a miserable experience.

Part #1 – The Call & Competencies of Church Planter

A time of explanation and discussion

SECTION 1 – Competencies of Church Planter

I. Spiritual Gifts - Do your spiritual gifts match your call, and are the necessary spiritual gifts for church planting present in your life?

A. LEADERSHIP -

Missionary Leadership

- out and about

- itinerant

- targets lost sheep

- go, proclaim, evangelize

vs.

Pastoral Leadership

- in house focus

- loves stability

- single focus of the sheep

- disciple/equip the sheep

B. PREACHING/TEACHING - the ability to communicate in a public setting, oftentimes a non-sympathetic setting. Prefers a coffee table versus pulpit approach.

C. FAITH - the capacity to envision the non-existent and pass that vision on to others.

D. EVANGELISM - see church planting as a primary vehicle to reach the lost. The ability to create an environment in which people are excited about evangelism and new birth is seen.

E. DISCERNMENT - the ability to know WHAT to do, with WHOM, and WHEN to do what is necessary.

1. Insight into and about people, making wise decisions regarding the people who become involved in the plant.

2. Insight into circumstances, using available resources appropriately.

3. Is keenly aware of the spiritual warfare involved with church planting.

II. Traits and Attributes - “a learned power and ability of doing something competently.”

- A. PERSEVERANCE - a type of construct stubbornness.

- B. DESIRE & WILLINGNESS TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE - taking control and the lead.

- C. COMPETITIVENESS - a desire to win for the LORD and to gain victory for His honor and glory (but not at all costs or “any means to an end”)

- D. STRONG NEED TO ACHIEVE - not for one’s own self-worth but rather to see that God gets victory and glory.

- E. CONFIDENCE - a holy boldness in what God can do through me and that He will (the Caleb factor).

- F. GOOD HEALTH - not only is needed for the physical rigors of planting, but also for the mental awareness necessary.

- G. WORK ETHIC - church planting is hard work and needs good time management skills in order for a planter to minister on his own.

III. Personal Skills Needed - what are the traits and skills that predispose certain people to start new churches and affect their ability to undertake the tasks which go along with church planting.

A. PROPENSITY TO START NEW VENTURES - an entrepreneurial mentality.

B. FACE TO FACE RECRUITING - experience in gathering people together.

C. CAPACITY TO DEAL WITH REJECTION

1. Finding core group members and eventual attenders involves many more misses than hits.
2. Unreturned phone calls and canceled appointments are par for the course.

D. HIGH TOLERANCE FOR AMBIGUITY AND UNCERTAINTY - many things in the church plant will not be concrete or clear.

E. HIGHLY ADAPTABLE TO UNEXPECTED EVENTS AND PROBLEMS

1. The planter may be required to revamp or modify the original plan once or several times.
2. He must learn quickly from mistakes.
3. The ability to borrow and adapt from other models.

F. THRIVE IN SPITE OF CAPITAL CONSTRAINTS - must work with limited funds and be able to be innovative with needs and resources.

SECTION 2 - Types of Church Plants

Discussion Only

I. Franchise - capitalizing on the denomination's name or reputation which is highly attractive in a particular geographical area.

II. Parachute Drop - starting a new church from scratch with little or no prior contact with the area or people (Pauline).

III. Parent - taking a launch team from a mother church and intentionally targeting an adjacent community.

IV. Partner - a cooperative venture between several churches and/or denominations to start a new church.

V. Unplanned - this is very infrequent, but may occur by means of a cell group or home Bible study ministry that develops among unchurched or spiritually interested unbelievers.

Note: Explain your choice.

Section 3 - Cost to the Family Discussion Only

In church plants, everything is magnified: financial constraints, physical plant needs, dependency, as well as and particularly the stress on family relationships.

I. Stresses of Church Planting on the Family

A. FINANCIAL -

B. TIME INVOLVEMENT -

C. LABOR DEMAND -

D. STRESS FROM SLOW OR NO PROGRESS -

E. INABILITY TO DO THE EXTRAS -

F. LIVING CONDITIONS -

II. Benefits that Church Planting has on the Family

- A. IT CAN BRING THE FAMILY TOGETHER SPIRITUALLY -
- B. IT CAN CREATE A CORPORATE DEPENDENCE UPON GOD -
- C. IT CAN INVOLVE THE ENTIRE FAMILY IN THE MINISTRY -
- D. IT CAN CREATE GOOD RELATIONSHIPS -
- E. IT TEACHES GOOD MINISTRY AND WORK ETHICS -

III. Expectations on the Spouse

- A. “DO I HAVE TO FEEL CALLED?” -
- B. NEED TO IDENTIFY GIFTS AND ROLE -
- C. BE CAREFUL ABOUT “GAP FILLING” -

IV. Discussion

- A. WHAT CAUSES THE MOST CONCERN FOR THE SPOUSE?
- B. WHAT IS THE SPOUSE’S VISION FOR THE MINISTRY COMPARED WITH THE PLANTER’S VISION?
- C. LIST 2 STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO SAFEGUARD YOUR RELATIONSHIP
 - With each other:
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - With Children:
 - 1.
 - 2.

Part #2 – Review/Discussion of Inventory Tests As Necessary

To be reviewed at an appropriate date set by the director.

Part #3 - Interview

Most Important – Please come with all questions answered in the spaces provided.

Explanation of the Interview - the interview will focus on your past performance(s) in areas that relate specifically to skills necessary for church planting. You may not have experiences in certain areas and if so, your answers will assist Church Extension in seeing what needed training and experiences it will have to design for you if you are called to plant churches with the BFC. **Inexperience is not necessarily a disqualifier.**

1. The interview will cover questions that relate to Parts #1 and #2 of the assessment along with some questions pertaining to the doctrines of the Bible Fellowship Church. All questions may not be covered, but come prepared to give responses to all questions.

Note: Prospective church planters, who are currently pursuing credentials with the Ministerial Candidate Committee of the Bible Fellowship Church, need not be concerned with the *Doctrinal Compatibility* part of this interview section.

2. The director and other members of the interview team will take notes and these will remain confidential. The notes will only be shared with the Board of Church Extension with the intention of discussing a call.

3. Think of the interview as an opportunity to tell your story and give a picture of your vision, desires, and experiences.

4. In your answer, please be as descriptive as possible and avoid giving opinions.

5. If there are any questions that you feel awkward about, let the director know ahead of time.

6. If you need a break at any time, simply let the director know. The interview will last approximately three hours.

Here is the list of questions you will be asked. (Please answer the questions in the spaces below or on the back of the page. Use a separate sheet to answer if necessary.)

Opening Questions

What questions have the previous parts of the assessment raised for you?

What conclusions have you drawn?

What has been clarified for you?

Church Planting Model (p. 8)

Take time to describe “your” church plant. How would you go about gathering people, forming a core group, casting vision, finding a facility and what type of facility would you desire? What would you prioritize in terms of: values, style of worship, programs, teaching/preaching, mercy ministry, counseling, marketing, caring for the flock, other?

Project a time-line and some goals and objectives, along with what you think will be hindrances.

ASSESSMENT EVALUATION QUESTIONS

- 1. Competencies (p. 5-7)** What feedback do you have in regards to your spiritual gifts, attributes, traits, and personal skills?

- 2. Cost to Family (p. 9-10)** What concerns do you have in regards to church planting's cost to your family?

- 3. Call to Plant a Church** - relate the process you went through to come to the conclusion that God is leading you to plant a church.

4. Your Personal Vision

What are your life verses?

What are your top two values in ministry?

What pre-Christian experiences or Christian experiences have prepared you to plant a church?

Give an example of one constant fruit you bear when involved in ministry.

Do you have a personal mission statement and if so, what is it?

What are your spiritual gifts?

5. Leadership

Give an example of when you were asked, or others elected you, to be their leader.
What was it? What did you do? What were the results?

What role do you prefer to take in leadership and why?

1. Presidential - head coach, where the buck stops, the person responsible for keeping all the things moving along and for making the final decisions.
2. Vice-president - assistant coach, leading your own team but having someone else keeping track of the big picture and making the final decision under pressure.
3. Strong Player - a team player on a great team, where your input is listened to and respected. Someone makes the directional decisions for the team.

What adjustments will you have to make in this role in the context of planting a church?

6. Catalytic Capacity

Give examples of ventures you have started as a child, teen and adult.

Describe what you did in the most successful venture you ever started.

What was the last venture, in the church or outside, that you started?

7. Faith

Give an example of a time when God gave you a clear direction and you stepped out in faith. What happened?

Describe a time when others said something couldn't be done, but you did not agree and proceeded to prove them wrong.

8. Visioning Capacity

Tell about a time someone asked you to take charge of a project and what you did to gather a group of people, get them headed in the right direction, and what the outcome looked like.

Give an example of a vision you came up with, made a plan for, and gained help from others to pull off.

Describe your vision for the church you are interested in planting.

9. Reaching Out

Give two examples of people you have helped in their understanding of Christ and led to the Lord.

Tell about the most recent unsaved person(s) you've entertained in your home, been in their home, done something together.

Tell about a group effort you led in which the goal was to help unbelievers come to a better understanding of Christ.

How would you share Christ, one-on-one, with an unsaved person? What answer would you give to the question: “What must I do to be saved?”

10. Conflict Resolution

Describe the most recent time in which you faced a conflict, either within or without of yourself and how you resolved it.

Give some examples of conflict you’ve had in personal, ministry or business relationships, including the most recent and how you handled each one.

11. Spousal Cooperation

What specific challenges will church planting raise for you that are beyond the areas of your current ministry?

What is the number one reason you believe that your spouse will be successful in church planting?

What is the one activity that encourages and energizes your spouse?

What is one activity that drains your spouse?

Give an example of where a ministry issue raised conflict between you and your spouse and how you resolved the issue.

Which career is dominant in your family at this time? Will this change when planting?

12. Equipping

Give some examples of people in your life or ministry which you moved from nominal participation in the faith to a deeper understanding and commitment to Christ.

Give some examples of people you helped discover their spiritual giftedness and find a place of ministry to use it.

Describe a time when someone you placed in a ministry position failed. What did you learn from the experience?

13. Perseverance

Tell about a distasteful assignment you were given and what you did to complete it.

Give an example of a time when others said a project couldn't be done, but you pressed on and completed it.

Describe a circumstance in which you came up with an idea the group didn't like at first, how you regrouped, and what you did to gather support for it.

14. Worship

In your opinion, what are some of the most common mistakes churches make in relating to the unchurched or unbelievers?

Give an example of a worship service that you would design where the unsaved heard the Gospel in an open and unthreatening manner.

Give an example of an unbeliever who was moved closer to the Gospel through a meeting or service you designed.

15. Closing Questions

Had I known you better, what questions would I have asked, that I didn't?

If you had the freedom to do whatever you wanted, what would you choose?

16. Doctrinal Compatibility

(further and more involved interviewing will take place with the Ministerial Candidate Committee of the Bible Fellowship Church).

Explain what your view is of God's election of those whom He saves.

Explain what is meant by the inspiration of the Scriptures.

Explain your view on elder rule and your opinion of women being elders and deacons.

Explain your views on total depravity and perseverance of the saints.

What is your view of the Church as connectional?

What are your views regarding sign gifts in the Church: tongues, healing, miracles?

What is your view of baptism and the mode baptism should be administered?

Part #4 – Evaluator’s Review

I. Personal Assets of the Candidate:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

II. Potential Liabilities:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

III. Church Planting Suitability Fit

1. Competencies
 - a. Spiritual Gifts
 - b. Traits & Abilities
 - c. Personal Skills
2. Cost to Family
3. Call to Plant a Church
4. Your Personal Vision
5. Leadership
6. Catalytic Capacity
7. Faith
8. Visioning Capacity
9. Reaching Out
10. Conflict Resolution
11. Spousal Cooperation
12. Equipping
13. Perseverance
14. Worship
15. Doctrinal Compatibility

Recommendations

#1

#2

#3

#4

#5

Date -

Place of Assessment -

Evaluators:

1.

2.

3.

4.