

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Purpose

This workshop is designed to walk nominating committees through their work by engendering ownership of the role of nominating committee member, introducing participants to the functions of a nominating committee, providing guidelines for recruiting leaders, and outlining factors that motivate persons for leadership roles. This workshop may be used in the first meeting, or any regular meeting, of a church's nominating committee or as part of a church officer training retreat. The workshop can be used in one meeting or several to complete the work of the nominating committee.

Time Frame: Two hours with a ten-minute break. Extra time will be needed if the meeting is a working group designed to complete one or several tasks of the committee.

Workshop Outline

I Introduction (15 minutes)

II Explore Experiences (30 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

III Functions of a Nominating Committee (60 minutes total)

- A. Appraising Leadership Needs
- B. Identifying Potential Leaders
- C. Matching Leadership Needs with Potential Leaders
- D. Recruiting Persons for Leadership
- E. Keeping the Church Informed
- F. Evaluating the Work and Making Recommendations

IV Closing (five minutes)

Preparation and Materials

- Familiarize yourself with the content of the workshop.
- Gather and review church documents related to the role of the nominating committee, such as the church constitution and bylaws. It will be helpful to have copies of these for participants.
- Arrange for drinks and snacks for the break.
- Gather copies of the church membership list, Bibles, newsprint, markers, paper, and pencils.
- Photocopy the handouts for participants, making extra copies of handouts C and D.
- List responses from Handout A, Part I, on newsprint or whiteboard.
- List questions from Handout A, Part II, on newsprint or whiteboard.

Conducting the Workshop

I Introduction (15 minutes)

Welcome the participants, introduce yourself, and share your background and interest in the work of the nominating committee. Lead an opening prayer, expressing gratitude for the commitment of those present.

Explain where the facilities are and review the purpose of the workshop. Encourage the participants to take breaks as needed and mention that there will be ten-minute beverage break about halfway through.

Distribute copies of Handout A and review the instructions for “Part I: What Motivates Me as a Leader?” Give the participants five minutes to complete the task. Ask the participants to introduce themselves and share their top five motivators. Tally on newsprint or whiteboard how many persons checked each item.

II Explore Experiences (30 minutes)

Ask the participants to move on to Part II of Handout A: “My Experiences.” After ten minutes, ask them to share the factors they’ve identified. Record the responses on newsprint or whiteboard.

Using newsprint or whiteboard, spend about ten minutes working together to create a one- or two-sentence guideline for identifying and inviting volunteers.

Break (10 minutes): Explain where the facilities are and direct participants to the drinks and snacks. Confirm the time for their return.

III Functions of a Nominating Committee (60 minutes)

Reconvene and review the description of the nominating committee from the church constitution or other church documents.

Distribute Handout B, “Six Functions of the Nominating Committee,” and review the list of functions:

1. Appraise the leadership needs of the church.
2. Identify persons with gifts, skills, and interests who can serve in leadership positions.
3. Match church leadership needs with persons who have the appropriate gifts, skills, and interests.
4. Recruit persons for leadership positions.
5. Keep the church informed regarding the progress of the committee.
6. Evaluate the work of the committee and make recommendations for the next committee.

Move on to individually addressing each function. You will need to pace yourself to spend no more than ten minutes on each item. You may choose to simply review each of these tasks and then set up other meetings focused on each of the tasks as a way to complete the work of the nominating committee.

A. Appraising Leadership Needs

Explain that before a committee starts looking for leaders with specific gifts and talents, it is wise to consider the general qualities desired in leaders. It is possible that the church constitution outlines basic leadership qualifications and qualities, and nominating committees should take the time to familiarize themselves with these.

Spend some time brainstorming desired qualities. You might suggest such things as the following:

- commitment to Jesus Christ and to this local congregation
- trustworthiness
- emotional maturity
- demonstrated ability to follow through
- open-mindedness
- kindness, gentleness, and self-control
- confidence and competence

Distribute Handout C, “Work Sheet for the Nominating Committee,” and review it. Provide copies for nominating committee members to use at appropriate meetings or proceed with the work of the committee as follows:

- Complete the first four columns, using a roster of present leaders of the church.
- Review position descriptions and list qualities specifically needed for each position. If position descriptions are not available, work together to develop basic position descriptions using Handout D, “Position Description Form.” It is important to note that these are working descriptions to help the committee in its work. The committee should encourage the church leadership to develop official descriptions that will be approved by the congregation and added to the church constitution.

B. Identifying Potential Leaders

Distribute Bibles and invite volunteers to read aloud Romans 12:4-8 and Ephesians 4:7-13. Then discuss the following questions:

1. What do these passages have to say about the work of the nominating committee?
2. What realities or factors put us at risk for *not* seeking those who are gifted for the roles we need to fill?
3. How might we address those risks?

Distribute copies of the membership list and begin identifying potential leaders for each position. Referring to the position descriptions, discuss each position and potential leaders.

C. Matching Leadership Needs with Potential Leaders

Using your list of qualities, the position descriptions, and the list of potential leaders, prayerfully select one or two names for each position and complete column five of Handout C. Next, indicate in column seven who will be responsible to recruit each person.

D. Recruiting Persons for Leadership

Share the following information with the participants:

- Recruitment needs to start well in advance of the date when the prospective leader is to begin serving. Last-minute recruitment does not indicate a high regard for the position, nor does it enhance the individual's self-esteem.
- The way leaders are recruited will affect response.
- Recruiting should be done by personal contact. Never try to recruit over the telephone.
- Whenever possible, use a recruiting team of two persons.
- Those who are contacting potential leaders should know the person and understand the position.
- State why the nominating committee thinks the person would be a good leader, naming specific qualifications the prospective leader has for the particular position.
- Provide a written position description, review expectations, and explain what resources and training are available.
- Allow time for questions. Give the prospect the opportunity to express hopes, concerns, and needs.
- Allow time for the prospect to consider the position. Set a date to contact him or her for a response.
- If someone says no immediately, don't pressure or pester, but see if he or she is willing to take more time to consider the position. Encourage the person to suggest what leadership position he or she might like to assume in the future.
- Be sure that you speak directly with the person you want for the position. A spouse or parent cannot make the commitment on behalf of another, even if the person being asked is a minor.

Referring to the factors identified on Handout A, Part II, develop a plan for completing recruitment, including contacting potential leaders and setting a deadline for completing the work. Identify one person who will receive reports and update the master "Work Sheet for the Nominating Committee."

E. Keeping the Church Informed

Explain that the nominating committee is functioning on behalf of the whole community of faith. Regular progress reports keep the congregation aware of the work being done. In turn, the community of faith needs to support the work of the nominating committee through prayer. The church can be kept informed through a newsletter, through the church bulletin, by announcements at the time of worship, and by committee members individually sharing with boards, committees, and small groups. It is crucial, however, that personal details not be shared. There is no need to inform the larger body, for example, that a particular person was asked and declined. Nor is it necessary to explain *why* someone declined an invitation.

Spend some time developing a plan for providing updates to the committee.

F. Evaluating the Work and Making Recommendations

Explain that when the recruitment is completed and the roster of leaders is ready, the nominating committee should evaluate its work and make recommendations for the next nominating committee. Distribute Handout E, “Evaluation and Recommendations for the Nominating Committee,” and explain that it is designed for use by the nominating committee during its final meeting. Read through the handout and ask in what ways they think the completion of this form would be helpful to the nominating committee. Invite them to suggest questions to add to the form.

Further explain that after the nominating committee has completed and evaluated its work, celebration is in order. This celebration should include an opportunity for committee members to talk informally about their experiences. Encourage them to spend time at their final meeting planning a celebration.

Additionally, if your church does not have a dedication celebration for its new slate of officers, consider making a proposal for such a service.

IV Closing (*five minutes*)

Provide a few minutes for closing comments and invite the participants to complete the workshop evaluation form (Handout F).

Close with prayer.

NM 802, originally written by Evelyn M. Huber, revised 1995 by Maynard Hatch and 2007 by Cassandra Williams.

Six Functions of the Nominating Committee

1. Appraise the leadership needs of the church.
2. Identify persons with gifts, skills, and interests who can serve in leadership positions.
3. Match church leadership needs with persons who have the appropriate gifts, skills, and interests.
4. Recruit persons for leadership positions.
5. Keep the church informed regarding the progress of the committee.
6. Evaluate the work of the committee and make recommendations for the next committee.

Work Sheet for the Nominating Committee

1. Leadership Roles	2. Person Now Serving	3. May Serve Another Term?		4. Comments about Performance	5. Person(s) to Be Asked for the Position	6. Response (List date of response.)		7. Person(s) Responsible for Contact
		Yes	No			Yes	No	

1. Leadership Roles	2. Person Now Serving	3. May Serve Another Term?		4. Comments about Performance	5. Person(s) to Be Asked for the Position	6. Response (List date of response.)		7. Person(s) Responsible for Contact
		Yes	No			Yes	No	

Handout D

Position Description Form

Position _____

Tasks to Be Performed

Needed Abilities, Qualifications, and Qualities

Working Relationships (e.g., primarily alone, in conjunction with the pastor, with a committee)

Training Required

Time Demands for Meetings and Outside Work

Term of Service and Limitations (e.g., can serve only two consecutive two-year terms)

From Kenneth Blazier, *Building an Effective Church School* (Valley Forge, Pa. Judson Press, 1976). Used by permission.

Handout E

Evaluation and Recommendations for the Nominating Committee for _____ (year)

1. Put a check mark on this scale to indicate how well you think the nominating committee did its work:

1 _____	3 _____	5 _____
Did not complete the work	Did its work satisfactorily	Did its work very well

Comments:

2. Put a check mark on this scale to indicate how well you think the nominating committee members worked together:

1 _____	3 _____	5 _____
Very poor relationship	Worked well together	A great committee

Comments:

3. Check the response that is most accurate for you. I think we . . .

___ should have started earlier. ___ had just the right amount of time. ___ did not need all the time we had.

4. What hindered the work of the nominating committee?

5. Recommendations for the next nominating committee. (Include here names of persons who declined but may be interested in other positions or in filling a position at a different time.)

Handout F

Workshop Evaluation

1. Put a check mark on this scale to indicate your overall assessment of the workshop.

Not Helpful 1 _____ 3 _____ 5 _____ Very Helpful

2. What new insights or ideas have you gained about the work of a nominating committee?

3. What new insights or ideas have you gained about the motivation of leaders?

4. What was most helpful in the workshop?

5. What was least helpful in the workshop?

6. Other comments: