



The Presbytery of
DONEGAL

Fit Between Person & Position Conversation For Teaching Elders in Conversations with Pastor Nominating Committee

From the Donegal Vacancy Handbook:

About the COM Fit Between Person and Position Conversation

The COM Fit Between Person and Position Conversation is scheduled when a PNC brings a finalist applicant for a site visit. This visit is often held in conjunction with scheduling a “Neutral Pulpit” for the applicant to demonstrate how they preach and lead worship.

The Purpose of the COM Fit Conversation is to talk with the applicant about the ways their gifts and skills and the potential congregation seem to be a good match, and also to talk about areas that raise questions about whether this is a suitable call.

When the position is for a multiple staff position with other teaching elders (Co-Pastor, Associate Pastor, Head of Staff), the other Teaching Elders on the staff will be included for part of the conversation in order to talk with the COM about their approaches to staff relationships.

The Fit Conversation typically lasts an hour. If other staff members are included, then the time will be expanded as needed.

The participants are between 2-4 COM representatives, and the Executive Presbyter. The conversation is with the applicant alone, spouses are not included. It is typically scheduled at the Presbytery Office on the Monday morning following a weekend visit. Applicant flight arrangements should be made accordingly. If the Monday morning timing is not possible, then COM will attempt to schedule sufficient representation for other times over the visit.

Topics for the COM Fit Between Person and Position Conversation

How Did You Get Here?

- Brief Biography/Spiritual Journey
- How Has Your Journey Led to This Particular Congregation?

Discerning the Call

- What has happened so far in your conversations with the PNC?
- What makes you wonder if this might be a Call?
- What makes you wonder if this might not be a Call?

- Position Description – where is there a match between your gifts and the position description? Is there a suitable fit?
- In staffs with more than one pastor, what impressions do each of you have about a potential Call to work together?
- What are your impressions of the congregation and what is ahead for them?
- What more do you need to know in testing if this is a call?

{At this point, other teaching elders on the staff of the church may be excused}

Competencies and Growing Edges in Ministry

- Explore topics from the EP Reference Check script
- What are your competencies?
- What are your growing edges
- Plans for professional development

Logistics:

- Adequacy of compensation -- Has there been a conversation with the PNC about Terms of Call?
- Review of the Presbytery Terms of Call form
- What discussions would need take place with the PNC about salary, benefits, expenses, time off, technology, and other arrangements?

Connection to the Presbytery – Developing Relationships, Ways to Connect and Engage

- What gifts do you have to share?
- Where might you connect and engage in the mission of the presbytery?
- What professional and spiritual support do you foster?

General Questions of all Candidates and Teaching Elders

- Are there any aspects of our church’s Constitution to which you wish to declare objections of conscience? By “objection of conscience,” we mean not merely intellectual disagreement but an unwillingness to conform your behavior and/or practice of ministry to a particular aspect of the Constitution.
- Are you now willing to affirm (or reaffirm) your commitment to “be governed by our church’s polity and abide by its discipline?” (W-4.4003e).
- Is there any issue that potentially could cause you to consider leaving the denomination?

What Comes Next? Next Steps?

- What information do you need?
- What other questions do you have?