

SURFACE TO SOUL

Live Well | Lead Well | Coach Well

Recruit Dialogue Partners to Be a Better Leader

Pastors and church leaders do their best work when they are surrounded and supported by individuals who equip, encourage, challenge, and pray for them. These individuals serve as dialogue partners who strive to bring out God's best in their staff. They help paid leaders focus on what matters most, recognize emerging opportunities, and explore ways they can work together to maximize their ministry impact.

THE ROLE OF DIALOGUE PARTNERS

- Teams are comprised of 3-5 people who represent various age groups and perspectives.
- The staff person usually selects their team and decides how often they'll meet and what the agenda will be.
- Team members are asked to serve a 1-year term, which may be renewed for another year.
- At the end of the year, pastors/staff are encouraged to thank team members for their wisdom.
- Staff often bring on new members who will offer new perspectives, approaches, and sources of wisdom.
- Most teams gather 3 to 5 times a year.
- Teams usually meet face-to-face on a quarterly basis. Other meet by phone or Zoom or over dinner.
- Team do NOT become unofficial personnel committees.
- Their charge is to help staff dream, discern, and give feedback.

CHARACTERISTICS TO CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING DIALOGUE PARTNERS

- They should be active participants in the mission and ministries of the church.
- They should be positive, proactive, prayerful team players who possess a "solutions mindset."
- They are accessible by phone, text, and email, and provide timely responses to issues being raised.
- They have a strong network of relationships in and beyond the church.
- They are attuned to changes taking place within their church, their community, and the world.
- They are respectful of the church's history and traditions yet open to finding better ways to do ministry.
- They are willing and able to speak their truth in grace-filled ways to the person they're seeking to support.
- They are lifelong learners who are naturally curious. They notice what's working and what's worth testing.
- They are astute observers of the congregation's culture, energy level, strengths, and challenges.
- They must inspire trust and be able to keep confidences.

TOPICS TO ADDRESS WITH DIALOGUE PARTNERS

- **Personal** – What should I keep doing? Stop doing? Start doing? Pay closer attention to?
- **Growth** – Which skills do I need to work on? How can I be a better communicator? Leader? Delegator? Inviter? Cheerleader? Vision caster? Team leader? Storyteller/preacher? Systems builder? Disciple-maker? Equipper? What are my blind spots?
- **Perspectives** – What changes do you see happening in our church? Our community? Who do you see as natural leaders within our church? How would you describe the personality/culture of our church? Where do you see us becoming too complacent in ministry? If you were me, what would you do?
- **Process** – What ideas do you have for inviting? Welcoming? Worshiping? Equipping? Giving? Sending?
- **People** – Whom are we not reaching or neglecting? Who needs encouragement? Who has a story to tell?
- **Passions** – What are people passionate about? What matters here? What keeps people up at night?
- **Proposal/Possibility** – Help me evaluate the possibility of launching (list a new event/ministry opportunity).



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