Timeline for Search Team & Meetings

The timeline you create is a rough approximation of what will actually happen in the Search Team Process. Obviously, there are a number of variables that are entirely outside of your control as a Search Team. Never-the-less, it can be helpful to establish rough guidelines regarding the time frames for each stage, and to seek to meet the self-imposed deadlines on your internal processes.

It is helpful to establish dates for regular meetings. It is difficult to mesh the schedules of all of the Search Team, but easy to cancel if the meeting proves unnecessary. So, take a look at your calendars at the first meeting, and try to establish the following dates. Realize that you may need to adjust and will almost certainly need to add in more meetings as you go along.

**(Stage 1) Meeting Date:**  - The Search Team Gathers

 Example: September 6

*After this initial meeting, and before the next meeting you will need to:*

* Have a subcommittee create an initial Church & Community Profile for the Search Team to Review.
* Have a subcommittee (or church Board) define a Job Description for the Pastor role you are searching for. This may involve a survey of the congregation prior to finalizing the Job Description.

*A reasonable estimate of time would* ***be 2 to 4 weeks for these tasks.***

**(Stage 2) Meeting Date:**  - Determining Who and How

 Example: September 27 (3 week gap)

*Before the next meeting you will need to:*

* Review and approve (or send back for adjustments) the Church Profile and the Job Description.
* Determine your advertising approach and get information to these sources promptly so that profiles and resumes can begin to come in. Then review them as they are sent to you.
* Establish an initial cut-off date for profiles and resumes (with recognition that this may need to be extended). Your cut-off date should give at least a couple of months for Pastors to respond. Although, you may want to begin contacting pastors before the cutoff date it you get a great prospect. Creating a cut-off date is not a “hard” rule to be followed, but will give you a general idea of the time line you are hoping for.
* Begin discussions about Pastors you already know (or have been suggested to you), and will want to pursue. Contact them to see if there is any interest in talking.

A reasonable estimate of time would **be 2 to 3 months** **for these tasks.** You may want to set an interim meeting date to begin to sift through the initial responses, and to review possible candidates who have been brought to your attention.

**(Stage 3) Meeting Date:**  - Processing of Candidates

 Example: November 29 (8 week gap)

*Before the next meeting you will need to:*

* Initiate contact with those you are interested in, but did not send a profile to you (you are initiating, not the Pastor), then contact them to see if there is any interest in talking.
* Sort through the potential candidates to create a short list.

*A reasonable estimate of time would* ***be 2 weeks for this task.***

**(Stage 4) Meeting Date:**  - Short List Processing

 Example: December 13 (2 week gap)

*Before the next meeting you will need to:*

* Set up and complete initial phone interviews with those on your short list. This will likely take more than one meeting.
* Set up an in-person interview with your top candidate. This will likely take a month or two to set up and accomplish. Also another interim meeting or two.
* Set up Birkman Assessments for candidates and possible Theological Reviews.
* Make a decision, and set up the official candidating week or weekend for the prospective Pastor.

*A reasonable estimate of time would* ***be 1 to 2 months for this task.***

**(Stage 5) Meeting Date:**  - Candidating Weekend or Week

 Example: January 24-January 28 (5 week gap)

*Before the next meeting you will need to:*

* Arrange for the potential Pastor to come for a Candidating weekend or week.
* Set up a schedule for the Candidating weekend or week.
* Ensure that compensation and benefits range has been established, and identify the person responsible for discussions with the candidate.
* Arrange for a church meeting and vote.
* Extend a formal offer of employment or employment contract.

*A reasonable estimate of time would* ***be 1 to 2 months for this task.***

**(Stage 6) Meeting Date:**  - Celebrate Arrival

 Example: March 21 (8 week gap)

Make final arrangements for the arrival of your new Pastor.