

# Profiles of Ministry Program

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## Models for Interpreting Individual Profiles

Below are models of various ways to structure a POM interpretive interview. The models vary from individual to group settings, from curricular to co-curricular settings, and from more inductive to deductive approaches. All have been used successfully by POM interpreters in a variety of locations. These are simply models for interpreting. Please see the handout “Guidelines and Notes on Interpreting” for more detailed instructions on interpretation.

### One-on-One Models

*Each one-on-one model assumes an interactive conversation ranging from 60 to 90 minutes.*

- Distribute individual profiles and Interpretive Manuals to individuals ahead of time
- Use one of the following to structure individual reflections in preparation of the meeting:
  - **Joy/Pain:** Ask individuals to examine their profiles and be prepared to discuss the 3 or 4 scores that gave them the most pain and the 3 or 4 scores that gave them the most joy.
  - **Strengths/Problems/Concerns:** Ask individuals to examine their profiles and be prepared to discuss the following:
    - What strengths will I bring to the ministry?
    - What problems might I have?
    - What specific concerns do I want to discuss during the session?
- Before leading the meeting, examine the profile in light of the same questions asked of the individual.
- During the meeting, compare and contrast the answers given by the interpreter and the individual with an aim towards helping the individuals develop a greater awareness of themselves and the ministry contexts they are preparing for. Focus questions on the implications for ministry. With the individual, develop strategies to address areas they need to focus on strengthening in order to prepare for or continue growing in ministry.

### Group Models

- **Possible Curricular or Co-Curricular Settings**
  - **An Introduction to Ministry Course**
  - **A Spiritual Formation Course**
  - **A Senior Integrative Seminar**
- Students may pay for the profile as part of the textbook fees for a particular course or program.
- The characteristics and perceptions of ministry used in the profile can serve as the basis for or to illustrate the following:
  - Various approaches to ministry from a biblical, historical, and/or theological perspective
  - Personal qualifications for ministry including discussions of ethics and boundaries, emotional health and spiritual formation
  - Denominational approaches and expectations for ministry
- Students may share from their individual profiles in a variety of ways:
  - Students may be invited to share from their profiles as part of a larger class discussion
  - Students may be placed into small groups with an experienced interpreter and asked to reflect together on their profiles
    - See the suggested questions for reflection listed above for the one-on-one models.

- In such a group setting, it is important to ensure confidentiality.
  - A small group approach works best when trust has been built within the group before profiles are discussed.
- Students may be required to use their profile as the basis of a reflective or integrative paper on their understanding of, readiness for, or plan of preparation for ministry
- **Clergy Groups**
  - Peer Groups
  - Mentor Groups
- Using Stage II of the POM, ask clergy to reflect on their particular strengths for ministry, what areas they would like to develop, which criteria might be critical as they consider continuing in the same ministry or think of a second career. Fellow ministers, especially those who have a history in the particular denominational tradition of the individual minister, have been helpful in sharing with these individuals their own sense of the denomination and a judgment about possible futures for their colleagues.

### **Additional Questions for the Interpretive Session**

When the individual has had time to explore his or her profile, here are some opening questions:

- Are there certain areas you want to explore first?
- Did any score surprise you?
- Did you discover any good or bad news on the profile?

With reference to individual characteristics, questions such as these may be helpful:

- How do you feel about the location of the score?
- Does this score ring true?
- Is this what you expected to see?
- Can you think of evidence from your experience that either supports or contradicts this score?
- Do you have any thoughts about how this score (or pattern of scores) might affect your ministry?
- If you could move this score, in which direction would you like it to go? How would the effort to change the score affect you? How would it affect your ministry?

With reference to scores that are a disappointment you might ask:

- In what ways would you expect this characteristic (or lack of it) to be evident in your ministry?
- Are you comfortable with this score as it is or would you like to change it?
- What would it cost you to change? What would be the evidence that change was occurring? What advantages are there to such a change?

*A disappointing score may be precisely the opening the individual or the advisor needs to talk about a long-term concern. Honest sharing may open the way to real, though painful, learning.*