

# Reference Questions

Here are some “Reference Questions” that you may want to add to your repertoire when you are ready to proceed.

As is my habit, I usually think in “categories and components” to arrive at the best agenda questions. Do not feel compelled or obliged to use these categories as the questions per se, but try to draw out something from each category from the reference person with whom you are speaking.

## **Ego:**

Everyone has an ego, what is of importance is how he manages it. Are his feelings easily hurt or is he immediately defensive? Both these characteristics are evidence that a person is more ego driven than he should be. Characteristics of an egoistic person are a brittle personality, insecurity and lack of appropriate flexibility. Insecure people often appear to be conniving and having a hidden agenda. Remember, “hurt people ~ hurt people.”

## **Judgment:**

Good judgment means that he keeps his head when everyone else is emotionally vested in a certain result or opinion. In other words when everyone is “running around with their hair on fire”, can he make a calm assessment of the situation and act appropriately? Is he patient, waiting for all the needed facts in order to make a good and wise decision? Can he be “stampeded?”

## **Character:**

What I mean by character is the “core quality” of the person. How does he respond under stress or criticism or in a highly charged setting. If you can, try to get some examples of his handling an ethically difficult situation. You also look for how he/they have handled pain, betrayal and disappointment.

**Maturity:** (Growing in Grace is all three of these not just one.)

This area has three subcategories

### **[] Intellectual Maturity:**

Find out if he is a clear thinker. Find out if he is quickly influenced by a popular trend or whether he can develop an independent opinion. Find out if he is inordinately affected by Christian “superstars”. Find out what books he reads.

How well does he know the Bible?” (Pay attention here, because this is different from knowing theology or agreeing with a certain theological point of view!)

**[] Spiritual Maturity:** Does he have enough life experience combined with biblical knowledge so that he can bring specific spiritual principles to bear on both personal situations and church situations? Can he “connect the dots?” Does he have the ability to “operationalize” the principles of Scripture?

[] **Emotional Maturity:** You want to find out if he is the kind of person who needs constant approval or more importantly if he is overly insecure. Insecure pastors often appear conniving and or manipulative. Find out if people feel comfortable around him, and if people feel like he is genuine, authentic, the 'real deal'. (Do not ask if he is "transparent", that term has now become useless).

**Management Style:** I think there are really only two management styles – What I call "Top Down", and "Ground Up." "Top Down" organizations are usually, educational institutions, large businesses and large churches. Orders come from higher on the chain of command and are carried out by people lower down in the organization. There is usually little creativity or freedom in these models. Their efficiency and success is most often directly related to the competence of those in the upper levels of management. "Ground Up" organizations usually are small businesses, smaller churches, grassroots organizations that have limited resources. The leader is a helper and/or facilitator. He knows that he has limited resources so he is creative in using and developing the resources he does have. This brings out a lot of creativity but also can create a lot of chaos.

**Clarity of Purpose:** Find out if he can articulate and communicate from Scripture his job as an undershepherd.

HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK...

How long have you known \_\_\_\_\_

Why in your opinion did he enter full time ministry?

Does he have friends?

Is he a generally happy person?

Does he exhibit emotional maturity?

Does he have mood swings that are out of the ordinary?

Are his feelings easily hurt?

Have you observed him when his feelings were hurt? How did he respond?

Is he overly concerned about what people think of him or how he looks to other people?"

Do other people consider him trustworthy?

How do men respond to his leadership?

Does he exhibit mature judgement?

Have you observed him in a crisis situation? How well did he handle it? Did he display good judgment?"

How well does he handle chaos and conflict?

Have you observed him in an ethical crisis or conflict? How did he respond? Did he over-react or did he keep a balanced approach?

Do people trust him to keep confidences?"

Does he work and play well with others?

Can he articulate his own style of leadership?

Is he a "Top Down" leader or a "Ground up" grassroots leader

Is he organized?

How well does he know the Scriptures? Can you give some examples

Have you seen him in a stressful situation?

Tell me how much he loves his wife. His children.

Do people feel comfortable around him? Do people feel like he is genuine?

Can he be self-absorbed?

Do people feel refreshed after they are around him?

Is he ever boring?

How do women respond to his leadership?

Does he handle money well?

Other than the ministry and family what are his consuming interests?