

Suggested Questions for Reference Calls

Have a list of questions before you so that you can ask questions and record answers without taking too much time from the person who has been willing to serve as a reference. Listen between the lines. Listen for hesitation or faint praise.

Here are some suggested questions, but don't be afraid to come up with your own or to ask follow-up questions.

1. How long and in what capacity have you known this individual?
2. What would you say are this person's strengths in ministry?
3. What areas of ministry does this person need to strengthen?
4. What kind of presbyter is this individual? Please, give some examples?
5. How does this person deal with conflict in the church?
6. How does s/he deal with conflict in her/his personal life?
7. What kind of money manager is s/he?
8. How does s/he handle her/his personal life? Are there any problems that you know about?
9. How does this person relate to the church staff?
10. How does this person relate to the session?
11. How does this person relate to the members of the church?
12. How does this person relate to the community?
13. Is this person supportive of the work of the Presbyterian Church USA?
14. Is this person organized or disorganized?
15. How does this individual relate to his or her colleagues in ministry?
16. Does this person have a good sense of humor?
17. Has this person's church grown or has it lost members in the last 3 to 5 years?
18. What kind of preacher, teacher, pastor, administrator is this person?
19. Can you give me the name of someone else who you think would be a good reference?