

HOW I READ A PERSONAL INFORMATION FORM (PIF)

by Bill Branch

1. I look at the Presbytery of care or membership. Does it⁵location match the address given on the PIF? If not, why not?
2. What is the ordination date? Is there a time gap between seminary graduation and ordination? Why?
3. What is the person's experience with formal education? In what subject field is the undergraduate degree? Will that degree help in the ministry? Is there a gap between the undergraduate degree and seminary? What has the person been doing? Did the person graduate from a Presbyterian seminary?
4. What has the person done with continuing education. Has this person studied in only one area or has s/he had a wide exposure to various fields related to ministry?
5. Has all of the continuing education come from the same place?
6. Is the person a Board of Pensions member? If not this usually means that s/he has not served a PCUSA church.
7. What kinds of work experience have they had? Have they worked in other fields than ministry? Can that experience be helpful in the church? How long has s/he stayed at each church? Is this person a "church hopper"?
8. What kind of other services has the person been involved in? Have they taken an active part in the Presbytery and community?
9. Look at narrative sections. Does the person use the English language well? Have they served "growing" churches? Are they beating some theological drum that may be different than what this church would be comfortable with?
10. Look at their references. Is there a balance of men and women, lay and clergy? Are there references that can be trusted?
11. When did this person last update his/her PIF?
12. Is the form of the PIF neat and attractive?