

How to Onboard a Trustee / Director:

Before you onboard anyone, it's always good to double check: Do I have the right person! As Paul put it: " Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands" (1 Tim. 5:22). I.e., Don't be quick promote people into leadership. Thus, as the saying goes, "the best way to fire someone is not to hire them." So, if you haven't read my essay on "What to look for" be sure to check that out.

However, once you find an individual who fits the IPODS of a Trustee, consider the following 5 steps:

(A). SET A MEETING W/THEM: Affirm them. Talk about the leadership you see in them. And then talk about the basic roles and expectations that might come along with this position.

(B). SET A TIMELINE FOR READING AND RESEARCH:

Have them to study your bylaws, statement of faith, and additional books for onboarding. The goal here is to make sure you are in unity. They might read your bylaws and fundamentally disagree with them. Or, they might read your statement of faith, and you suddenly find out, "I don't believe in hell" (this honestly happened to me once). Thus, the goal of this step is two-fold: You want to make sure they understand both *you* and your *churches' methods*.

For example, I've written numerous books that explain how our church works. I wrote *Pharisectomy: How to Remove your Inner Pharisee and Other Religiously Transmitted Diseases*. The goal of this book was to increase generosity and to decrease politics in my church. Thus, it's a good read for board. Or, I also wrote *Happy Church Governance* for my boards to understand. However, you can pick additional books for reference. For example, you might want your board of elders to own a good systematic theology book (as they have the ability to affect your Statement of Faith).

(C) ASK THEM TO GET TO KNOW OTHER BOARD MEMBERS:

The goal here is to give your other board members an opportunity to vet the individual. Do they fit? Think of your board like a small group. You will need trust. Technically, our Staff Elders vote on whether to approve a certain trustee (the staff elders are an internal board of pastoral staff – often the highest ranking pastors – chosen by the lead pastor to manage our statement of faith and ordination process). Thus, it's important for them to feel comfortable with the nominee.

(D). DO A FOLLOW UP MEETING FOR Q&A: Give the individual time to think about the commitment and the role. You want to hear their hesitations and questions before tossing them into a meeting. They might be curious about the bylaws or about their roles. Constantly revisit the basics!

(E) . HAVE A FORMAL VOTE to confirm their legal role. For some this will mean, calling a meeting of your board of staff elders. And once it's official, make it fun. The spirit of the board matters as much as the business of the board. Operate like a team that truly loves one another.

