Effective and Ineffective Staff-Parish Relations Committees

Characteristics of Effective and Ineffective SPRCs

**Effective**

- Meet regularly and often
- Prepare for meetings
  - Have an agenda
  - Stay focused on agenda and identify topics for future meetings
  - Allow adequate time
- Establish partnership with pastor
  - Keep pastor informed
  - Take pastor into confidence
  - Maintain “We are in this together” attitude
  - Provide support and understanding

**Ineffective**

- Conduct annual evaluations only
  - Withhold regular feedback
  - Allow issues to build too long
  - Related to salary and appointment decisions more than to growth
- Allow too little time and care
  - Insufficient time to do task well
  - Insufficient care in getting input and preparing for evaluation
- Behave unfairly
  - Bringing unevaluated complaints
  - Bringing anonymous complaints
  - Giving all sources equal credibility
  - Not putting issues in perspective

What SPRCs and Clergy Most Need from Each Other

**SPRCs Most Need from Clergy**

- **Cooperation and receptivity**
  - Willing to listen with open mind
  - Attempt to understand members’ needs and concerns
  - Attempt to make some changes
  - Openness to improvement ideas
- **Clear and open communication**
  - Pastor’s vision for ministry
  - Candid assessment of what is going on in the church
  - Information about issues and needs

**Clergy Most Need from SPRCs**

- **Honest feedback**
  - Balanced, objective, thoughtful, and candid feedback
  - Treated as adults who can take criticism
- **Personal concern and support**
  - Advocate for pastor
- **Communication with the congregation**
  - Education of congregation
  - Feedback from and to congregation

Based on a comparison of staff-parish relations committees deemed effective by both the SPRC chair and the pastor and those deemed ineffective by the chair and pastor

Subscribe today to the Lewis Center’s free e-newsletter, *Leading Ideas*, for information, resources, and strategies for forward-thinking church leaders at [www.churchleadership.com/leadingideas](http://www.churchleadership.com/leadingideas).

For more resources, please visit [www.churchleadership.com](http://www.churchleadership.com)