
Professional Development Process



CRCA

(Approved CRCA Synod 2018)

Contents

1. Overview	3
1.1 Introduction.....	3
1.2 Purpose.....	3
1.3 Rationale.....	3
1.4 Benefits:.....	4
2. Summary of the Professional Development Process (PDP).....	4
2.1 Professional development:.....	4
2.2 Personal development:	4
3. Summary of a Possible Three Year Cycle	4
3.1 First Year	4
3.2 Second Year.....	5
3.3 Third Year	5
3.4 Fourth Year.....	5
4. Professional Development Possibilities.....	5
4.1 Spiritual Development	5
4.2 Developing a Support Network.....	6
4.3 Study Development.....	6
4.4 Skills Development	6
4.5 Developing Wider Community Relationships	6
5. Personal Development Possibilities	7
5.1 Improving Personal Health and Lifestyle Choices.....	7
5.2 Prioritising Family Time and Personal Time Management.....	7
5.3 Developing financial stewardship.....	7
6. Oversight of the PDP by the Classes	8
6.1 Questions for Sessions:.....	8
6.2 Questions for ministers:.....	8
A GUIDE FOR PDP COACHES	9
1. Introduction	10
2. Who can be a PDP Coach?.....	10
3. The primary qualities to be looked for in a PDP Coach	10
4. The basic responsibilities of the Coach.....	11
5. Some helpful questions in assisting pastors in forming their PDP.....	11
6. Regular Meetings	11

Acknowledgement: The Leadership Development Workgroup expresses its thanks to the Churches of Christ in Victoria and Tasmania Mission and Ministry group for assistance with consultation and resources upon which this document is based.

1. Overview

1.1 Introduction

The Gospel calls us again and again to give our very best to God - our *Utmost for His Highest* (Luke 10:27; Rom 12:1). Specifically in the Reformed tradition the sanctity of work has always been appreciated — not only hard work, but work wisely approached (Prov 6). As Spurgeon encouraged his students not only to work on their sermons but on their preaching, and on their characters as preachers, we as ministers of the CRCA have to encourage one another strongly not only to work hard *in* the work of our ministry, but *on* our ability, skills and character, to equip us better and better for our work in our Lord's Kingdom.

The term "Professional Development" to describe this process may perhaps be questioned, but it has the advantage that CRCA church members, sessions (church councils) will immediately understand the term without any explanation.

It is very much in the interests of churches and sessions in the CRCA to ensure that pastors are spiritually and emotionally healthy and that they are continuing to sharpen their skills for ministry. We would, therefore, like to encourage sessions to fully support the Professional Development Process and to also take an active interest in the participation of their local pastor in the process. This is not envisaged as primarily a supervisory involvement, rather as part and parcel of the fulfilment of the mandate that local sessions have to 'look after' their pastor in different areas of his personal and professional life.

The purpose of this document is to outline the process for developing a Professional Development Plan (PDP) for CRCA pastors. PDP participants will more than likely develop their plans in consultation with their families, sessions, colleagues, mentors, church leaders or members, or whatever combination may apply best to their situation.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the Professional Development Process is:

- For pastors to be encouraged in their continued growth in their readiness for every good work (1 Timothy 2:20-21). This may include further study, a deeper personal walk with God, taking better care of their health, or growth in relationships.
- For pastors to have a structure to review and evaluate their ministry, and to develop Professional and Personal Development Plans (PDP) to map their continued growth in ministry.
- For pastors to be accountable to at least one other person (hereafter referred to as the 'PDP Coach').

1.3 Rationale

Continuing education, spiritual growth and self-care are important and valuable, not only for the pastor, but also for the church or context in which ministry takes place.

1.4 Benefits:

There are clear benefits in this process for both the pastor and for the churches in which they minister.

1. The pastor will have a framework to develop dreams and plans for his continued growth which can then be validated by his church.
2. The pastor will have a framework by which he can evaluate his growth as a person and as pastoral leader.
3. Sessions and churches will be able to recognise, affirm and support the need for their pastors to be engaged in significant continuing development.

2. Summary of the Professional Development Process (PDP)

There are two major sections to this process:

2.1 Professional development:

- Spiritual development
- Developing a support network
- Study development
- Skills development
- Developing wider community relationships

2.2 Personal development:

- Improving personal health and lifestyle choices
- Prioritising family time
- Improving personal and time management skills
- Developing financial stewardship

The PDP can be drawn up on an annual basis but some pastors may prefer to design a three-year program that will give more time to attain specific goals. Regular accountability reports by the church council/session and minister to the Classis will help to ensure that progress is made on the goals set by the minister.

3. Summary of a Possible Three Year Cycle

3.1 First Year

- 3 year cycle begins
- Read through the relevant information on the PDP process
- Write Professional and Personal Development Plans for the next three years together with a PDP Coach.
- Discuss the outline of the plan with local church council /session
- Continue meeting with a PDP Coach (meet at least but not limited to 2-4 times throughout each year)

3.2 Second Year

- Continue to meet with Coach (2-4 times each year)
- Keep working on elements in the plan
- Complete first annual progress review. A summary, signed by the PDP Coach, to be discussed with church council/ session.

3.3 Third Year

- Continue to meet with Coach (2-4 times each year)
- Keep working on elements in the plan
- Complete final review of the three-year cycle. A summary, signed by the PDP Coach to be discussed with church council/ session.

3.4 Fourth Year

- Cycle begins again

4. Professional Development Possibilities

This is a guide for CRCA pastors planning their Professional Development Plan.

The headings are to assist in providing ideas or direction for reflection on your Professional Development needs.

- Spiritual development
- Developing a support network
- Study development
- Skills development
- Developing wider community relationships

Under each heading general examples of what could be included are listed. When drawing up your Professional Development Plan it is important to be as specific as possible. The general suggestions (in consultation with the PDP Coach if need be) should become SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely) goals. In addition to your PDP you may prefer to type up your own plan in order to expand on your ideas and plans. When your PDP has been signed by you and your PDP Coach please forward it your church council/ session. Once this has been received it will mark the beginning of your PDP.

4.1 Spiritual Development

- Daily quiet time including Bible reading and prayer
- 1 Day per month away on your own for the day, prayer and fasting
- Monthly family prayer night
- Small group weekly
- Daily disciplines, journaling, singing, writing, fasting
- Quarterly? Day(s) of retreat
- Worship songs in car
- Teaching aids in car
- Regular meeting with a group of peers

-
- Day in the country
 - Bible reflection
 - Meeting with spiritual mentor

4.2 *Developing a Support Network*

- 3 Pastors retreats per year
- Minister Care retreat annually
- Meet with mentor and or Coach 2-4 x /year
- Peer mentoring
- Meet with Ministry Group bi-monthly
- Regular meals with other ministers
- Accountability breakfasts with other ministers
- Quarterly Ministers gathering
- Involvement and contribution to various denominational groups

4.3 *Study Development*

- Read the whole Bible a certain amount of times
- Read ten books on a certain topic
- Set a 'book target' per month
- Downloads of sermons/lectures
- Prayer breakfasts
- Courses that have been advertised through RTC
- Master of Theology at RTC or similar
- Attend RTC Preaching Conference
- Attend CRCA Recharge Conference

4.4 *Skills Development*

- Leadership course.
- Sport coaching or umpiring course
- Writing papers or articles
- Advanced public speaking course
- Evangelism Course
- Coaching/Mentoring course
- Multimedia training, PowerPoint, Publisher etc.
- Teaching English as second language course.

4.5 *Developing Wider Community Relationships*

- Regular contact with leaders of other Christian denominations (e.g. through interdenominational minister's fraternals)
- Becoming a participant and or office bearer of local groups e.g. Country Fire Service, State Emergency Service.
- Being involved in combined community and church carols
- Being involved in other community events

5. Personal Development Possibilities

This is a guide for CRCA pastors to develop a Personal Development Plan. This part of the PDP recognises that the demands of ministry can have an impact on one's personal health and family relationships. The headings and sub points are to assist in providing ideas or direction for reflection on your Personal Development needs.

- Improving personal health and lifestyle choices
- Prioritising family time
- Improving personal and time management skills
- Developing financial stewardship
- When your PDP has been signed by you and your PDP Coach, please forward it to your church council/ session.

5.1 Improving Personal Health and Lifestyle Choices

- Regular medical check-up
- Eat healthily
- Sports coaching/umpiring
- Exercise 3 times per week
- Tennis, golf, hockey
- Swimming
- Motorcycling
- Meals with friends
- Manual work
- Gardening
- Lose weight

5.2 Prioritising Family Time and Personal Time Management

- Setting goals for personal growth
- Do an audit of personal time management
- Setting realistic limits on evening work
- Regular date nights with wife
- Nights away with wife (4 or 5 per year)
- Monthly prayer night with family
- Individual quality time with children
- Baby-sitting grand-children
- Annual leave
- Time with aging parents
- Regular family nights
- Blocking out time (e.g. Friday night always free for family)

5.3 Developing financial stewardship

- Study and apply the principles of Biblical stewardship
- Study and apply the Biblical principles of simplicity and contentment
- Planning to be debt free

-
- Drawing up plans for super and long service leave
 - Drawing up plans for savings for emergencies
 - See financial planner

6. Oversight of the PDP by the Classes

To provide accountability for the PDP the Classes will regularly make use of the following questions at regular Classis meetings and on Church Visitations:

6.1 Questions for Sessions:

What is your church council/ session doing to ensure your minister has developed a plan for ongoing learning, both personally and professionally, and is progressing in that plan? What resources could you make available to assist with that (e.g. time, finances, coaching etc.)?

6.2 Questions for ministers:

What are you doing, as a minister, in terms of your personal and professional development? What would you need to do to further fulfil your PDP plan? What has provided you with the greatest spiritual growth/ learning/ skill development that may be of value for your colleagues in Classis?

A Guide For PDP Coaches



CRCCA

1. Introduction

All pastors in the CRCA are strongly encouraged to be involved in structures of accountability. For the purposes of the PDP process this involves having a 'PDP Coach'.

Professional Development Plan, Personal Development Plans and all PDP Annual Reviews, must be signed by the PDP Coach as an indication that he is familiar with the pastor's plans and is taking a personal and continuing interest in his ongoing development and wellbeing.

2. Who can be a PDP Coach?

There are no specific qualifications for those who serve as PDP Coaches.

Preferably the Coach would be someone with whom the pastor has a current relationship of trust so that the PDP becomes an extension of that relationship.

Possible PDP Coaches:

- One's supervisor/coach or mentor would be an ideal choice
- A peer support and supervision group could serve as PDP Coaches for each other
- A colleague in ministry (preferably not on the same pastoral team)
- A mature and trusted member of the congregation (this person would need to be chosen very wisely). The advantage would be that he would be able to observe a pastor in their context and be able to offer valuable feedback

If possible one should avoid nominating a partner or close family member as this could potentially place unhelpful strains on the relationship.

3. The primary qualities to be looked for in a PDP Coach

- A genuine commitment to the pastor and to his development as a person and as a professional.
- A willingness to speak honestly and to ask the difficult questions about performance, self-care and faithfulness to the PDP.
- An understanding and affirmation of the requirements for accountability in the PDP process.
- A preparedness to enter into a long-term (minimum twelve months and preferably three years) commitment with the pastor.
- A deep personal faith and commitment to pray for the pastor.
- A commitment to observe confidentiality.
- Strong commitment to the fellowship of the church

The PDP Coach is a vital feature of the PDP and represents its most rigorous accountability requirement. For this reason the choice of PDP Coach is crucial for the process to be meaningful and beneficial for the pastor and for the church. This is a position of great trust as the PDP Coach may become privy to sensitive and confidential information.

4. *The basic responsibilities of the Coach*

- Familiarity with the overall objectives and procedures of the PDP by reading these Guidelines thoroughly.
- Discuss with the pastor the PDP during the preparation stage.
- Sign the completed Personal Development Plan and the Professional Development Plan.
- Pray regularly for the pastoral leader, his family and the church.
- Discuss the First and Second Annual Reviews with the pastor prior to signing.

PDP Coaches should enter into this relationship for a minimum of twelve months, but with the view to be a support for the entire three-year cycle. At the end of the agreed period, either renegotiate or terminate the arrangement by mutual agreement. There is no obligation, and there should be no expectation, that the relationship will continue indefinitely.

5. *Some helpful questions in assisting pastors in forming their PDP*

- Is the pastor taking seriously the need for prayer, rest, Sabbath keeping, growing in their relationship with God?
- Is there real accountability reflected in the PDP in terms of mentoring/ supervision for the next year?
- Are the study and skill development plans clear and realistic?
- Has enough attention been paid to health and lifestyle plans? Are family and personal needs given adequate priority?
- Is the pastor engaging in responsible Biblical stewardship in the area of finances?
- What resources does this pastor need to be able to fulfill his PDP? Are there financial or other implications for his church?
- What concerns would you want to raise that do not seem to be covered in the PDP?

6. *Regular Meetings*

- Meet 2-4 times a year as a minimum.
- As a guide, each meeting should last approximately an hour and should allow time to hear any current issues facing the pastor, progress on the goals set in the various categories of both PDPs (Professional & Personal), and then time to pray for each other and for the church.
- It is the primary responsibility of the pastor to organise regular meetings; however a gentle reminder from the PDP Coach may at times be helpful.