

# 10 THINGS EVERY INTERIM MINISTER NEEDS TO KNOW



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Many pastors believe if they have a successful career in church ministry they will be able to automatically handle an interim or transition ministry calling with ease. Even with years of experience and a wealth of knowledge, there are many situations and circumstances an interim/transition pastor will probably have to deal with that are unfamiliar. The most effective leader will need retooled skills for a call to interim and transition ministry. Below you will find a list of things we believe every interim pastor should know.

### 10 things that every interim minister needs to know:

**1. How systems theory applies to churches experiencing change.**

Systems Theory is no help if an interim does not know how to apply it. The anxiety of change can act as leverage for introducing new concepts and new ways of being - basically, the work of visioning and goal setting. Without a working understanding of using Systems Theory, change becomes chaos, and visioning becomes agenda setting.

**2. How to lead the process of discernment.**

Helping a congregation learn what a discernment process entails and approaching it from a spiritual perspective is essential. Moving congregants from the "I" position to the "we" position via "Holy Indifference" is vital. What is the church being called to become, and what does that say about the necessary skills for the next pastor?

**3. How to execute a systems assessment on an organization.**

The behavioral patterns among the many moving parts of a church community reveal much about how the system works. Information the interim identifies while building relationships and learning church history rounds out their systems assessment. These clues help develop a more focused approach to the ministry of a change agent.

**4. How to help a congregation identify its core positives and exemplify an abundance mindset.**

Walking beside a congregation as they discover who they are at their best requires an appreciation of their history. Can you lead the group on a journey that highlights their strengths, skills, and core values? Can you identify how these "core positives" can be lived out in the 21st Century for the good of the Kingdom and the community?

**5. How to customize your ministry approach to each church.**

No two church transitions are alike. Grief, conflict, merger, closings, misconduct, and disaster can impact a church community differently. Your ministry approach needs to create a unique path for every church you lead through an interim period.

**6. How to turn theory into practice.**

Theory is grand - if you know what to do with it! It is essential to learn how to translate theory into practical applications in the church setting. Systems Theory tells us that everyone in the church system affects the system's health. So what does that mean about how you handle the church sweetheart and the church bully?

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## 7. What your role is as an Interim/Transition Pastor.

You are not the expert. No one could be an expert because each church is different. Using a cookie-cutter approach diminishes the ministry that each church has to offer as a part of its core identity. As an interim pastor, you need to be able to coach and ask good questions that lead the congregation in a successful pastor search.

## 8. Where to focus your efforts.

Where do you begin if a church is dealing with grief, conflict, declining membership and finances, and a staff shortage? Do you know how to assess these differing, chaos-inducing factors for prioritization? Which can be dealt with simultaneously? Nothing is a priority if everything is a priority!

## 9. What type of anxiety you are dealing with in any given situation.

Learn how to determine which type of anxiety you observe. What is present, and how shall the church address them? When done well, the tension in the system can reach a level that sustains the energy to change without inducing lethargy.

## 10. Identifying the 4 types of church systems.

There are four kinds of church dynamics that affect the ability to induce and sustain change. Recognizing which category your church falls into is one of the earliest parts of the assessment process. Where do you get the information to determine this factor? What impact does this dynamic have on the change technique you use? Be sure you know which of the four church dynamics are at play before starting an intervention. Don't waste valuable time and compromise your professional image by going in the wrong direction.

If you want to become a competent, agile trained interim or transition minister, here are ten reasons to get prepared by an organization that understands the dynamics of a church in the 21st Century.

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*We believe the Center for Healthy Churches **Interim Ministry Training** is the best guide for a new generation of interim and transition pastors. Our course emphasizes the need to discern the unique DNA of the church, its context, and its compelling mission and vision for ministry in the 21st Century. Those are the factors that should drive the congregation and the next leader of the church. A CHC **IMT** certified transition pastor will be able to provide an in-depth consulting and advising process based upon the Spirit's leadership and the individual church's needs. After completing the course, you will feel confident in your ability to assess churches in transition and help them move toward a new future, knowing you can rely on a cohort of coaching peers who utilize the same approach in other contexts. To learn more about CHC's Interim Ministry Training Course opportunities for 2022 [\*\*CLICK HERE\*\*](#).*