Effective Ministry 360
Ministerial Assessment Specialist Guide

Purpose

EM360 for Candidates assesses fitness for ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church with respect to the **likelihood of performing effectively** in the role of a local church pastor. Responses obtained via EM360 may manifest psychopathology but assessing or representing various forms of psychopathology is not the intended purpose of the EM360 process.

EM360 is designed to be used in conjunction with a wide array of additional assessments focused on evaluating the fitness of the candidate for ordained ministry. To most effectively use the information present in the EM360 report it is important to understand the conference's **Candidate strategy**. How selective does the conference wish to be at the early stages of the candidate process? Are they investing in Candidate assessment at the early stage to limit the number of candidates entering the candidacy process so that they may invest more heavily in developing relatively fewer high potential candidates? Is the candidate certification process relatively lenient at early stages while later stages are designed to identify candidates with the greatest potential for success in ordained ministry? How selective can the conference be in choosing candidates to move forward?

Process Overview

EM360 for Candidates expands on and replaces the 'Personal Reference Form' in UMCARES. Four sources provide responses to the assessment: The **candidate**, the most recent **local church pastor** or a former pastor, three or more **members of the SPRC** from the candidate's local church, and three or more individuals serving as **personal references**. Responses from SPRC members and personal references are confidential and only shared with the candidate using summary statistics.

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Research Foundation & Validity

EM360 is founded on a set of qualitative and quantitative studies collectively known as the KSAP (knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal characteristics) research. This research represents a formal 'job analysis' of the work performed by local church pastors. The EM360 assessments, then, are based on a **content approach to validity**. The assessments are intentionally broad and intended to cover the vast domain of the work performed by local church pastors and the underlying competencies (aka KSAPs) that enable the effective performance of this work. Assessing both broadly and deeply is challenging and requires a huge investment of time and resources. At this point, EM360 emphasizes breadth and content coverage over deep insights so that assessment length is reasonable. Most constructs (KSAPs) are assessed using single item measures and incur the known costs of using single item measures (e.g., reliability).

The white papers detailing the research on local church pastor effectiveness can be found on the GBHEM website.

- DeShon, R. P., & Bosch, K. L. V. (2003). *Job analysis for the position of United Methodist minister: Focus group results.*

- DeShon, R. P. & Quinn A. (2007). *Job Analysis Generalizability Study for the Position of United Methodist Local Pastor: Focus group results.*

- DeShon, R. P. (2010). *Clergy effectiveness: National survey results.*

- DeShon, R. P., Pearce, M., & Powers, C. L. (2013). *The advancing effective ministry through covenant-building (AdEMiC) pilot project.*

Norms

Candidate norms are not yet available for EM360. As they become available, overall and conference-level norms will be provided in the report.

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Reliability

Reliability data for the Candidate EM360 results are not yet available. However, given the assessment approach adopted in EM360, the reliability results are likely to be consistent with other similar approaches. The KSAPs in EM360 are assessed using single item Likert ratings from self and other sources. Single item Likert responses typically yield relatively **low reliability (e.g., r = 0.45-0.65)**. As such, the error in any single rating of a single item is likely to be substantial.

Aggregates of single item ratings, however, tend to quickly reach **acceptable levels of reliability (e.g., 0.7-0.85)**.   There are two forms of aggregation possible in EM360. The **first** deals with aggregating the items in the respective categories (e.g., effectiveness, knowledge, skills, abilities, personal characteristics) into a heuristic total score. For instance, if a pattern of low scores in a dimension, say abilities, is observed this is likely indicative of a reliable result. The **second** form of aggregation occurs in aggregating responses within the references and SPRC source groups. The aggregate of a set of responses to a single item measure often yields acceptable reliability. This means that the average responses provided by the 'other' sources are likely more reliable than the single response provided by the candidate and the nominating pastor. **Differences greater than 1.0** between the candidate ratings and the mean ratings from the aggregated sources are likely worthy of exploration.

Reliability results will be provided as they become available.

Content Overview

Each of the 4 sources (i.e., candidate, nominating pastor, personal references, local church SPRC members) participating in EM360 respond to a largely overlapping set of questions. Here, the broad dimensions assessed and the differences in the assessments across the sources

Candidate:
- Leadership Style (open response)
- Effectiveness Ratings (overall, leadership, transforming lives, growing others; Likert)
- Strength of Call (Likert)
- Call Story (open response)
- Knowledge (Likert)
- Skills (Likert)
- Abilities (Likert)
- Personal Characteristics (Likert)
- Additional comments (open response)

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Pastor:
- Leadership Style (open response)
- Effectiveness Ratings (overall, leadership, transforming lives, growing others; Likert)
- Strength of Call (Likert)
- Knowledge (Likert)
- Skills (Likert)
- Abilities (Likert)
- Personal Characteristics (Likert)
- Additional comments (open response)

References:
- Leadership Style (open response)
- Effectiveness Ratings (overall, leadership, transforming lives, growing others; Likert)
- Strength of Call (Likert)
- Knowledge (Likert)
- Skills (Likert)
- Abilities (Likert)
- Personal Characteristics (Likert)
- Additional comments (open response)

SPRC:
- Leadership Style (open response)
- Effectiveness Ratings (overall, leadership, transforming lives, growing others; Likert)
- Strength of Call (Likert)
- Knowledge (Top 3; Likert)
- Skills (Top 3; Likert)
- Abilities (Top 3; Likert)
- Personal Characteristics (Top 3; Likert)
- Additional comments (open response)

SPRC members only provide ratings to the top three dimensions in each of the KSAP domains. This is done to reduce assessment fatigue for SPRC members and recognizes that in many cases the SPRC members will have had little experience with the candidate.

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Assessment Section Details

Leadership Style

Leadership permeates the work of local church pastors. As such, it is important that candidates recognize the expectation that they will provide strong, effective leadership serving as a local church pastor. The leadership research highlights that there isn't a single best way to lead across all situations and contexts. Responses to this open-ended question should highlight that the candidate is **actively exploring** the approach to leadership that works best for them. **Leadership agility** is highly important in the United Methodist Church and responses should, ideally, highlight the need to adapt modes of leadership to the context.

Effectiveness Ratings

EM360 for pastors assesses four dimensions of effectiveness: Overall, leadership, transforming lives, growing others. While candidates will not be serving as local church pastors it is useful to get a baseline assessment on predictions of these key dimensions of effectiveness. Therefore, all sources are asked to reflect on the dimensions of effectives (in the role of a local church pastor) and predict the candidate's likely level of effectiveness. At this early stage of the process, the resulting ratings are highly speculative and likely have poor predictive accuracy. These results should be primarily considered as **opportunities for probing conversation** rather than accurate predictions of success.

If a candidate provides low self-ratings on these dimension or the candidate and the sources disagree (differences of 1.5 points or more) on one or more dimensions, it is important to explore the underlying cause of these responses and the potential implications for performing effectively in the role of a local church pastor.

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Call to Ordained Ministry

This component of the assessment has two parts: The perceived strength of God's call to ordained ministry and the richness of the provided call story.

1. All sources including the candidate provide a Likert rating of the **perceived strength of the candidates call** to ordained ministry (1-5; Poor to Exceptionally strong).
   a. Candidates should report experiencing a strong call (3.5 – 5.0) and all reporting sources should substantially agree that the candidate has a strong sense of being called. Differences in ratings greater than 1.5 points suggest the need for probing conversation on why others may not perceive the candidate's call to be as strong as the candidate experiences the call.

2. The candidate is asked to provide a rich, detailed description of his or her story of being called to ordained ministry. A sufficiently rich call story should contain many of the following details:
   a. **Ordained Ministry**. The story should address a calling to _ordained_ ministry. Stories that address general ministry provide an opportunity to explore whether ordained ministry is the best path to meet God's Call.
   b. **Beginnings**. The call story should address the origin of the experienced call such as: who the candidate was as a person when he or she began discernment, what was the context, what event(s) initiated the discernment, how the candidate responded and why, and from a theological perspective where was God moving.
   c. **Transitions**. The candidate should describe changes in his or her context that have occurred between then and now, whether the response has been consistent over time or if the candidate has responded in different ways over time, and where God was moving.
   d. **Now and Next**. What is the candidate's current context? How is the candidate currently responding to the Call? Where do they perceive God is leading them into the future? What is being learned about God and the candidate's relationship with God?
   e. **Affirmations**. The candidate should provide examples of how he or she is being affirmed by God (vertical affirmations-prayer, scripture, meditation, contemplation) and examples of how are you being affirmed by others (horizontal affirmations-family, friends, peers, students, church members)?

Attributes - Knowledge and Skills

Knowledge and skills are malleable and can be improved through study, learning, practice, and experience. All respondents were asked to rate the candidate's current knowledge and skills with respect to those required to perform the work of a local church pastor effectively. Because knowledge and skills are malleable and the candidate will often just be starting the journey to ordained ministry, it would be surprising to find high ratings on the knowledge and skill attributes. These are primarily being assessed as a baseline for future assessments taken by successful candidates. Of course, differences across the raters greater than 1.5-2.0 points represent disagreements and opportunities for probing exploration. The specific dimensions assessed via self and other report in EM360 are:

Knowledge

- Business and Financial Principles
- Individual and Group Dynamics
- Ministry Context
- Teaching and Training
- Theology and Scripture UM History, Doctrine, and Polity

Skills

- Agile Learning
- Communication
- Conflict Management and Negotiation
- Decision-Making
- Exegetical
- Intercultural Competence
- Multitasking
- Presentation Skills
- Problem Solving
- Setting and Meeting Goals
- Social Skills
- Spiritual Disciplines
- Teamwork

Attributes - Abilities and Personal Characteristics

Abilities and personal characteristics are believed to be relatively stable across the adult lifespan. This is not to say that all people remain exactly the same forever on these dimensions but, rather, that change is often gradual and small. Life events having deep personal meaning can sometimes alter personal characteristics substantially. Given the relative stability of abilities and personal characteristics, these dimensions represent opportunities for assessing fitness as a candidate for ordained ministry.

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All respondents were asked to rate the candidate's abilities and personal characteristics with respect to those required to perform the work of a local church pastor effectively. Low ratings across a set of these dimensions and/or disagreements between the rater sources greater than 1.5-2.0 points are problematic and should be factored into fitness considerations. The specific dimensions assessed via self and other report in EM360 are:

Abilities
- Adaptability
- Concentration
- Creativity
- Innovation
- Intelligence
- Memory
- Oral and Written Comprehension
- Trust in God
- Vision-Casting

Personal Characteristics
- Authenticity
- Balance
- Conscientiousness
- Cooperation
- Empathy
- Integrity
- Intercultural Disposition
- Learning Orientation
- Passion and Drive
- Patience
- Resilience
- Risk-Taking
- Self-Direction
- Self-Regulation
- Social Orientation
- Tolerance for Ambiguity
- Willingness to Seek Help

Additional Comments
All sources – including the candidate – are given an opportunity to provide additional open-ended comments to supplement or clarify issues relating the assessment of the candidate's fitness for ordained ministry and the likely role of serving as the pastor of a local church.

Questions?
If you have questions about how to best use the Candidate EM360 report in your assessment, please reach out to EM360@gbhem.com or team@coetichr.com.

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Appendix A – Glossary of Attributes

Attributes are the individual abilities, personal characteristics, knowledge, and skills that will contribute to clergy effectiveness in ministry. There are 46 total attributes. Definitions are listed below. The letter following the name of the attribute notes the category for the attribute (i.e. A = Ability, P = Personal Characteristic, K = Knowledge, and S = Skills).

Adaptability (A) – The ability to fluidly change one's thoughts, emotions, and actions to align with dynamic environmental conditions. Synonyms: flexibility, versatility.

Agile Learning (S) – Actively and continuously seeking and rapidly integrating new information to improve current and future problem-solving and decision-making.

Authenticity (P) – The strong tendency to behave and relate to others in ways that are congruent with one's beliefs, values, principles, and feelings. To experience a sense of meaning or purpose underlying behavior, and to show vulnerability when appropriate.

Balance (P) – Tendency to maintain a level of important life activities related to profession, self, family, and friends.

Calling (A, P, K, S) – The experience and awareness of the call of God to the pastorate as a vocation. A calling to ministry is critical for all those who serve. This attribute cannot be sorted into one category.

Business and Financial Principles (K) – Knowledge of church business and financial principles including remittances, audits, apportionments, budgets, bookkeeping, financial planning, investments and interest, loans and debt, payroll, benefits, and retirement. Knowledge of how to incorporate principles into practice of ministry and church oversight.

Communication (S) – Describing ideas, concepts, facts, and other information in a manner that others can easily understand.

Concentration (A) – The ability to focus attention on a task over a period of time without being distracted. Synonyms: immersion, diligence, engagement, persistence.

Conflict Management and Negotiation (S) – Working with others to arrive at a mutually agreeable resolution to a problem; handling complaints, settling disputes, and resolving conflicts.

Conscientiousness (P) – The disposition to perform tasks at a high level, to follow through on commitments to others, to pay attention to detail, to be organized and efficient, to act dutifully and achieve goals, and to be self-disciplined and dependable.

Cooperation (P) – Tendency to work well with others to effectively pursue mutually beneficial outcomes.

Creativity (A) – The ability to perceive situations in new ways, to find hidden patterns, to make connections between seemingly unrelated phenomena, and to generate novel solutions to problems. Synonyms: inventive, imaginative, original, resourceful, novel.

Decision-Making (S) – Generating and weighing the relative costs and benefits of potential actions so that the best option may be selected.

Empathy (P) – Tendency to be aware of, understanding of, and sensitive to other peoples' experiences and emotions.

Exegetical (S) – Communicating the meaning of Scripture and other religious documents in a manner that others find understandable.

Individual and Group Dynamics (K) – Knowledge of the principles involved in motivating, developing, and directing people as they work individually and in groups.

Innovation (A) – The ability to improve an existing product or process with respect to one or more criteria such as quality, effectiveness, efficiency, or cost. Synonyms: ingenuity, transformation.

Integrity (P) – Strong tendency to adhere to a strict moral or ethical code with a special emphasis on being honest to others and to oneself.

Intelligence (A) – The general mental ability to reason, plan, solve problems, think abstractly, comprehend complex ideas, learn quickly, and learn from experience. Synonyms: IQ, general cognitive ability, fluid intelligence, acumen.

Intercultural Competency (S) – Engaging effectively in relationships with others across cultural settings or in a multicultural situation.

Intercultural Disposition (P) – A deep appreciation of diversity coupled with a strong tendency to seek culturally rooted understandings of others across different ethnicities who possess different beliefs, values, and worldviews to facilitate the building of cross-cultural relationships and strengthen the practice of ministry.

Learning Orientation (P) – Tendency to develop one's competence through expanding one's ability and mastering challenging situations.

Memory (A) – The ability to rapidly and flexibly recall names, facts, events, stories, and learned associations relevant to a particular situation. Synonyms: recollection, mindfulness, recall.

Ministry Context (K) – Knowledge of the unique context and surrounding community of each ministry setting and how that context affects the way ministry is practiced.

Multitasking (S) – Prioritizing tasks and managing one's own time and the time of others to make efficient progress toward multiple goals simultaneously.

Oral and Written Comprehension (A) – The ability to accurately extract and construct the intended meaning(s) present in written and spoken language.

Passion and Drive (P) – Tendency to be fully engaged in the pursuit of desired outcomes.

Patience (P) – Tendency to cope with pain, troubles, difficulties, or hardship, without complaint or ill temper.

Presentation Skills (S) – Effective communication of a concept, vision, or message to a group of individuals using a structured combination of media (e.g., speech, graphs, videos, quotes).

Problem Solving (S) – Identifying problems and integrating information to formulate solutions.

Resilience (P) – The flexible pursuit of desired outcomes over time despite encountering obstacles and setbacks.

Risk-Taking (P) – Tendency to consider variables responsibly and undertake important tasks despite a lack of certainty or a fear of failure.

Self-Direction (P) – Tendency to develop one's own ways of doing things, guiding oneself with little or no supervision, and depending on oneself to get things done.

Setting and Meeting Goals (S) – Establishing long-range objectives, specifying the strategies and actions needed to achieve them, and obtaining useful feedback about progress toward them.

Social Orientation (P) – Tendency to prefer working with others rather than alone and to be personally connected with others.

Social Skills (S) – Relating to others in a way that inspires them to want to do their best to complete a desired course of action, being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do, giving full attention to what other people are saying; taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.

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Spiritual Disciplines (S) – Using spiritual inspiration to facilitate personal spiritual growth and to deepen one's relationship with God.

Teaching and Training (K) – Knowledge of principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and the measurement of training effects.

Teamwork (S) – Accomplishing tasks directly by working as a member of a team or indirectly by helping members of a team to cooperate and efficiently coordinate actions and decisions.

Self-Regulation (P) – Tendency to pursue goals in a disciplined, effective manner while maintaining composure, keeping emotions in check, controlling anger, and avoiding aggressive behavior in challenging situations by using knowledge of one's motivations, strengths, and weaknesses.

Theology and Scripture (K) – Knowledge of philosophy about the existence and nature of God, religion, and biblical text.

Tolerance for Ambiguity (P) – The tendency to be comfortable in situations characterized by uncertainty, unpredictability, conflicting directions, and multiple demands.

Trust in God (A) – The ability to place oneself in God's care.

UM History, Doctrine, and Polity (K) – Knowledge of the written body of teachings of The United Methodist Church and how those teachings are different from other denominations and religions.

Vision-Casting (A) – The ability to imbue others with a shared sense of a desired future that energizes, directs, and supports actions that transform the possibility into a reality.

Willingness to Seek Help (P) – Tendency to ask for help with overwhelming tasks or to seek help from others to compensate for one's own weaknesses.

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