

PROFILES of Ministry

Interview Stage I Sample

This sample has been provided to help institutions administering the POM better understand the program. It should not be used by students or other individuals to prepare for the POM.

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PROFILES OF MINISTRY

INTERVIEW STAGE I

This manual is for testing purposes only. In order to preserve the integrity of the interview, do not reveal the content or nature of the questions to anyone.

The *Profiles of Ministry Program* of The Association of Theological Schools is designed to assist a variety of people: those who are entering seminary, those about to enter the pastoral ministry full time, practicing clergy, and other pastoral ministers. The purpose, in all instances, is to help participants identify their own potentials, strengths, and needs.

The questions in this interview are designed to discover how much evidence a person shows of ten characteristics judged important to ministry. Other assessment instruments explore additional characteristics.

Certain procedures have a marked influence on the usefulness of each interview. Read the following instructions carefully.

A. Equipment and Setting

1. Record the interview on a 60- or 90-minute cassette tape. The recorder and cassette should be in good working order before you begin.
2. Conduct the interview in a quiet location away from telephones, people who stand outside your door to chat, noisy radiators, and squeaky chairs. Interference from any of these or related sources can decrease the quality of the recording making it difficult to code.
3. Place the microphone near the interviewee.
4. Speak clearly and distinctly; ask interviewees to do the same.
5. Shortly after the interview has begun, check to see that the recorder is working properly and that the interviewee is clearly audible on the tape.

B. Comfort of the Interviewee

1. Read the introductory material on page 5 aloud so that the person knows why the interview is given and that the interview is confidential.
2. Look at the interviewee while the question is being answered, keeping . However, keeping your hand on the manuscript to maintain your place. If you discover that you have skipped a question, insert it out of sequence rather than omit it.
3. How long an answer is long enough? In general, whatever the person wants to say. If the person gives a one- or two-word answer and the script shows no follow-up questions, the brief answer is enough. However, three or four sentences are enough to answer most questions adequately.

C. Standard Conditions

1. Ask all questions in the order given using the **exact** wording printed. Do not provide definitions, give opinions, or make comments. Read the question, stop at each asterisk, and listen. (Exception: For students whose second language is English, rephrase the question, if necessary, to be certain it is understood.)

2. Terminology differs among the 49 different denominations of ATS. For example, where a term such as "priest/minister" occurs, use the one appropriate for the individual.
3. Some questions have two parts. Ask all the parts except where there are special parenthetical instructions.
4. Certain questions pose a choice between two actions, descriptions, or preferences. You will find the core of the two opposing ideas underlined to make it easier for you to emphasize the two equally.
5. Ask each question seriously. The interviewee should be permitted to give serious answers.

D. Atmosphere

Do what you can to make the interview feel like a conversation. Part of the value interviewees derive from the experience is the opportunity to think about their responses to these questions. Therefore, be that listening person in conversation by these means:

1. Do not keep your nose buried in the script; keep the place with your hand, look up and listen to the interviewee during the answers.
2. Do not read the numbers of the questions aloud. The numbers are there to help you keep the sequence straight.
3. Be interested in what the interviewee says.

SUMMARY OF PROCESS

1. Before the interviewee arrives, read the instructions and questions so that you are familiar with them.
2. Read the questions to the person while taping the interview.
3. Shortly after beginning the questions and again near the end of the interview, check the interview tape to be certain the interviewee's answers are audible.
4. Write the interviewee's name on the side of the tape where the interview begins.
5. When the process is complete, return this booklet and the recorded cassette to the Coordinator of the program.

THE INTERVIEW

Before turning on the recorder, read the following text aloud to the person to be interviewed:

“This interview is one part of the Profiles of Ministry program. It consists of a series of questions dealing with your view of yourself and your approach to ministry. Please consider each question as an invitation to express yourself as honestly as you can, not as a demand for one particular kind of answer that may seem more ‘right’ than another.”

“Sometimes a word or two will be all you want to say in response to a question. Sometimes you will need several sentences to answer. It is up to you to judge how much needs to be said. Several questions direct me to ask follow-up questions or for a fuller explanation. Your responses to these may be as brief as you wish.”

“Throughout the interview you may hear several questions that seem to relate to the same issue. This is to help get a clearer picture of where you stand, not to see whether you are consistent. You will also notice changes of subject matter between one question and another.”

“I will read the questions as they are written and I can repeat any question you wish to hear again. I am asked not to define any words or interpret meanings. You should feel free to go back and add to previous answers any time you want.”

“Whatever you say during this interview will be confidential. It will be used only in coding your answers. Please do not discuss these questions with anyone who has not taken the interview.”

“Unless you have a question, I will turn on the recorder and we will begin. Please speak loudly enough for your taped answer to be clearly understood.”

NOTES TO THE INTERVIEWER:

Interviewer:

- A. The interviewer on this tape is _____ and the date, _____.

Reader to Interviewee:

- A. Please state your name and spell your last name.*
B. What seminary are you attending/did you attend?*
C. Of what denomination or church body are you a member?*
D. May I have permission to record this interview on tape?*

Stop the tape here, rewind, and listen to be sure the volume level is adequate and that the interviewee’s voice comes through clearly. If necessary, adjust the volume or relocate the microphone closer to the interviewee. Restart tape.

Below are just a few of the 46 questions that make up the POM Interview...

9. What would be your objective when visiting unchurched people in your local community?*
10. What have been your political involvements in the past?*
11. Does your denomination recommend or require certain forms of worship or liturgical forms?*(If interviewee says "Yes", ask:) How closely do you plan to follow those forms?*(If interviewee says "No", ask:) Do you, nevertheless, expect to follow some form of worship or liturgy consistently?*
12. In what types of ecumenical activity have you ever participated?*
13. How well organized are you?*

Sample
Interview
Questions