

## Types of Church Health Consultations

The BUV's Church Health and Capacity Building Team offers both proactive consultations, described in detail below, and reactive consultations. Proactive consultations are usually initiated by church leaders as part of their ongoing leadership of a church. Such consultations seek to determine the current situation and present options for future development and growth. Reactive consultations are typically when significant conflict or trauma happens in a congregation and external support is needed. The process for a reactive consultation is similar to that of the problem or issues based consultation, described below.

In both proactive and reactive consultations, CH&CB Team consultants seek to listen, understand what the church's needs and capacities are, and then co-create a plan with the church leadership on how to move forward. They recognise that while there are some things common across various churches, each church has a unique context, history and composition of personalities and gifts. Therefore, consultants seek to tailor their approach and recommendations to suit the particular church they are working with.

### Three common types of proactive consultation

#### 1 Problem Solving or Issue Based Consultation



**Basic Description** Short-term planning

**Method** Asks the question: How do we fix this? How do we do this better?

**Assumption** What we are doing is OK and appropriate – we just need to tweak things to get back on track and move into further growth.

**Goal** To fix whatever is stopping us moving forward toward our goals, achieving our mission and realising our vision

**Time frame** <3 months and often revisited down the track 2 years

**Outcome** To get things working right and return the church to a healthy place.

Examples of **issues-based** consultations:

1.1 The church had grown from 100 to 180 people attending. This raised issues around the existing governance and ministry structure. The church leaders and then the congregation needed to identify and resolve the difficulties they were facing and map out a way forward.

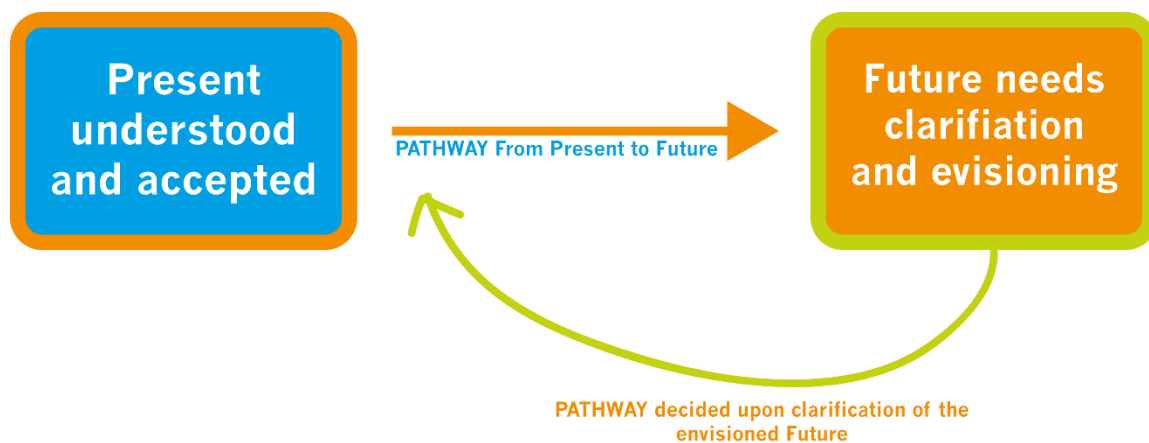
1.2 The church had grown from 50 to 100 attending. The existing leadership team had biblical convictions about the ministry model they were using and wanted to retain the essence of that

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while finding a solution to include a larger number of people in the leadership decision-making process and responsibilities.

1.3 The church had about 150 attenders, the long term Senior Pastor of 15 years was finishing up, and the leadership team wanted to work on a transition plan for going forward while they worked out their priorities for a new Senior Pastor.

## 2 Developmental Consultation



**Basic Description** Long-range planning

**Method** Asks the question: What do we do next?

**Assumption** What we are doing is OK and appropriate – we now need to build on this reaching new goals and shaping a new vision.

**Goal** To articulate our goals afresh, develop our mission and paint a bigger vision.

**Time frame** 3-6 months and often revisited down the track 2 - 5 years

**Outcome** Create a new Strategic Plan within the current framework - 5 Year Developmental Plan

Examples of developmental consultations:

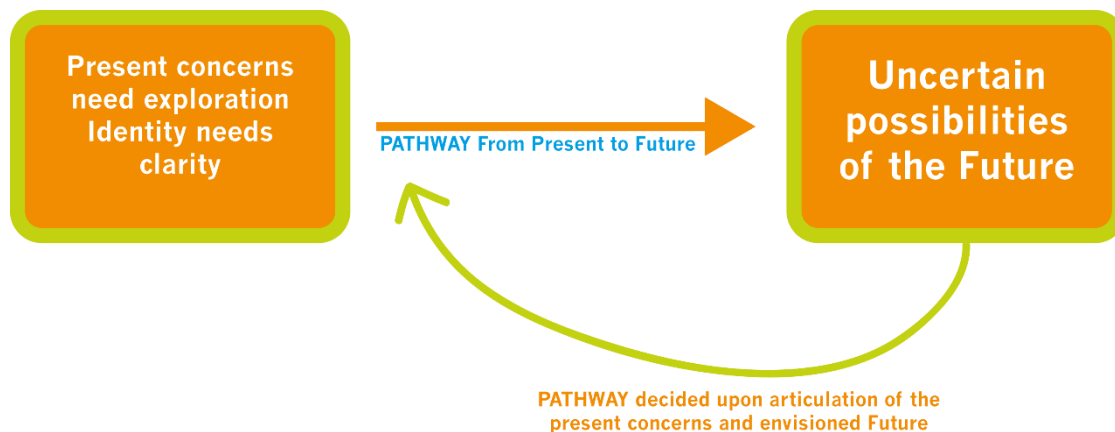
2.1 The church had been slowly declining to 30 attenders. They enjoyed each other's company, had good services on a Sunday and were positive about the church. They also recognised they had to do something new to ensure the church's long term future. They needed to work through what their strengths were, what needs in the community they sensed God was calling them to engage and some options they could try as a way of getting started in a new ministry area.

2.2 The church had just finished building a new auditorium. They wanted to work through what they needed to do to make the transition into the new building and how to do it well. They also wanted to explore what new ministry opportunities God was calling them to pursue with this new resource.

2.3 The church of about 100 people wanted to review their core values and future direction. The current Pastor was leaving, they had a strong sense of who they were and what they wanted to Acknowledgement to Tim Dyer and John Mark Ministries. This sheet draws heavily from their work on types of consultations.

do but decided to take the opportunity to review and confirm where the congregation was at and what new possibilities might emerge that the leadership team had not considered.

### 3 Reframing Consultation



<b>Basic Description</b>	Revisiting - who we are, where we are going, what we are called to do, who are we called to serve
<b>Method</b>	Back to basics: Reworking our framework for ministry
<b>Assumption</b>	It's time to look again at what we are doing as we cannot continue the way we are going.
<b>Goal</b>	To re-examine the call of God and the mission and vision of the ministry.
<b>Time frame</b>	12-18 months requiring significant consultation and congregational conversation.
<b>Outcome</b>	Create a new strategic plan under an entirely new framework. Revisit after 5 years.

Examples of reframing consultations:

3.1 The church had about 80 attenders. They felt stuck and didn't know what they should be doing collectively. They needed support in the process of identifying their core values and strengths, what opportunities they were called to respond to and how they would discern priorities and get started on something under the conviction of the Spirit.

3.2 One of our large churches with over 500 attending wanted to do a review of their vision, mission and values. This was the beginning of a major re-visioning process. They wanted to test the level of ownership across the congregation and see what God might be saying through the congregation about what the priorities for the next 5 years should be. They wanted an outside independent review to help them work through this process.

3.3 The church had about 30 attending and the leadership group were unclear about church's core values, vision and mission. The leadership group and the congregation needed support to re-vitalise their ministry and vision for the next 5 years.

### **Requesting a Church Health Consultation**

The CH&CB Team conducts consultations in response to requests from Church Leaders and/or Pastors. To discuss a consultation with your church, contact the Team Leader, Rev David Devine, [david.devine@buv.com.au](mailto:david.devine@buv.com.au); phone 0398806118.

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