

The Discernment Worksheet

A structured template for discerning category and consequence after senior-leader moral failure.

Formation must match responsibility.

BEFORE YOU USE THIS WORKSHEET

This worksheet is intended for use by a convened discernment body: local elders + **at least two external overseers** (pastors, denominational leaders, or mature voices from outside the church's immediate circle). **Do not attempt category determination without external covering.** The discernment cannot be faithful if it is in-house only.

The worksheet walks through five stages: (1) Facts, (2) Category determination, (3) ABC + Troika Score formation analysis, (4) Consequence decision, (5) Dissent recording. Plan on at least three meetings across two weeks.

STAGE 1 — ESTABLISH THE FACTS

Before category discernment, agree on what actually happened.

- What specific actions have been confirmed (documented, witnessed, or admitted)?
- What allegations remain unverified? What would confirm or disconfirm them?
- Who are the people directly harmed? Have they been consulted (with trauma-informed support)?
- What was the power/age/authority differential in each incident?
- What was the pattern — single incident or ongoing?
- Was deception, cover-up, or retaliation involved?
- Did minors or legally vulnerable adults experience any of the conduct?

STAGE 2 — CATEGORY DETERMINATION

Based on Stage 1, the body determines which of three categories the facts most closely correspond to.

When uncertain between two categories, default to the higher — this honors the harmed and protects the congregation.

Category	Markers	Default Consequence
1 — Criminal / Predatory	Abuse of minors or vulnerable adults; sexual assault; financial fraud; cover-up; use of power to gain sexual/financial access	Permanent disqualification from office. Full cooperation with civil authorities. Mandated reporting required.
2 — Patterned Abuse	Serial adultery; long-term inappropriate relationships; chronic spiritual abuse; sustained deception	Strong presumption of long-term or permanent disqualification. Rare exceptions require multi-year, multi-community discernment.
3 — Non-Predatory Moral Failure	Single adulterous incident, peer-to-peer, disclosed with repentance; serious addiction without exploitation	Removal from office for a significant season. Restoration to fellowship primary. Office not assumed; rigorous ABC + formation discernment required.

Record here: Our category determination is ____, with ____ members concurring. Dissenting perspectives recorded in Stage 5.

STAGE 3 — ABC + FORMATION ANALYSIS

Regardless of category, analyze the leader's character using the ABC model. This is not about blame-assignment; it is about understanding what formation was lacking that allowed the failure, which informs any restoration work.

Attitude (Love • Joy • Peace)

- Did the leader operate out of love for the flock, or out of use of the flock?
- Was there sustained joy in the calling, or dry-spirited performance?
- Was there peace, or was anxious/driven activity masking unresolved interior?

Behavior (Patience • Kindness • Goodness)

- Did the leader show patience with slower growth, or impatience for results?
- Did the leader's conduct toward staff, family, vulnerable people match their pulpit posture?
- Was there consistent goodness in the private life — what the left hand did when the right hand wasn't watching?

Character (Faithfulness • Gentleness • Self-Control)

- Faithfulness: were small promises kept over time?
- Gentleness: were defenses lowered or raised under pressure?
- Self-control: what patterns of ungoverned speech, money, sexuality, substance use were visible in hindsight?

Troika Score administration. If the leader has previously taken the Troika Score, review their history. Administer to spouse, 3–5 close staff, and 2–3 trusted congregants as observer-ratings. Look for significant gaps between self and observer ratings — these are formation fracture indicators.

Formation pathway placement. Where was the leader functionally on the Troika formation pathway? (Death, Curiosity, Conviction, Repentance, Belief, Obedience, Abiding, Fruitfulness, Leadership, Multiplication.) A leader in Leadership stage holding Multiplication-level authority is a formation-authority gap. Name it.

STAGE 4 — CONSEQUENCE DECISION

Based on Stages 1–3, the body records a formal consequence decision. **Two external covering voices must concur**, and the record must note dissenting views.

- The leader will be removed from office for: (permanent / at least ____ years / re-evaluated at ____)
- Civil authorities notified: YES / NO / N/A (date reported: ____)
- Financial settlement with harmed parties: YES / NO / in process
- Public statement issued: YES / NO / scheduled for ____
- Compensation/employment terms: ____
- Restriction on ministry involvement (any form): ____
- If restoration to some form of Christian service is ever to be considered, the minimum time before re-evaluation is: ____ years
- The external covering responsible for future re-evaluation is: ____

STAGE 5 — DISSENT RECORDING

Faithful discernment welcomes dissent. Record names and specific concerns of any members who disagreed with the majority decision. Their concerns become part of the permanent record and may inform future re-evaluation.

■ Dissenting member: ____ Specific concern: _____

■ Dissenting member: ____ Specific concern: _____

SIGNATURES AND DATE

Each body member signs and dates the worksheet. Copies are retained by: the church's governance, each external covering overseer, and secured records (legally privileged where applicable).

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

“Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god.” — Psalm 24:3–4

*Part of the Post-Failure Leadership & Restoration Framework. Canonized 2026-04-20. Free resource.
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