

AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS
LOS ANGELES CHAPTER, PLACEMENT SERVICE

JOB EVALUATION TICKLER

Many pastors, rectors, rabbis and ministers are unaware of the amount of time which the musician spends in activities pertaining to his/her work. The following questions may be helpful in analyzing the amount of time you will be asking your musician to spend in preparing and playing services and fulfilling other duties associated with the job, be it organist, choirmaster/organist or music minister.

1. Maintenance of technique and repertoire, i.e. practice. A good parallel might be to consider how much time you spend preparing a normal sermon. Many ministers will spend 3-4 hours or more preparing a 20 minute sermon. It is not unreasonable to assume that your musician will spend about the same amount of time practicing weekly for 15-20 minutes worth of prelude, postlude, hymns, anthems, responses, benedictions, "travelling music", etc.
2. An even greater amount of time may be spent reviewing, selecting, ordering and preparing choir music if your musician serves as choir director. How much time do you spend reading through material you may or may not use, including the newspaper, professional journals and articles?
3. The musician will spend time rehearsing the choir(s) during the week. This should be easy for you to calculate. The time spent in actual services will also be easy to calculate, but don't forget about extra services and holy days which may be a tradition in your congregation.
4. Does the musician select the hymns for the worship services? Study of scripture lessons and selection of appropriate hymns can add 40-60 minutes of preparation time each week.
5. Do you meet regularly with your musician? Is the musician expected to attend weekly staff meetings? This time should be included (you should also include driving time if the musician has a "main source of income" job).
6. The musician will have a certain amount of paperwork to do each week: writing out titles and texts for the service bulletin, getting titles of organ voluntaries and selections of hymns to the church secretary, answering correspondence and telephone calls, etc.
7. Does the musician need to maintain instruments such as the organ, piano, handbells, guitars, percussion instruments, etc.?
8. What about program building and recruiting - do you want the musician to visit various church group meetings? Pastoral work, counseling or supervisory duties - should the musician visit choir members who are ill or in need?
9. Does the musician attend choral reading sessions, classes, workshops or professional meetings such as the monthly meetings of the American Guild of Organists?
10. Is it necessary for the musician to engage in custodial work (furniture moving), setting up and clearing rehearsal and performance areas, cleaning up after the choir?
11. Does the musician need to do special musical compositions or arrangements? Do you have a concert series? If so, the list of duties related to that activity is very long, but will certainly include program preparation, publicity, artist arrangements, maintenance of a mailing list, etc.

We do not intend to suggest that a musician will necessarily engage in all these activities on a weekly basis. Many of the above items will not pertain to the position you are offering. However, we ask that you seriously consider just how much time you expect your musician to spend in job-related activities. You may wish to consult an outside party or someone from your congregation who is knowledgeable about music. It's a lot more than just sitting down Friday night, Saturday or Sunday morning and "letting it all happen."