Questions to Ask Before Choosing a Church Assessment Provider

ORGANIZATIONAL INTELLIGENCE YOU CAN USE

Choosing an assessment tool for your congregation directly impacts your strategic clarity, leadership culture, and future vision. Use this guide to evaluate prospective survey tools and consulting partners beyond surface-level cost or survey length.

CRITERION 1

Benchmarking & Context

"Does your tool provide raw survey results, or is the data benchmarked against a nationwide database?"

Why It Matters: Raw percentages are misleading in isolation. Without comparative context, you cannot distinguish hidden risks from exceptional strengths.

Holy Cow! Advantage: The Church Assessment Tool (CAT™) benchmarks results against 2,800+ congregations from the last 5 years across denominations.

CRITERION 2

Measuring Congregational Health

"How does the survey distinguish between the loudest voices and the true majority of the body?"

Why It Matters: DIY or generic questionnaires often become complaint boxes, masking organizational dynamics beneath surface-level noise.

Holy Cow! Advantage: The CAT™ measures satisfaction AND energy levels, mapping your church into operational quadrants to reveal true vitality.

CRITERION 3

Rigor & Customization

"Is the instrument sociologically validated, and can it adapt to our unique season of ministry?"

Why It Matters: Unvalidated surveys lack statistical reliability, while rigid tools fail to address specific search or strategic needs.

Holy Cow! Advantage: Validated core instrument combined with targeted supplemental modules for search, facilities, stewardship, and visioning.

CRITERION 4

Facilitation & Actionability

"Do you simply send a PDF report, or do you guide our leadership through live data interpretation?"

Why It Matters: Uninterpreted chart decks leave search committees and boards overwhelmed or divided by first-impression bias.

Holy Cow! Advantage: Every assessment includes a Vital Signs Report paired with a live, consultant-led interpretation session to build consensus.

CRITERION 5

Track Record & Proven Stability

"How long has your organization been conducting church assessments, and is your model tested over time?"

Why It Matters: Consulting trends and boutique firms come and go. Partnering with an untested provider risks unproven methodology and short-lived tools.

Holy Cow! Advantage: Over 25 years of continuous, evidence-based organizational intelligence designed exclusively for faith communities.

ASSESSMENT APPROACH COMPARISON

EVALUATION CRITERIA	GENERIC DIY SURVEYS	TRADITIONAL CONSULTING	HOLY COW! CONSULTING (CAT™)
Track Record & Experience	New/unproven tools	Short-term / Trend-focused	**25+ years of dedicated church assessment experience**
Comparative Context	Raw percentages only	Small or regional sample	**Benchmarked vs. 2,800+ churches (last 5 yrs)**
Scientific Rigor	Unvalidated / Intuition-based	Varies by individual consultant	**Sociologically validated instrument**
Health Metrics	Surface satisfaction only	Basic narrative feedback	**Dual-axis (Satisfaction + Energy)**
Action Plan	Unstructured chart deck	Lengthy static report	**Vital Signs Report + Live Facilitation**

Ready to bring clear, data-backed discernment to your church leadership? **holycowconsulting.com**