

# ME<sup>25</sup>™: MEASURE, MANAGE, AND MAXIMIZE MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

## What Is the ME<sup>25</sup>?

For decades, Gallup has been developing instruments that measure the “unmeasurable.” Gallup has created systems that accurately measure the “soft numbers” — including customer and employee engagement and other former intangibles — that are keys to business success.

Gallup’s extensive research in the arenas of workplace and customer engagement resulted in the development of indices that reliably assess levels of engagement among employees and customers. Knowledge gleaned from this foundational work has informed subsequent research focused on the distinctive needs of faith communities.

Gallup has now tackled another “unmeasurable”: spiritual engagement. Through careful research, Gallup has designed a census-style survey — the ME<sup>25</sup> Member Engagement Survey — that captures important information about the spiritual health of faith communities. Spiritual health drives other factors in faith community life, including attendance and financial commitment.

The ME<sup>25</sup> Member Engagement Survey is a tool that helps measure, manage, and maximize the engagement of each member of the faith community. This critical component of Gallup’s Leadership Excellence system helps leaders learn the difference between engaged communities and those that are just going through the motions.

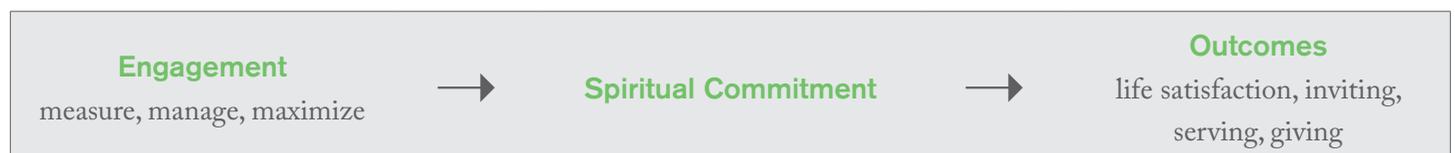
## What Is Engagement?

Engagement is the degree of belonging that an individual has in his or her local faith community. Engaged members feel their faith communities are like family. They demonstrate a high level of ownership for the mission and ministry of their local faith community.

## Why Measure Engagement?

Gallup research has shown that engaged members are more than 10 times as likely to invite someone to participate in their congregation, are nearly three times as likely to say they are extremely satisfied with their lives, spend more than two hours per week serving and helping others in their communities, and give up to three times more to their faith communities annually.

Assessing, addressing, and improving members’ engagement reaps rewards. Engagement drives spiritual commitment, which impacts particular behavioral outcomes. When strategically addressed, increased engagement translates to positive impact inside and outside the local faith community.



## How Is Engagement Measured?

Leaders are encouraged to administer the ME<sup>25</sup> survey to every individual at least 18 years of age who considers himself or herself a part of the faith community. The survey may be administered in three ways: a paper survey, through a Gallup Web site, or a combination of the two.

## Survey Administration

Clients may opt to have their members participate in the ME<sup>25</sup> directly, by logging onto a Gallup-sponsored Internet site from their home computers, or they may choose to administer the survey using paper copies. For faith communities in which Internet access is of concern, this paper option may be preferable to a Web-only administration.

For Web-only administrations, participants first type the provided Internet address into a Web browser, then enter a pre-assigned access code that will open the ME<sup>25</sup> survey. Easy-to-understand survey items are listed on the subsequent Web pages.

Clients who choose to modify their Web survey administration by providing members with printed copies of the survey may ask participants to complete the ME<sup>25</sup> by marking their answers on paper. Completed surveys can then be collected and given to a designated person who will input the responses on the Gallup-sponsored Web site.

For both of these Internet-based options, Gallup provides an informative help sheet that contains instructions to lead members through the survey process. The survey Web site will open and close at predetermined dates and times, and all survey responses must be submitted during that time period.

## In what languages is the ME<sup>25</sup> available?

Paper surveys are available in both English and Spanish. The Web version of the survey is available only in English.

## What does the survey ask?

The ME<sup>25</sup> survey has 25 items carefully chosen to measure engagement, spiritual commitment, and outcomes important to faith communities. All survey responses are confidential. Gallup is a member of the Council of American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO) and as such abides by specific rules of conduct required by our industry.

## How can we improve participation rates?

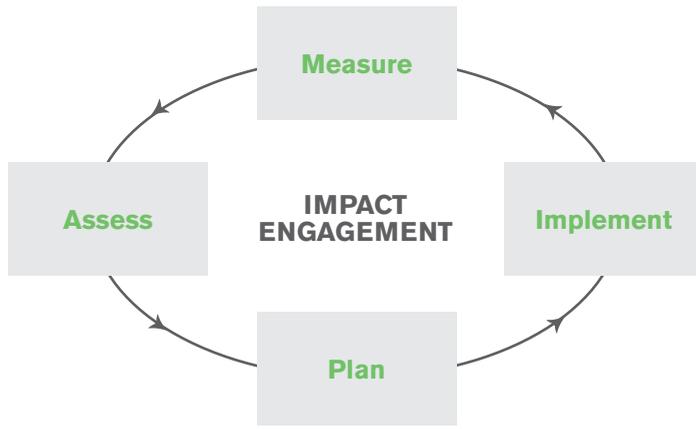
ME<sup>25</sup> participation rates improve when attendees are surveyed on-site during or immediately following Mass or worship service. Lower participation rates occur when surveys are mailed to members or when the survey is distributed by hand to attendees for completion at a later time. It is not unusual for some attendees to choose not to participate in the survey despite an in-person, on-site request.

Because high participation rates improve the actionability of the results, Gallup recommends publicizing the survey for several weeks ahead of time. The survey dates may be announced after Mass or worship services, advertised in printed materials, and posted on Web sites and message boards.

## How are the ME<sup>25</sup> results reported?

Gallup generates a scorecard that summarizes the results of the data collected on all 25 items. In addition to reporting the results of each item that was rated, the scorecard includes two important summary scores that are general measures of Engagement and Spiritual Commitment for the faith community. The report also includes a Member Engagement Index that shows the percentage of Engaged, Not Engaged, and Actively Disengaged members. For each item on the scorecard report, Gallup provides comparisons to the average response in Gallup's proprietary ME<sup>25</sup> database.

The engagement process can be most simply illustrated in this way:



### What do we do after we receive our score?

A Gallup consultant will meet with leaders and members to interpret the scorecard and facilitate discussion surrounding action plans aimed at increasing engagement. Engagement is an ongoing process, and the ME<sup>25</sup> is a useful tool that helps drive meaningful change and impact.

The ME<sup>25</sup> provides a reliable measure of the level of engagement among community members. As it is tracked over time, the metric helps leaders assess the level of spiritual commitment of their members and how engagement is positively affecting particular outcomes.

Initial administration of the ME<sup>25</sup> provides a baseline measure of the engagement level of the community. This baseline is a reliable platform on which leaders and Gallup consultants can create and implement strategic action plans aimed at increasing engagement. Subsequent administrations of the ME<sup>25</sup> provide opportunities to assess the impact of those action plans on engagement.

### Gallup recommends the following steps for increasing member engagement:

- an initial administration of the ME<sup>25</sup> to establish a baseline engagement metric
- interpretation of the scorecard by a Gallup consultant
- creation of transformational action plans aimed at increasing engagement
- implementation of those action plans
- follow-up administrations of the ME<sup>25</sup> to assess the impact of those action plans on spiritual commitment and outcomes

### How do we initiate the ME<sup>25</sup> survey process?

- Contact the Gallup Faith Practice to begin the engagement journey.
- Discuss your faith community's needs and opportunities with your Gallup consultant.
- Invest in the Leadership Excellence system and discuss the program with your Gallup consultant.
- Establish a timeline for the ME<sup>25</sup> survey administration that includes promotion, administration, data entry (if Web-based), scorecard generation, consulting, and subsequent administration waves.

### What other resources does the Gallup Faith Practice offer?

The Gallup Faith Practice offers many resources that may be leveraged to increase engagement and the positive impact of your faith community. For more information, contact your Gallup consultant or call the Gallup Faith Practice at 1.800.288.8592.