Elder David Bednar: “This is the work of salvation. It’s not just indexing; it’s not just searching for names. These are people, sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father. We are here to participate in the work of salvation in inviting all of these people to come unto Christ and receive the saving ordinances of the gospel. That’s who we are; that’s why we are here on the earth. I don’t know of a greater blessing than ultimately realizing that God trusts us and depends on us to do His work. It’s a remarkable spiritual experience when you do the work for your own ancestors and you take your family names to the temple to perform the ordinance work.”

Turning Hearts: Different View of Consultants and Family History

In many stakes the family history center is the center for family history work. But temple and family history work should start in the ward and stake priesthood councils. That is where the keys reside and that is where the work of salvation resides. The work of family history should be a resource to councils. The family history center is a vital resource but not the center of family history work.

Family history consultants can be a resource to members in achieving this remarkable spiritual experience by helping them take a family name to the temple. Temple and family History work can be a support and resource to the bishop and ward council in the work of salvation in helping with:

- Member missionary work
- Teaching the gospel
- Convert retention
- Activation

Turning Hearts or Turning Off

“To Turn the Hearts” means that individuals and families feel a spiritual awakening as they serve their deceased relatives and experience the joy of being active participants in a fundamental part of Heavenly Father’s plan of salvation. If hearts have not been turned and members and leaders hear the term family history they often “turn off” their listening and think of reasons for not participating in this sacred work. Why?
Leaders and members may:

- Feel like they already have too much to do and family history is just one more program.
- The perception that it is a huge time commitment, and cannot fit into their life.
- Feel guilty about not being involved in family history but are overwhelmed at what they need to do to get started.
- Rationalize that another family member is doing the work for them or the work has already been done.
- Rationalize that they will get involved in family history later in life; not right now.
- May fear going to the family history center.

**The Roles of a Family History Consultant**

With all of the excuses listed above, the overarching reason members are not more involved in family history work is because their hearts are not turned toward the work of salvation. There are two roles a family history consultant can play. A consultant can play both roles, but the skill sets are different and the outcomes are different.

1. The first role is to support to the ward council in helping members take names to the temple. The outcome is to turn the hearts of the members. It is NOT to turn members into genealogists. The skill set is being able to teach and help members understand the doctrine of salvation and help them get a family name to the temple so that their hearts may be turned.

2. The second role may be to work in a family history center and educate, assist and show members the resources and tools such as new FamilySearch, FamilySearch, etc. to find more family names.

**Profile of a Family History Consultant**

Family history consultants who do not work in a family history center do NOT need to be experts in family history research. However they should be:

- Skilled teachers who work and communicate well with others
- Comfortable using the resources at FamilySearch.org and helping others use them. These resources include:
  - FamilySearch.org historical records
  - Family pedigrees
  - New.familysearch.org (how to submit a name to the temple)
  - FamilySearch Indexing

**Magnifying Your Calling**

Whether you have just been called as family history consultant in your ward or you have been in the calling for a long time, there are things you can do to magnify your calling:

**Work with Leaders**

Bishops hold the keys to family history work in the ward and direct the work of salvation. The High Priest Group leader coordinates ward council efforts and directs the work of family history consultants. If ward leaders are not
providing names of people in the ward to work with, then you consider ways to turn the hearts of your ward leaders. Consultants help ward leaders learn about family history so they can share it with those they serve. You should take the initiative to reach out to leaders by:

- Helping them work on their own family history so they can perform temple ordinances for their deceased relatives.
- Demonstrate how family history can help them in their calling to minister to those they serve.

**Work with Members**

If consultants do not have assignments from ward leaders, ponder and pray on how to take the initiative and reach out to select members, especially those who are not comfortable using technology, by:

- Helping a few individuals or families at a time to work on their own family history so they can perform temple ordinances for their deceased relatives.
- Answering family history questions from ward leaders and members.

**More Ideas**

- **Develop a plan to turn the hearts of the ward council, bishop, and high priests group leader.** First meet with your High Priests Group Leader to determine the best approach.
- **Develop a plan for members assigned by the ward council on getting family names to the temple for ordinance work.** If members are not comfortable with technology do the research and prepare the names for the members.
- **Create a fan chart for members of the ward council** using TreeSee.com. You will need to sign in with the member’s LDS Account, so make sure they have one and do that for you. This will show them the gaps in their family tree.
- **Offer to Give presentations in Priesthood meeting and Relief Society.**
- **Involve the youth.** Plan a family history activity for Mutual. See familysearch.org/fhy for more ideas.
- **Ask to speak in sacrament.** Focus on how you can help turn the hearts of the members of your ward by helping them find and take family names to the temple.
- **Include your contact information** in the Sacrament meeting program, ward newsletter, or bulletin board.
- **See page 21 in “To Turn the Hearts” for more ideas.**
- **Other ideas:**
What if?

Even as family history consultants we can think of several reasons why it is hard to magnify our calling. The following is a guide when you find yourself thinking of the “what if’s.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What if…</th>
<th>Then you could…</th>
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| I’m brand new to my calling as a family history consultant. What should I do? | **Then you could…**  
  - First understand what your calling entails and why it is important  
    - Ask for help and advice from your High Priest Group Leader  
    - Read “To Turn the Hearts” guide and watch the DVD  
  - Learn how you can work to “turn the hearts” of your ward leaders and members (see the next box) |
| I’m brand new to the calling. I’m overwhelmed with all of the “help” available online. Where should I start? What should I do? | **Then you could…**  
  - Go to [www.familysearch.org/serve](http://www.familysearch.org/serve)  
  - Click on “Training for Family History Consultants”  
  - Start with:  
    - “To Turn the Hearts” guide and accompanying DVD (New)  
    - Training for Family History Consultants (New)  
    - Youth and Family History (New)  
  - As time permits, review the rest of the training and help as you need it |
| My High Priests Group leader knows less about my calling than I do | **Then you could…**  
  - Take the initiative to share the “To Turn the Hearts” guide and DVD with your HPGL and bishop |
| My ward council doesn’t understand my calling and how I can be a resource in helping them in their callings. For example: member missionary, activation, convert retention, etc. | **Then you could…**  
  - Take the initiative to meet with your High Priests Group Leader and share the “To Turn the Hearts” guide and DVD  
  - With your HPGL, decide how to present the information from the “Turn the Hearts” guide and DVD with the bishop and ward council.  
  - See page 21 in “To Turn the Hearts” for more ideas. |
| Even after I’ve explained my calling and how I can help the ward council, they are not providing me with names of people to help. | **Then you could…**  
  - Take the initiative to pray about who in the ward you can help.  
  - Think of new converts or part member families. |
| I live in an area where most of the members of my ward come from pioneer ancestors. They think the temple work has all been done. | **Then you could…**  
  - Prayerfully consider ways to turn hearts by getting members of your ward to get a name to the temple. You could:  
    - As a “Helper” find a name for them to take to the temple  
    - If you find a biography of one of their ancestors, share it with the member.  
    - Teach them there are many ways they can participate in family history |
| I don’t know how to use new.FamilySearch.org, FamilySearch.org, or FamilySearch Indexing | **Then you could…**  
  - Use the helps available to learn how to use them including going to your family history center and taking classes. |
| I’ve been asked to work with the youth in the ward. What resources are available? | **Then you could…**  
  - Go to [https://lds.org/fhy](https://lds.org/fhy)  
  - There are many excellent resources for getting youth involved in family history |