

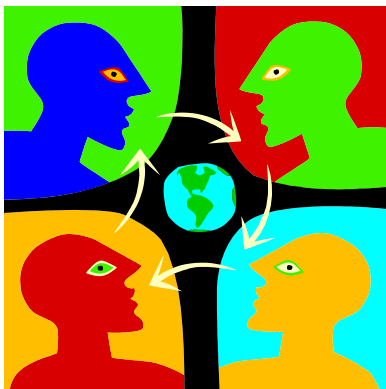


# Toward Best Practices in Missionary Training

# ***Toward Best Practices in Missionary Training***

*An e-publication of  
Next Step: The North American Partnership in Mission Training*

*Hayward Armstrong and Ben Sells, Editors*



***National  
Missionary  
Training  
Forum 2004***

**Next Step: The North American Partnership in Mission Training**  
**May 2004**

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*Dave Broucek*

### ***About the Editors***

*Ben Sells (bsells@imb.org) is serving a term as President of Next Step. In that responsibility, he chairs Next Step's National Missionary Training Forum and leads its Best Practices Task Force. His full-time role is Coordinator, Missionary Learning Center, and Director, International Centre for Excellence in Leadership, at the International Mission Board, SBC. He has field experience in East Asia and Western Europe. Ben currently is Board Chair for the U.S. Center for World Mission. He previously served as a Vice President of Southwest Baptist University and President of William Carey International University. He holds a Ph.D. in Higher and Adult Education from the University of Missouri.*

*Hayward Armstrong (harmstrong@imb.org) coordinated workshop preparations and presentations for NMTF 2004 and edited the written summaries. He serves as Associate Director of the International Centre for Excellence in Leadership at the International Mission Board, SBC. He served more than twenty years in cross-cultural ministry with a variety of responsibilities, including church planter, National Director of TEE for the Peru Baptist Convention, Administrative Chairman of the Peru Baptist Mission, and Associate Area Director for Spanish South America (IMB). He is currently on the Board of Directors for Community Bible Study International. Hayward holds degrees from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (M.Div.; Ed.D.) and is completing a Master of Distance Education degree at the University of Maryland University College.*

## Introduction

In January 2004 approximately 100 people converged in Richmond, Virginia for what has become an annual event—the **National Missionary Training Forum**. NMTF is sponsored by *Next Step: The North American Partnership in Mission Training*.

The Forum represents evangelicals involved and interested in equipping that contributes to effective missionary service. Participants reflect the growing and maturing mission training profession, including people from agencies, church, schools and other providers.

### NMTF '04—A “Best Practices” Theme

The Forum’s planning group, in early 2003, settled on a theme: *Outstanding Practices in Mission Training*. We wanted to focus the conference and conversations on the “best practices” approach as a means to improve mission training and thus missionary effectiveness.

We constructed a *Request for Proposal* and distributed it widely in the mission training world. People were asked to submit a brief response describing a training program, event or course that worked well for them. In other words, the program had to be outstanding in their organization, having a positive impact on learners, the organization and its ministry. This was the extent of our criteria.

Over 40 proposals were submitted. Five of us, representing the larger mission training community, read and reviewed the proposals. We consulted with other colleagues. Then, we selected 14 proposals and asked presenters to facilitate a 90-minute workshop. We requested presenters to briefly describe the training, give attendees an opportunity to experience some the training being profiled, describe why it works and then to give significant time to interaction with participants.

### NMTF '04—From Presentations to Papers

The papers in this document are written summaries by the presenters of their respective workshop. Oral presentations, sometimes augmented with multimedia assistance, along with participant interaction are more dynamic and engaging than written papers. Nevertheless, these papers give insights into effective mission training programs. Papers cover the diversity of mission training by churches, schools, agencies and other providers. Following is a brief description of the summaries:

- *Synopsis of the Missionary Development Program of Calvary Church* (Lancaster, PA) describes how a local church helps qualify and prepare its members for cross cultural ministry.

- *Good Intention or Great Practice? The Field Internship Program of Bethany College of Missions* describes how a missionary training program evaluated and transitioned its internship program to be more effective and strategic.
- *Training for Challenging Fields: What is Missing?* describes how the Intensive Russian Language Program has been designed to help ensure the missionary's long-term success with Russian-speaking peoples, and how to apply its principles to other challenging fields.
- *The Journey Deepens* explains a mission mobilization retreat to help people explore missionary life, opportunities and preparation.
- *Undergraduate Missions Training at Grace University—Intercultural Studies and The Edge Program* describes a six-month and field-based student program in cooperation with four agencies on four different continents.
- *Learning that LASTS—Five Criteria for Excellence in Training* explains five principles Jesus used in his approach to training that are relevant to current missionary equipping.
- *The Summer Institute of Linguistics at the University of North Dakota: Language and Linguistics Package* describes how a partnership between a private and public organization helps people be effective cross-linguistically and cross-culturally.
- *Recruiting and Preparing Missionaries in Your Church* describes the process Xenos Christian Fellowship uses for individual missionary preparation.
- *Less Me . . . More We: Why Partnering is an Outstanding Model for Training* describes the Center for Intercultural Training, a partnership for the equipping of missionaries from a variety of mission agencies and churches.
- *Revisiting Your Childhood Home: Using the Grid and Group Theory and the Image of God* illustrates how to use house floor plans as a tool to help students with their cultural self-discovery and then use it with other cultures.
- *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* explains how and why the Perspectives course, a training and mobilization tool, continues to expand and influence the international missions movement.
- *WorldView: An International Agency Committed to Creating Understanding of God's Truth in Every Culture* describes how one organization, over 40 years, has developed its approach to training for mission service.

### **NMTF '04 Accelerates “Best Practices” Interest**

While we were preparing for the 2004 Forum, the annual IFMA/EFMA Personnel Conference was also planning a workshop on “best practices.” Dave Broucek, from TEAM, prepared a presentation on best practices for the Conference. Both the NMTF and the IFMA/EFMA Conference were held at the Missionary Learning Center within one month. Dave’s paper, *Best Practice Standards for Missionary Training*, was subsequently made available to Forum participants and is included in this publication. The IFMA/EFMA workshop, Dave’s paper circulating to a wide audience, and the focus of the Forum generated substantial energy in a “best practices” interest beyond the Forum.

During the Forum, *Next Step’s* leadership convened a meeting to explore “what to do next” with the best practices approach. Collectively, we decided to create a Task Force, a proposal that received overwhelming support from NMTF participants.

### ***Next Step—A Task Force on “Best Practices”***

The popularity of “best practices” across many fields along with the enthusiasm reflected in NMTF '04 caused *Next Step* to embrace it as a priority. As a voluntary network of mission trainers, *Next Step* leadership is committed to encouraging the use of the “best practices” approach to stimulate effective mission training.

Following NMTF '04, we formally organized the **Best Practices Task Force** for the “*purpose of discussing, defining and developing a process based on best practices/benchmarks by which mission agencies, churches and schools may improve the effectiveness in equipping cross-cultural workers for the advancement of God’s Kingdom among all nations.*”

Fourteen people from across the mission training world held an initial meeting April 12-14, 2004, at Bethany Fellowship International in Minneapolis. Significant pre-work was done to learn from similar efforts through the American Society for Training and Development and the Federal Government’s Baldrige Quality Awards. As a result of our April meeting, the primary work of the Task Force in 2004 and 2005—and the work of *Next Step*—focuses on two key activities.

#### **A. Designing and releasing the Missionary Training Assessment (MTA) tool.**

This tool is designed to help missionary training programs in agencies, churches and schools assess themselves against “best practices” criteria. Task Force members hammered out seven criteria for effective missionary training programs. In other words, a program is approaching a “best practice” when it exhibits the following criteria:



1. *Needs Identification*: An excellent program of missionary training identifies and considers the needs of the learner, the organization, and other stakeholders.
2. *Alignment*: An excellent program of missionary training is aligned with the mission, vision and values of the training unit and with that of the parent organization.
3. *Design Values*: An excellent program of missionary training demonstrates dependence on God and fosters Christian community.
4. *Training Values*: An excellent program of missionary training employs adult learning theory and methods.
5. *Resource Stewardship*: An excellent program of missionary training makes careful use of human, intellectual and financial resources.
6. *Evaluation Strategy*: An excellent program of missionary training will have a clear, measurable and feasible evaluation strategy.
7. *Results*: An excellent program of missionary training will monitor individual, team and organizational impact.

The MTA, which includes several self-assessment questions for each criterion, is being pilot-tested by several people and organizations. The MTA will be available in the Fall.

These criteria were not used to select the NMTF '04 workshops, and thus the papers in this publication. For the '04 Forum, we simply were looking for what appeared to be working well. We are not stating that the programs profiled in this document meet or exceed the criteria that have been identified though some surely do. The NMTF Theme and the workshops, however, sparked a genuine and deep interest in the mission training community to further use the "best practices" approach.

- B. Organizing the 2005 National Missionary Training Forum (NMTF) to reflect and extend the Task Force's purpose.

A program group of six people are working on the Forum. The 2005 Forum will build upon the 2004 Forum as well as the Task Force. NMTF '05 dates are:

- Pre-Forum Workshops: Jan 12-13 (Wednesday and Thursday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm)
- Forum: Jan 13-15 (Thursday from 7:00 pm to Saturday 12:00 pm)

### ***Next Step—From Task Force to a Movement***

The major focus of *Next Step* is utilizing the “best practice” approach—through the Task Force and NMTF event--to provide products and processes for missionary training programs. We aim to engender a movement that stimulates effective mission trainers, mission training programs and effective missionaries as a contribution to extending God’s Kingdom among all nations. In summary, NMTF ‘04 and the subsequent task force have propelled *Next Step* “toward best practices in missionary training.”

### **Thanks**

- Thanks to *Next Step*’s Board, the 2004 NMTF Planning Group and Best Practices Task Force Members for their leadership.
- Thanks to presenters of the 2004 NMTF for their efforts in facilitating a workshop and then providing a written summary. Thanks to Dave Broucek for the paper he wrote.
- Finally, a special thanks goes to Hayward Armstrong, who worked with workshop presenters before and after to 2004 NMTF. He did the day-to-day editing, a substantial effort, to produce this e-publication.

Ben Sells  
President, *Next Step*  
May 2004

## **The Next Step: North American Partnership in Mission Training**

[www.thenextstep.org](http://www.thenextstep.org)

*The Next Step: North American Partnership in Mission Training* is a working partnership of evangelical North American churches, mission agencies, mission trainers and mission mobilizers who are committed to equipping Christian workers in the area of character, ministry skills and knowledge for effective cross cultural ministry.

The idea of “Next Step” is traced to a gathering in 1996. It spawned a number of meetings that widened and deepened the interest of mission trainers from agencies, churches and schools in relating to one another. Next Step was incorporated as a legal non-profit entity governed by a Board and led by a President. In the early years, the interest blossomed with annual and regional meetings. However, by 2001, less than a dozen people attended the annual gathering.

A handful of people met in an Atlanta airport hotel in January 2002 to assess the future. Believing that there was a need and an interest in what Next Step represented, one “last ditch” gathering was planned for January 2003. Over 100 people attended. With new enthusiasm, a second meeting was planned for January 2004. As you have already read, it was well attended and sparked further interest in what Next Step could do.

During 2002 and 2003, much of the day-to-day leadership—and its voluntary leadership for a voluntary organization—was provided by the Board. With the interest in “best practices” and the Task Force, we want to further establish and broaden the strength of this mission training network during 2004. Currently, *Next Step’s* leadership includes:

### **Board**

Jim Roche (Chair), Crossover Communications  
Dave Dougherty, OMF  
Steve Hoke, Church Resource Ministries  
Richard Lewis, United World Mission  
Gene Kissinger, Cherry Hills Community Church  
Ben Sells (ex officio), International Mission Board

### **President**

Ben Sells, International Mission Board  
[bsells@imb.org](mailto:bsells@imb.org)

Contact Ben for more information on Next Step, the Best Practices Task Force and the 2005 National Missionary Training Forum.

**Best Practices Task Force**

Monnie Brewer, Crystal Evangelical Free Church

Dave Broucek, TEAM

Bob Ferris, Columbia International University

Chip Griepsma, BCM International

Paul Hartford, Bethany College of Missions

Steve Hoke, Church Resource Ministries

Gene Kissinger, Cherry Hills Community Church

Holly McCallum, Xenos Christian Fellowship

Gary Morgan, Northwestern College

Jonathan Lewis, World Evangelical Alliance--Missions Commission

Joyce Prettol, WBT/SIL

Ben Sells, IMB

Sheryl Silzer, SIL/Biola

George Schultz, Center for Intercultural Training

**2005 National Missionary Training Forum—Planning Group**

Dave Broucek, TEAM

Paul Hartford, Bethany College of Missions

Gene Kissinger, Cherry Hills Community Church

Holly McCallum, Xenos Christian Fellowship

Joyce Prettol, WBT/SIL

Ben Sells, IMB

# **A Synopsis of the Missionary Development Program of Calvary Church Lancaster, Pennsylvania**

***Dave Hall***

Calvary Church believes it has been called by God to respond in obedience to His command to the church to make disciples among all people groups (Matthew 28: 18-20). Primarily, we see that as a call to go; that is, to see qualified people from among us sent to serve in cross-cultural ministry.

This requires that we qualify people, examining their...

1. **Call** – Is there evidence that God has indeed been at work preparing and directing the candidate to missionary service? This should be observable and confirmed by those in positions of spiritual leadership.
2. **Character** – Does the candidate display attitudes and actions that reflect a growing Christ-likeness? This should be evidenced primarily through relationships in and out of the church.
3. **Competence** – Does the candidate exhibit skills and abilities that are needed for the intended missionary service? These skills and abilities should be demonstrated in relevant fashion “here”, as opposed to hoping they will be developed “there”.
4. **Compatibility** – Does the candidate “fit” into the strategy, philosophy, aims, and relationships of the missions ministry of the church?

Qualifying people for such ministry is a fundamental responsibility of the local church, for it is out of the community of the local church that people are best disciplined and equipped for life and service in the Kingdom of God. With a strong foundational preparation in the church, people can be developed and

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**Dave Hall** ([dhall@calvarychurch.org](mailto:dhall@calvarychurch.org)) has served in pastoral ministry at Calvary Church in Lancaster, PA since 1994. In his role as Missions Pastor, he is involved with all aspects of the church's efforts in Global Ministries. Following undergraduate studies in secondary education and a seminary degree in religious education, Dave served in pastoral ministry with students and singles for eight years before serving six years in Spain with Bible Christian Union. Dave currently serves as a member of the board of directors of The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM) and represents Calvary Church on the board of the Alliance for Saturation Church Planting. Dave and his wife Joni have been married since 1976 and have three children.

deployed effectively in partnership with mission agencies and other parachurch organizations. But the life of the disciple is best nurtured in the life of the biblically functioning church.

The *Missionary Development Program* grew out of a desire to see the church take ownership and responsibility for the identification and initial training of our potential missionary candidates. We place great emphasis on a church-wide approach to mobilization and training for mission.

For this reason we see all the people of the church in two broad categories. The first includes everyone at Calvary Church and is both formal and informal. If you attend this church for any length of time, you will be exposed to the activities included in this category.

The second category is for those who have made a conscious choice. They have asked the church to assist them to understand and pursue God's calling upon their lives for missionary service. It's a collaborative partnership between the individual and the church to prepare and mobilize another missionary.

### **General – for all the church family**

#### **Recruitment**

Through various means, people in the church are exposed to and challenged about the need for more harvest workers in the work of world evangelization. This comes from the pulpit on Sunday mornings, conferences and other special missions events, missionary speakers in Adult Bible Fellowships and a wide variety of other means. We consciously strive to permeate all our ministries with a world evangelization flavor. *The key outcome of this level is for the individual to make a commitment to pursuing possible missionary service.*

### **Specific – for those whom God seems to be calling**

#### **Level 1: Assessment & Training**

Once committed to pursuing missionary service, the candidate will meet with the Missionary Development Team (MDT) for the purpose of assessing his/her calling and preparedness for such ministry. Through the use of various tools, the MDT will either (a) advise the candidate to pursue ministry service other than missions, or (b) affirm the apparent call of God in his/her life and devise a plan of training for further preparation.

This will involve the assignment of a mentor and the establishment of a training program tailored to the needs of the candidate. *The key outcome of this level is a clear affirmation of the candidate's calling and increasing preparedness for missionary service.*

## **Level 2: Exploration**

Upon sufficient training and personal preparation, the candidate will be coached in the exploration of various people groups, ministries, and mission agencies. This will be intended to identify a possible “fit” for the candidate, all in conformity to God’s emerging will and the missions priorities and policies of the church. This will include application and acceptance by an approved mission agency. *The key outcome of this level is a defined focus for future ministry, including mission agency, location and nature of ministry.*

## **Level 3: Team Building**

Upon appointment to a mission agency, the candidate will engage in the ministry of developing a team of supporters who will share in prayer, finances, and other means of encouragement. This level of the program will result in an expanding circle of people in the church who identify with and will share in the ministry of the missionary candidate. It represents an essential phase for the church family to understand and “own” the missionary and his/her ministry. *The key outcome of this level is an identified prayer and support team that will be committed to ongoing involvement with the missionary candidate.*

## **Growth Areas for Candidates**

Missionary candidates are expected to grow in six primary domains of life. These are areas the mentor will explore with the candidate and assist in the development of strategies for needed growth. The Missionary Development Team will also offer guidance and counsel.

1. *Spiritual* - Spirituality is not merely one domain on par with the others; it is what informs, guides, and governs all of life.
2. *Interpersonal* - All ministry takes place in the context of relationships.
3. *Intercultural* - The missionary is a cross-cultural specialist.
4. *Ministry* - Competencies and skills are given and developed by God for the accomplishment of ministry objectives.
5. *Personal & Family* - Credibility is built for ministry through healthy self-

- discipline and growth, as well as through healthy family relationships.
6. *Organizational* - God is honored when people work in concert with one another rather than in autonomy and independence.



## Good Intention or Great Practice?

### The Field Internship Program of Bethany College of Missions

*Paul F. Hartford*

#### **A little history**

Bethany International and its various divisions, including Bethany College of Missions grew out of the ministry of Bethany Missionary Church. This small congregation began in 1943 as a result of a home Bible study. Shortly thereafter, five families in the church, including the pastor, banded together in what they called *Bethany Fellowship*. The young men were all involved in business, and all five families agreed to pool their income and live together to prepare themselves to serve as missionaries.

They described the purpose of the Fellowship as to further the gospel message, or as they preferred to phrase it, “The Message of the Cross,” and to raise up and fulfill a vision of the congregation to send one hundred missionaries to the field. This was an astonishing goal in that the congregation was less than one hundred including children at the time!

Although all five families had the aspiration to become missionaries, none of them ever made it to the field! Instead, in 1945 they began seeing young people, mostly singles, join the Fellowship and go out as missionaries. Within the first year, four young people were commissioned and sent out to serve with WEC.

As the movement grew, Bethany began to formalize Bible training for the young people coming in and going out. A farm was purchased in the southwest suburb of Bloomington and several businesses were started to provide support for the community and the training program. Over the years Bethany has built toys, electronic appliances, camping trailers, and published and printed Christian

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**Paul Hartford** ([Paul.Hartford@bethfel.org](mailto:Paul.Hartford@bethfel.org)) has been involved in cross-cultural ministry since 1981, serving 11 years in the Philippines, before becoming Director of Bethany College of Missions. On a wider scale, he serves as Vice-president for Global Ministry Training with Bethany International, serving as the international coordinator for an emerging global alliance of missionary trainers, involving more than thirty mission training partners in several countries around the world. Paul is married to Theresa and has three daughters. He holds a B.A. in Theology and Missions (Bethany) and the M.A. in Intercultural Studies (Wheaton).

literature. Today only Bethany Press International remains of the businesses. As classes and curriculum took shape, the training program was initially called Bethany Fellowship Missionary Training Center. Later, in the 1980's, that name was changed to Bethany College of Missions.

### **Good intentions**

Early curriculum was centered on biblical and theological instruction and ministry practice with very little content given specifically toward cross-cultural training. Later, various post-graduate internships were tried. In the early 1970s the decision was made to make the internship a third-year experience within a four-year program.

Very little structure was put on the internship program. Students were encouraged to contact various mission agencies and find opportunities to serve a one-year short term. Students were responsible to make all arrangements with the agency and secure whatever financial responsibilities the agency required. About one-third to one-half of the interns were taken by Bethany's mission sending agency, Bethany Fellowship Missions, for various support roles primarily in literature ministries in Florida, Puerto Rico, Mexico and the Virgin Islands. Internship began in August and ended in August. The students returned to campus after their full year in another setting and began classes within the week. Throughout the years since the internship program was started, various minor improvements were made. It was not, however, until the last decade when serious changes were made. Bethany began to recognize several weaknesses in the program and to act with intentionality to create a program that was integrated in its approach and integrated well with the rest of the training program. We believe that these changes have taken the Internship program from a good intention to a truly great practice.

### **Moving to a great practice**

#### **Step one. Identification of the need for change**

The first step in moving the program to a great practice was identification of the specific weaknesses of the program and the need for change. Assessment of the program led to the understanding of the following issues:

1. Lack of consistency in the field experience. Because some interns ended up with mission agencies in pioneer and "cutting edge" ministries, while others ended up doing back office work in mission compounds, there was often tension on the return between students, and a sense that some had a great experience while others had struggled miserably. Lack of definition for the program itself was greatly to blame for this. Interns

simply went out and came back. The internship was under no immediate accountability to the College.

2. Faulty student expectations. Students often faced stress over the reality of the internship and their prior expectations. Young zealous missionary trainees wanted full-time hands on ministry. They didn't want office work, or to care for missionary children, and they often saw any menial labor as below missionary work. They had very little perspective of what real missionary life might be like. In addition, they had faulty expectations of their supervisors. This continued to grow through the years as generations of students have become increasingly relational and idealism about "mentoring" has grown. Students wanted mentors, but the model of mentorship they held in their mind was closer to a relationship like that of Yoda to Luke Skywalker. They expected a person who would drop everything and focus on them.
3. Faulty field leadership expectations. Field leaders receiving interns from Bethany had no specific expectations placed on them by the school, and there was little done to brief them about what they could or should expect from the intern. This led to obvious misunderstandings both concerning the intern's preparedness and capacity and purpose of the experience. In many cases, interns were treated as any other short-term volunteer. In the 70's and 80's many missions saw that as a position where language and cultural learning and even ministry learning were optional. Volunteers didn't come to learn, they came to help so that missionaries could focus on real ministry. Many Bethany interns ended up in situations with little cross-cultural contact, and little ministry opportunity.
4. Inadequate communication between Bethany and both the students and their supervisors. As already stated, interns went out and came back and were really on their own for the year. Few letters were written unless a student had developed a specific relationship with a college staff member. On occasion, leaders of Bethany might travel to a country for other purposes and would meet briefly with the intern. Little communication went out to supervisors before the internship as well.
5. Inadequate pre-field preparation. Bethany saw the internship experience as a time of testing, but did not really see the interns as missionaries. Therefore, very little pre-field preparation was designed in the freshman or sophomore years.
6. Inadequate post-field debriefing. Students returning to campus were welcomed, and sometimes had opportunities to give testimony of their

experiences in student chapels, but no intentional debriefing was done. Because of the number of interns returning all at once, those on campus tended to default to listening only to short versions of the interns' stories. Interns were often frustrated that at a missions training school, few were willing to give the time to listen to the stories.

## **Step 2. Our response**

Over the last decade, Bethany College of Missions has worked through many of these issues, making significant changes to the internship program. These changes have not been in isolation, impacting overall program and curriculum of the College.

Here are some of the ways in which we dealt with these needs:

1. Dealing with the lack of consistency
  - a. We advanced the selection process well into the fall semester of the sophomore year. Although the internship does not begin until September of the junior year, students begin active research as part of the sophomore fall curriculum.
  - b. Students are lead through a process of creating a proposal for their internship based on specific criteria. It is the goal to have proposals submitted by the students prior to the end of the fall semester.
  - c. We moved our annual campus Mission Conference from the spring semester to the fall semester. The conference is meant to keep vision alive in the students for missions, something that is necessary in spite of the fact that this is the focus of all their studies. We seek to bring a key speaker or speakers in one or more specific areas of missionary work to address the students, and also invite about 25 mission agencies to display and recruit among our students for both the internship program and career opportunities. Moving the conference to the fall gives students a greater likelihood of linking with one of these agencies.
  - d. Interns are now required to go out in groups of two or three. Securing and declaring an internship partner within their class is part of the proposal process. We have found that students generally do better when they are sent with a partner who is under the same program requirements. We have also found that most

potential internship field supervisors are unable to handle more than three interns.

- e. The internship proposal is approved by a committee which includes the Internship Program Director, two faculty members, and the Personnel director of our sister organization, Bethany International Ministries.
- f. Beginning in 2004, all internships will be officially under Bethany International Ministries. The interns may serve on the field with another organization but are then under a secondment agreement between BIM and the other mission. During 2003 this arrangement was made for more than half of the interns and was well received and proved beneficial. For students, dealing directly with BIM's finance office and personnel office on campus eases a number of anxieties and helps their fund-raising process. From the school's perspective, it makes it much easier to move an intern to another location if a situation goes poorly.
- g. Beginning in the early 90s, we became more intentional about field visits to the interns during their internship. Currently, every possible attempt is made by the Director of the Internship Program to visit each of our approximately 50 interns on the field during December or January. Another leader in either the College or Bethany International Ministries visits those the Director is not able to visit.
- h. Beginning in 2003, mid-year seminars have been added on a voluntary basis, and will be moved to mandatory in the 2004-2005 school year. The seminar is hosted by the Internship Program Director and his wife, or by another staff couple. The goal is to host a seminar in each region of the world. Seminars include a review of their assignments, a significant amount of time given to sharing and interacting with each other about their experiences, additional insights and advice on dealing with cross-cultural, ministry, team and leadership issues, and prayer and worship.
- i. In 2000, additional assignments from the College were added to the internship experience. These assignments include:
  - i. A Personal/Spiritual Journal which students show to the Internship Director during his visit and at the end of the year.

ii. A Cultural Observations Journal. This journal is the place to record experiences and observations that regard the cross-cultural experience.

iii. Monthly ethnographic reports. In 1997 an ethnographic paper was added to the internship. In 2003, this paper was broken down into monthly topical assignments. The intern is expected to record observations in the Cultural Journal with a focus toward the topic of the month, and then produce a 3-4 page paper at the end of the month on the topic. The change has been very positive. Students often seemed to struggle to collect their thoughts for the end of the year paper, but with the monthly reports, they have often submitted 5-6 pages instead of the required 3-4. The assignments, suggestions, and topics are posted on an internet site designed just for the interns. The topics are as follows:

September	General observations of the people group
October	Language and communication
November	Family structures
December	Authority structures
January	Economy and technology
February	Religion
March	Beliefs and values
April	World View
May	Summary

## 2. Dealing with student expectations

- a. Prior to the internship, a new course was added to the College program. This required course is 1 credit hour and runs both the fall and the spring semesters for sophomores. It is through this course that students learn what to expect of the internship, are walked through the process of selection of field, raising support, communicating vision, dealing with misunderstanding and conflict, and are introduced to the experiences of previous interns. The design of the course borrows from best ideas gleaned from pre-field orientation or candidacy processes of several mission organizations.
- b. A number of peer learning opportunities have been added to the program during the course of both the freshman and sophomore

years. Students learn from the experiences of the senior class who have just returned from their internship as well as from the interns currently on the field. Current interns send video clips of advice and encouragement to the sophomores. Specific issues (as confidentiality allows) of struggles, difficulties, challenges and victories are shared. Seniors are assigned leadership roles in the College, and take leadership of freshmen evangelism teams and the required freshmen summer short term teams called Trek. They also make presentations of their experience in chapels.

### 3. Dealing with supervisor expectations

- a. An extensive Field Supervisor's Manual has been created which includes:
  - (1) Overview of Bethany College of Missions program.
  - (2) A description of our philosophy of training.
  - (3) A description of the purpose and desired objectives of the internship program.
  - (4) A description of what we think makes an internship successful.
  - (5) General guidelines and policies.
  - (6) Guidelines for assessment, and for corrective action if needed.
  - (7) Reporting forms.
  - (8) A copy of all documents given to the students including monthly exercises.
- b. Field Supervisors are also given a contract job description which includes:
  - (1) Commitment to disciple and mentor with a minimum of 10 contact hours between the intern and supervisor each week (contact hours can include team meetings, ministry outreach, etc.).
  - (2) Commitment to the spiritual development of the intern.
  - (3) Commitment to practical oversight of the intern.
  - (4) Pre-field preparation for the intern including: housing, tentative budget, intern job description, visas and other such requirements.
  - (5) Orientation of student to field on arrival.
  - (6) Assessment and feedback to student throughout internship.



- (7) Pre-departure debriefing of intern and re-entry preparation at the conclusion of the internship.
- (8) Creation of (or description if existing) a crisis/contingency plan.

#### 4. Dealing with communication issues

- a. We have increased our communication before placement with the supervisor through the process described above.
- b. The internet has become our ally! For interns, we have created an Intern web site where assignments are posted and can be submitted and where interns can communicate with each other and the Internship Director through forums. The Intern Director also maintains an Instant Messenger account and students often communicate live whenever their schedules and access allow.

#### 5. Dealing with pre-field preparation

This is probably one of the most significant areas of change to the program and it involves a paradigm shift for the College. We once thought of ourselves as having four years to prepare a missionary in our program. When we began to examine the quality of the internship program we began to think of the interns as missionaries! This led to the realization that we only have in actuality a two-year program of preparation, and that the senior year is really an opportunity to effectively debrief the internship and make course corrections before they graduate and go out to the field again. This led us to make several changes to the whole program of the college and the flow of the curriculum.

- a. Specific changes for sophomores:
  - (1) Addition of the Logistics for Ministry course throughout the sophomore year.
  - (2) Regular appointments and checkpoints with the Internship Director throughout the sophomore year.
- b. Global changes to the Bethany program include a restructuring of the flow of the curriculum.
  - (1) Freshman year Fall: Focus on discipleship
    - 1. Designed for Freedom (basic discipleship)
    - 2. Introduction to Missions
    - 3. Introduction to Evangelism



4. The Gospels
5. Composition or elective
- (2) Freshman year spring: Focus on Growth
  1. Old Testament
  2. Preaching and Teaching
  3. Theology I
  4. Bible elective
  5. Missions elective
- (3) Freshman summer: Trek (3 week cross-cultural ministry and learning trip)
- (4) Sophomore year fall: Focus on Understanding
  1. Theology II
  2. Hermeneutics
  3. History of Missions
  4. Old Testament II
  5. Logistics for Ministry (1 credit)
  6. Elective
- (5) Sophomore year spring: Focus on Preparation
  1. Cultural Anthropology
  2. Linguistics and Language acquisition
  3. Logistics for Ministry
  4. Book of Romans
  5. Elective
- (6) Internship
- (7) Senior year fall: Focus on Integration
  1. Cross-Cultural Communications (taught from a debriefing perspective)
  2. Developing a Christian Worldview
  3. Electives
- (8) Senior year spring: Focus on Leadership
  1. Cross-cultural Church Planting
  2. Learning to Lead
  3. Electives

## 6. Dealing with Post-Field Debriefing

The change of the flow of curriculum itself dealt with many of the needs in debriefing the internship experience. Courses such as Cross-cultural Communications and Developing a Christian Worldview were redesigned to take the seniors through the experiences of their internship, the issues of re-entry, and the development of foundations for learning and contextualization that will help them to continue to integrate the experience. In addition, we

have added several debriefing opportunities for students returning from their internship.

- a. Re-entry weeks. A two week session held in late May and early June. Students meet together to discuss their experience, with a heavy emphasis put on sharing with one another and listening to one another. Other sessions deal with specific re-entry issues, advice for re-entering the college environment, and changes they face. Returning interns also begin meeting individually with college staff to debrief their experience.
- b. Intern Retreat. During the first week of classes in the fall, the seniors are taken away to a camp in northern Minnesota for another debriefing opportunity. Again, a high focus on sharing the experience is made, but this time with a deeper level of vulnerability drawn out, and significant time spent praying for each other by the class. These retreats are significant and really set the stage for the growth of community in this class. We have found that returning interns have so many stories to tell, but so few willing to listen. We encourage them to become each other's audience and strength.
- c. Debriefing meetings with the Intern Director through the summer before the senior year. Students who uncover deeper issues may additionally be assigned staff mentorship throughout their senior year.

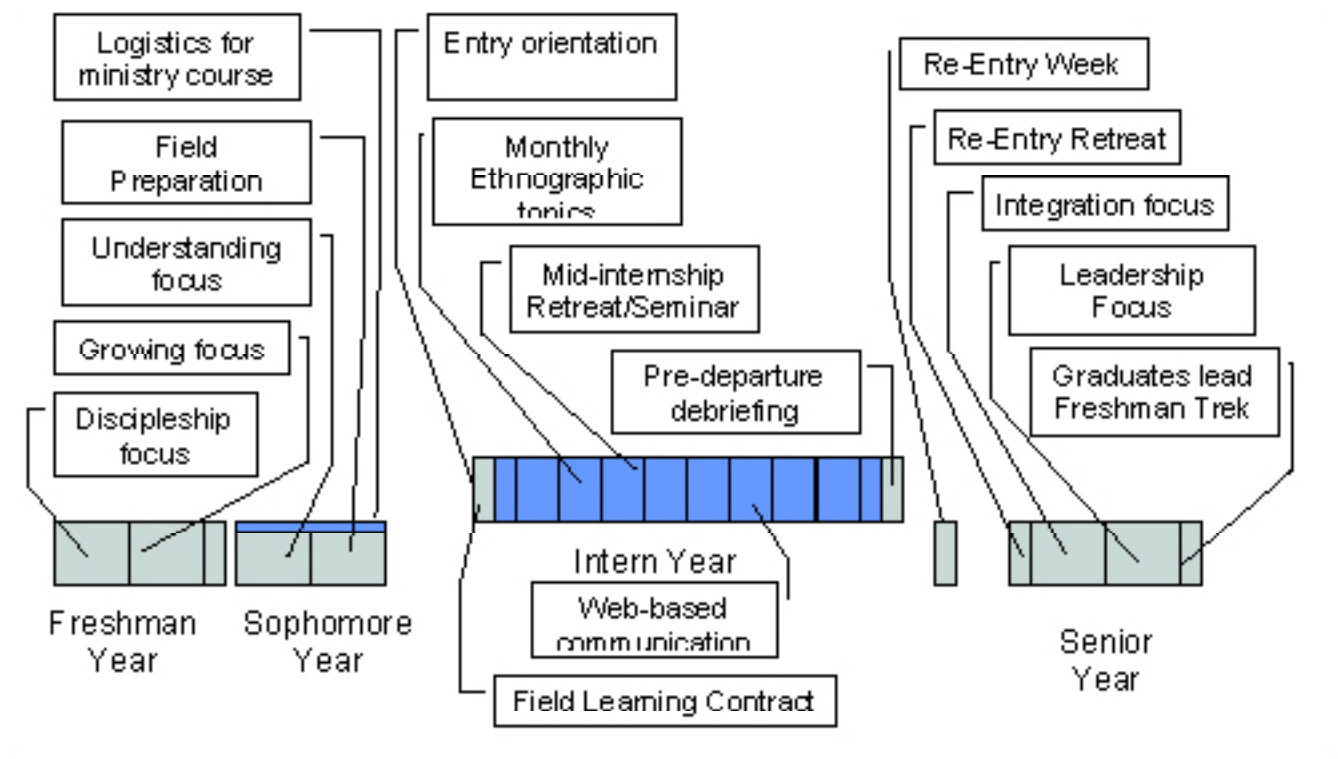
## **Conclusion**

The chart attached as Appendix A demonstrates graphically the flow of our program and each of the elements we have added. In addition, many streams of thinking and understanding with regard to effective missionary training have challenged us. All of these have pointed to a common idea, that effective missionary training starts with a thorough foundation of spiritual vitality. The missionary task is not simply a task, it is an opportunity to share with others the profound message of the love and grace of a God who so desired to redeem the people he loved that he went to extreme measures. This message will not be proclaimed unless the people who are sharing it not only understand it, but have a profound experience of it in their lives. Toward this end, Bethany is reorienting its program again around a focus of spiritual vitality throughout the program. We seek to provide more opportunities for students to develop a personal and corporate relationship with God that can be described as "intimacy" with Him. This includes a desire to make corporate intercession and worship opportunities

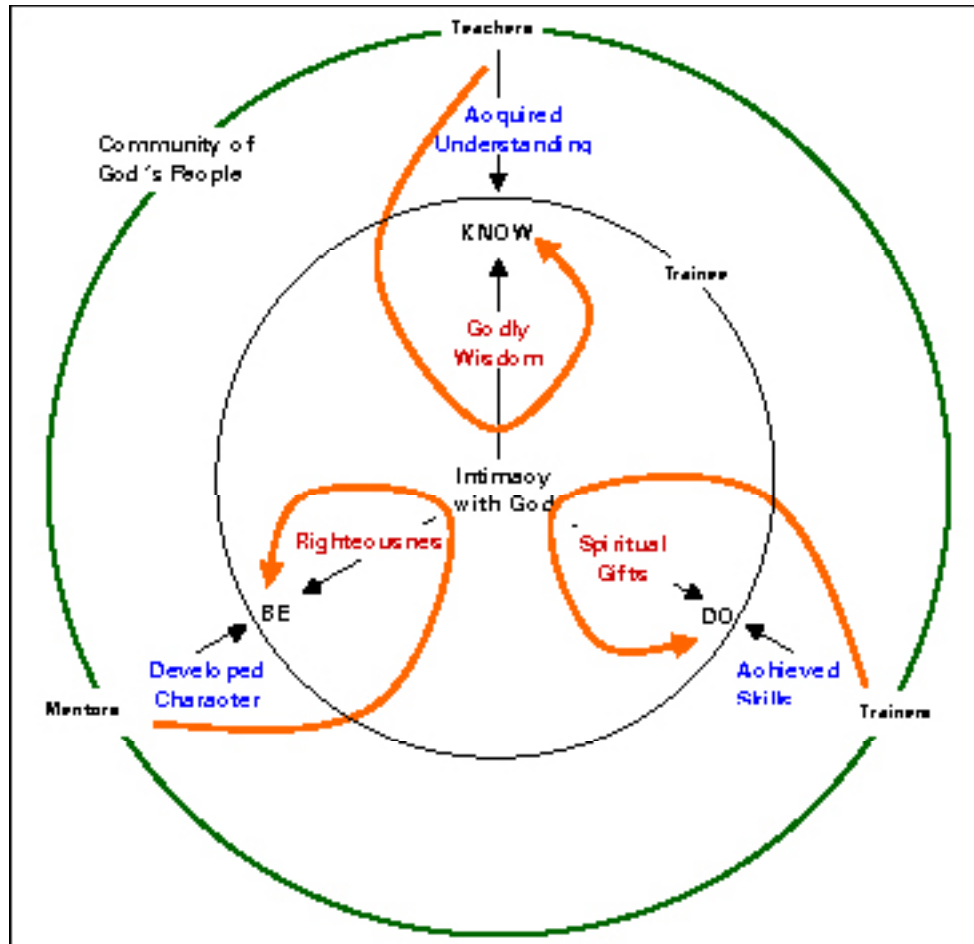
available “24/7” and to engage the students in as much of that as possible. Appendix B describes some of our thinking in this regard.

Through these changes and the changes we are still in process on, we have taken a program that existed almost as an afterthought to our training and made it the centerpiece of our Master of Arts in Cross-cultural Studies. The results are already beginning to show in a greater confidence in leadership, a higher level of fielding after graduation, and a more integrated program overall. The Internship Program has gone from what once was only a good intention to a great experience and practice!

## **Appendix A: Great Practice components we have added to the Internship Program of Bethany College of Missions**



## Appendix B: The Missionary Training Environment



Training combines the “**natural**” inputs to a person’s growth and maturity with the “**spiritual**” inputs. The external or natural are things that can be gained apart from a true intimate relationship with God. The spiritual inputs only come from a life of abiding in Christ. When combined, they form a powerful basis for ministry competency, as spiritual gifts are grown alongside of achieved skills, as godly wisdom shapes understanding, and as a foundation of righteousness, a grace-gift of God, shapes character development.

This intimacy with God is not shaped in individualism, but within the context of **community**. Teachers, trainers, and mentors (which are overlapping categories of individuals) **engage with a learner’s growth** by providing strength from their own walk with God, insights from their own growth in understanding, the example of their own lives, and an environment of wisdom and discernment to filter and test what the learner is gaining through intimacy with God and through other inputs.

## Training for Challenging Fields: What Is Missing?

*A comprehensive strategy for training missionaries for strategic regions of the world*

**Marc T. Canner**

### I. Background

American mission agencies and churches have long sought the “magic formula” for preventing early attrition and ensuring the effectiveness of missionaries they send to the mission field. Yet when you look closely at the situation in some of the most challenging destinations, you might as well conclude that perhaps there is no such thing as a “magic formula.” For example, some organizations have pulled out of the former Soviet Union entirely because of the difficulty they had just keeping a team functioning there. Many workers in China are faced with the dilemma of perhaps never becoming fluent enough in Chinese to effectively conduct discipleship or leadership training in that context, while few last longer than a few years there. And like Russia and China, the Middle East has the reputation of (pardon the expression) “chewing them up and spitting them out.” Yet if you carefully analyze the preparation missionaries typically receive for such contexts, the reason for such disastrous trends is obvious: A lack of *context-specific*, pre-field preparation.

Such training actually *is* available for some destinations. The Intensive Russian Program offered by Russian Language Ministries (RLM) is designed to provide the kind of training that will ensure the missionary’s long-term success among

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**Marc Canner** ([marc.rlm@juno.com](mailto:marc.rlm@juno.com)), of Russian and Romanian descent, completed a B.A. in Russian Studies at the University of New Mexico before serving in the U.S. Army as a Russian linguist and analyst. In 1988-89 he was assigned to work as an interpreter/escort in the implementation of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty signed by Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev. After leaving the military, Marc completed postgraduate studies in Second Language Pedagogy at the University of New Mexico and taught Russian there. In 1991-92, he and his wife, Dale, served as church planters in Ukraine before founding Russian Language Ministries, a non-profit training agency devoted to equipping Christian workers with the cross-cultural and linguistic skills they need for service in the former Soviet Union. He has served as RLM’s Executive Director since its founding, and has served as Adjunct Faculty at Columbia International University since 1993. Dale aids in the ministry of RLM as a language instructor in Russian. They have three children.

Russian-speaking peoples. RLM is now part of a larger institute, called the Institute of Strategic Languages and Cultures (ISLC), a training center devoted to equipping missionary recruits with the linguistic and cross-cultural skills they need to be effective in the most challenging and strategic areas of the world. But before we look at the training being developed at the ISLC, why is such context-specific preparation so important?

A close friend of mine recently told me that when he finished his Bible college degree with an emphasis in missions, he felt very ready for the Middle East. But soon after he and his family arrived in the Persian Gulf and began to learn Arabic and do ministry as tent-makers, he realized that the training he had was grossly inadequate. Certainly a thorough knowledge of the Bible, the theology of missions, or basic principles of cross-cultural ministry are important aspects of training. But very few Bible colleges or seminaries even begin to acquaint students with the specific language and cross-cultural skills they need.

Some training centers like MTI or C.I.T. provide essential preparation in cross-cultural principles or language learning, but all in all pre-field language and culture training specific to a context is hard to find. And if the context in question is a place like the Middle East or former Soviet Union, the new missionary has a very good chance of failure. Like so many others, my friend and his family lasted only 3 years.

During a recent discussion about today's various Islamic studies programs, a Jordanian friend said that in his opinion, a major problem is that formal academic training "merely teaches one about Islam, while it does not help the student understand the mindset of Muslim people." Given the great differences between Western and Middle Eastern peoples, enabling recruits to both speak the heart language and understand the worldview of the Muslim should be an important component of any training we offer. And for any challenging context there are some very good reasons why such training should be accomplished prior to deployment.

Let's take a closer look at the current situation in the former Soviet Union (FSU):

1. In most Russian-speaking cities negative attrition for those who come without prior training is extremely high. For example, according to one informal study in St. Petersburg, Russia, attrition there (defined here as an

inability to last longer than four years) has averaged above 90%.

2. Even with a decrease in population, for the past ten years the percentage of those in Russia claiming to be Evangelical Protestant has remained below 1%.

3. Most missionaries who come without training require over 4 years to acquire the skills they need to function well with the language. Some never learn the language at all.

4. In many areas of the FSU people have become increasingly disillusioned with the efforts of American missionaries and are returning to their traditional, Orthodox, faith.

Examples of this disillusionment abound in the FSU. In a research project our staff conducted in four different cities in Russia and Ukraine, a question was posed asking Russian and Ukrainian believers to characterize American missionary efforts there. Many of them responded in ways that really cut to the quick:

Sasha (a pastor outside of Moscow): "Russians say that their kind of faith is not Christian but American, and then no one goes to the real living church, but they return to their Orthodox church..."

Vasilij (a church elder in an American church plant): "How can Americans even live here or work if they do not understand our culture? They are only using a weak faith that is like dust or smoke.... And we pastors and leaders in the national church are insulted by the fact that many missionaries are deceiving themselves, their own churches and are deceiving our souls here in Russia."

Seryozha (a Bible college student in Russia): "Americans should be sure to speak Russian well. They need to study our literature and history. They also should try to listen to us and learn from us what they should do here. But instead, usually they just do what they want, not what we want."

So what are we to conclude from this? What most Russians conclude. In the words of one Russian pastor: "Those missionaries who take it slow and try to understand us, who train for the kind of ministry which we as a people need, who learn the language and then get some practical training in how to work in Russia effectively, they will be the ones who will be effective here."

Put plainly, such disillusionment is a direct reflection of missionary ineffectiveness in the

FSU. The ineffectiveness of missionaries there is due to:

1. The majority of those deploying to that area of the world are extremely unprepared for the rigors of life and ministry in that context.
2. Most cross-cultural training available to missionary trainees lacks content specific to the culture they are called to.
3. Very few recruits acquire even a rudimentary knowledge of the history of this region, fewer still an understanding of the culture.
4. When interviewed, most missionaries who have failed to complete their term there cite difficulties with the language and culture as primary reasons.

The results of these shortcomings are some serious missiological mistakes. Just to name a few of the mistakes commonly made there should cause any of us to blush profusely. Some examples are: A use of inappropriate and culturally insensitive evangelistic and discipleship methods; A reliance on interpreters to accomplish teaching and discipleship; a complete ignorance of Russian cultural folkways and customs resulting in strategies that are inappropriate to the Russian context; an unwillingness to even begin to establish relationships with Russian Orthodox priests and bishops, resulting in misunderstandings and hostility, and which, one could argue, has been a cause of the many new anti-missionary laws being enacted throughout the region. Is it any wonder that Russian parliament has branded American missionaries as CIA spies or that so many Russians have become disillusioned with American missionary efforts?

Another cause of these problems is insufficient pre-field language preparation. Though some are correcting this oversight, few Americans receive pre-field language training. But why is pre-field language training so important? Consider the following:

1. Though native speakers are essential to any training effort, Russian nationals cannot adequately explain the grammar of their language so that English speakers can understand and apply the rules to their language needs. Insufficient explanation causes inaccurate speech patterns, resulting in miscommunication. Having instructors who can explain the grammar effectively ensures proper speech development.



2. The language teaching methodologies used by nationals are typically ineffective and outdated, and due to some great cultural differences between us, the methods used often cause unnecessary difficulties for English speakers.
3. English speakers need to be gradually immersed in the language so that accurate speech patterns emerge naturally with their language development. Due to the inflectional complexities, sudden immersion in Russian causes the development of non-grammatical speech patterns as the learner is forced to play “catch up” with native speakers.
4. Life and the call of ministry in the former Soviet Union tend to prevent the missionary from making language learning a priority. Learning is usually spotty at best even with a language tutor.
5. Due to differences among learners, such as aptitude and learning style, a complex language like Russian requires a learning environment and study pace designed with the specific needs of the learner in mind. Native-run programs do not provide such an environment, resulting in a failure of many to acquire the language properly.
6. In order to be effective at learning the language, most learners need a structured, purposeful, and encouraging learning environment. Native-run programs are usually very intimidating and often cause learners to become discouraged.

The result of a purposeful and encouraging pre-field language program is faster acquisition of the target language. With the more complex languages such as Arabic, Russian and Chinese, the American learner needs the most up-to-date and appropriate methods. It is important to design language learning according to the unique needs of the learner. And any program should also take into account the specific characteristics of language. A “case” language should be approached somewhat differently than a “tone” language, like Chinese.

The Institute of Strategic Languages and Cultures (ISLC) will provide a solution to the above dilemma. Created in 1992 as a result of firsthand observation of the difficulties missionaries have being effective in their life and ministry, the Russian component of the Institute is a comprehensive approach to pre-field training.

Upcoming programs for Arabic and Chinese will utilize a similar structure:

## **II. The Training Program**

**Purpose:** To equip new missionaries with the linguistic and cross-cultural skills needed for effective service in the newly independent countries of the former Soviet Union.

**Program Overview:** The RLM Intensive Russian language and culture program is multifaceted and designed to give missionary trainees a well-rounded training experience.

### **Structure:**

**1. Tracks of study** – Students are tested for language aptitude and assigned to three possible tracks of study: Accelerated (6 or 8 months), standard (8 months) and the “special grace” track (1 year).

**2. Flexible duration** – Those who already possess some abilities in the language are tested and placed in a level appropriate to their skills and aptitude. Others may opt to study for only part of the entire curriculum, if necessary.

**3. Proficiency testing** – Missionary trainees are regularly monitored to evaluate their development of proficiency. They are also given a language proficiency exam near the end of the training cycle to evaluate their overall language development. They are tested for their listening/oral as well as reading/writing skills.

**Schedule:** The program of study includes four major components, each comprised of four parts:

<b>1. Language component (6 hours/day):</b>	<b>3. Russian Cultural House Component</b>
Vocabulary Building	Immersion
Grammar	Cuisine
Conversational development in Russian	Group discussion & Bible studies
Topical discussion	Communal living
<b>2. Culture component (Wednesdays):</b>	<b>4. Culture-specific Field Practicum</b>
History learning	Intermediate-Advanced language
Cultural Worldview	Advanced ministry-related

vocabulary  
Religion  
The Arts

Ministry-specific skills development  
Acculturation

### **Curriculum content:**

**1. Language component content** – the language curriculum consists of three categories of content:

**Practical life skills** – Vocabulary needed for basic survival: So that one is equipped to live, travel, build relationships, buy food, etc.

**Ministry vocabulary** – Vocabulary needed in order to share one's faith, explain one's role in ministry, disciple new believers, conduct Bible studies, etc.

**Biblical vocabulary** – Vocabulary needed in order to explain the gospel, discuss scripture and deal with the major apologetics issues relevant to Russian culture.

### **2. History/culture component content:**

**Russian history overview** – Trainees receive a strong understanding of the major historical forces, events, people and issues that have shaped the Russian worldview.

**Russian Culture Seminar** – Students are introduced to the major aspects of Russian culture, emphasizing the Russian worldview. Class time is devoted to important topics such as orthodoxy, naturalism, Marxist Leninism, Russian messianism, the Russian soul, the role of women in Russian society, literature, etc.

**Specific field study** – Trainees acquire a fundamental understanding of the their specific target country's history and culture through independent study and time with instructors.

**Critical analysis of historical trends** – Students are given an opportunity to analyze historical events and draw conclusions about the effects of history on Russian culture.

**Cultural events** – Students have an opportunity to experience Russian culture and take periodic trips to the ballet, orthodox

churches, etc.

**Culture-specific Field Practicum content:** Includes two major components.

**Advanced language learning** – Missionary interns are given an opportunity to learn more advanced ministry-related vocabulary and phraseology by teaming up with a national trained as an advanced language coach.

**Ministry skills development** – Interns team up with national lay pastors, evangelists, cell group leaders, orphanage workers, etc. (representing the specific ministry the intern feels called to do), and apprentice with them in order to acquire specific cross-cultural skills relevant to the people he or she will be working with.

### **III. Application of the model:**

How can this model be applied to other, challenging fields, such as the Middle East? Certainly many future destinations for missionaries will be far more difficult than the former USSR. As the doors begin to open in Iraq and perhaps other countries, what we do there will impact missions for generations to come. If our current approach to Russia has caused disillusionment and anger, what will be the result of a similar approach to the already hostile Muslim world?

An examination of the scriptures sheds light on the problem. Unfortunately, it is often the American cowboy approach of “head them up and move them out” which governs the way we send missionaries, rather than the Apostle Paul’s “take 13 years to be disciplined daily before you go” approach!

It is painfully evident that something is missing in the way we prepare for challenging fields such as Russia, the Middle East and China. In light of recent trends in the Middle East, it is time we think critically about our past mistakes and about how we should prepare missionaries for such challenging contexts. If we are serious about preventing high attrition and ensuring missionary effectiveness in the tough areas of the world, then we must be willing to ensure that those we send are equipped with the specific cross-cultural and linguistic skills they will need to be effective and stay the course. As one Russian friend put it: “Don’t send any more missionaries to us. And if you do, please send the right missionaries.”

# The Journey Deepens

*Jim Hogrefe & Steve Hoke*

## Introduction

Training...teaching...classes...books...exams...! Despite the anxiety that traditional forms of training produces – and the low retention rate of the material – the education establishment continues to devote trillions of dollars to it. Perhaps because this is the culture in which we live and there are rewards for those who excel, millions of students choose to learn this way. They learn how to get along in the system and most do learn something.

However, missionary organizations that follow this traditional method of training encounter additional challenges:

- What we teach is antithetical to our culture and everything that people know.
- Our training involves intellectual, emotional, personal and spiritual components, with the spiritual being the most important.
- There are no right or wrong answers.
- The group from which we draw most of our future missionaries – those under age 40 – prefer more interactive training.

## Background

In an effort to interest all generations and mobilize them to go out as Christian missionaries, *Heartland MissionsFests* sponsored large, biannual city-wide events

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**Jim Hogrefe** ([jhogrefe@omsinternational.org](mailto:jhogrefe@omsinternational.org)) was a management consultant and worked in financial management positions with several Fortune 500 companies before going to Russia with OMS International. In 1998, he became a regional director for OMS, mobilizing churches and individuals to increase their involvement in missions. He is currently Director of Recruitment for OMS. Jim holds a B.S. in industrial engineering and an M.A. in biblical studies

**Steve Hoke** ([shoke@crmnet.org](mailto:shoke@crmnet.org)) has served as a missions professor and director of campus ministries at Seattle Pacific University, director of field training for World Vision International, president of LIFE Ministries (Japan), and is currently vice president of staff development and training of Church Resource Ministries (CRM). In his present role he mobilizes, trains, and encourages international teams for ministry around the world. He is author of *SEND ME! Your Journey to the Nations*, written to assist Post-Moderns in their journey to where God might have them serve in the world. He's been married to Eloise since 1972, and has two children.

in Tulsa, OK that attracted thousands of people. There were plenary sessions with internationally known missionary speakers, seminars on a wide range of topics, and hundreds of exhibits related to missionary work. In terms of mobilizing and training participants for missionary service, the results were disappointing.

If traditional training methods are ineffective or unappreciated, and if large events are also ineffective, what can an organization do that will mobilize and train a new generation of missionaries? What would attract and help participants who have a strong desire to obey God, but who are confused about what this means?

### **A fresh approach**

The executive team of Heartland MissionsFest decided to go another direction. They chose a weekend retreat format to explore mission mobilization in a fresh approach and to teach participants about missionary life, opportunities and preparation.

Since this weekend is about being in passionate pursuit of God, His desire to spread the gospel throughout the world, and His personal plan for each participant, the focus of **The Journey Deepens** is spiritual with lots of time for worship, prayer and reflection. The perspective is more on learning than on teaching as participants interact with experienced missionaries and learn from them according to their individual interests and callings. The retreat format is based on three principles:

1. **Retreat**. Prospective missionary candidates need some time away in a retreat setting - away from their normal environment with all of its distractions and materialistic messages – where they can enter into an environment that encourages quiet time, prayer, reflection, and listening as they process and learn.

2. **Relationships**. The biblical priority of relationships in the Body and in accomplishing Kingdom ministry reminds us that God desires relationship with His people and that He works through His people to accomplish His plans. The Journey Deepens seeks to establish a closer relationship with God through corporate worship and individual and small group prayer, and to provide an environment that allows plenty of time for interaction in small groups, one-on-one discussions with each other and with missionaries, and during leisurely mealtimes. These interactions provide opportunities for participants to process what they are hearing and what is in their hearts, and to receive validation of their callings to careers that are discounted in our culture.

3. **Reinforcement.** Challenging talks, small group discussions, conversations with missionaries, book and video resources, and follow-up communication all help participants to maintain their commitment to the path God has called them to take. The biggest challenge for most participants in any training is to apply what they have learned. The key is to have somebody who will champion participants' commitments to change after the training is over.

So, what were the results? What feedback did participants provide?

"TJD has what future missionaries need: support, encouragement, and accountability. We don't need more options; we need to sit down and plan our next steps."

"Instead of implementing workshops, common at mission conferences, TJD used a series of small group discussions. Being able to ask missionaries question after question helped make going to the mission field seem closer and not so huge and complicated."

"This has been the greatest and most helpful retreat I've ever been to. Mixing with different people and missionaries was a great learning time. I really enjoyed the small groups. I enjoyed the one-on-one. It was awesome."

"This weekend gave me a clearer view and vision for what I would like to do and how I can get there. It brought people into my life to help me along the journey in many ways."

"This retreat helped solidify things about the future and expanded what I know about missions. I loved being able to talk with the missionaries who are doing what I dream of doing."

"It rocked my world. I've learned a whole new level of passion and action."

"The retreat provided an environment free of my everyday distractions, helped me process and gain refreshed perspective."

"I was so encouraged by my small group time and the sincerity of all the participants and missionaries. There was a different feel than a typical retreat."

Another result was that we were able to take these principles and experiences

and apply them in developing a retreat for the mission agency where we work. We had 50-some participants - mostly college students - attend a retreat at our headquarters from Friday night to Sunday noon. We followed the same three principles.

**1. Retreat.** Students came from 10 campuses and were in an environment free of ordinary distractions. The weekend included contemporary praise music, times of prayer, times for reflection, and free time on Saturday afternoon for recreation, fun, or a nap.

**2. Relationships.** It's important to keep the size of the event small (under 100). Missionaries facilitated small groups (5-7 students each), were available during meal times for interaction, and housed many of the students. There were also snack and fellowship times on Friday and Saturday nights.

**3. Reinforcement.** Challenging messages, vocational workshops, videos, books and testimonies all helped participants understand that their desire to serve in missions may be unusual, but not unique. We have also followed up the weekend with letters, e-mails and phone calls.

The results of this weekend are difficult to measure, but 20% of the participants already are pursuing missionary service.



## **Undergraduate Missions Training at Grace University – Omaha, Nebr. Intercultural Studies and The EDGE Program**

***John Costello & Michael Smith***

### **Context and Background**

Undergraduate Missions Training at Grace University – Omaha, Nebr.  
Intercultural Studies and The *EDGE* Program

### **Context and Background**

Presently, our missions training is conducted within the structure of a four year, accredited undergraduate degree program. Grace University was founded in 1943 as part of the Bible Institute movement with the purpose of training pastors, missionaries, and other full-time Christian workers for the ministry. In 1976, we became Grace College of the Bible to reflect our collegiate status. Then in 1995, we added two additional colleges and adopted the new identity Grace University.

The present curriculum template includes a 40 hour major in Bible and Theology, a 40 hour General Education Requirement, and a 48 hour professional major in Intercultural Studies. At the heart of that 48 hour professional major is The *EDGE* program.

The *EDGE* is a six month, field-based, 18 credit hour, accredited undergraduate intercultural ministry training program conducted in cooperation with mission organizations in East Africa (SIM International), Asia (SEND International), Latin

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**John Costello** ([jcostello@graceu.edu](mailto:jcostello@graceu.edu)) is a graduate of Grace University, Omaha, NE (B.S.), Spanish Language Institute, San Jose, Costa Rica (Diploma), and is a Master's candidate at Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, IN. John comes to GU after twelve years with Greater Europe Mission doing church planting and evangelism in northeastern Spain. He presently serves as Instructor of Spanish and Intercultural Studies at GU. He is married and has two children.

**Michael Smith** ([msmith@graceu.edu](mailto:msmith@graceu.edu)) is a graduate of Grace University, Omaha, NE (B.S.) and of Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, IN (M.Div.). He grew up as an MK on the Caribbean islands of St. Vincent and Grenada. He returned to Grace University in 1999 after serving with AVANT Ministries in Mali, West Africa. He presently serves as GU's Intercultural Studies Program Director. He is married with three children.

America (CAM International), and Europe (Greater Europe Mission).

The *EDGE* has been active since 1997 and has seen 56 students participate. We started the first training site in Mali, West Africa that was offered every other year in 1997 and 1999. In 2000 we introduced a new site in Taiwan/Philippines and moved to offering The *EDGE* each year. In 2001 a site in Kenya was added and then in 2002 we moved to offering two sites each year with the addition of a site in Mexico that was done simultaneously with a return to Taiwan/Philippines.

### **Participants and Format**

The *EDGE* is a requirement for all Intercultural Studies majors but is open to students from any major. Students from many other majors also participate this year. For example, we have students from our C.Ed., Business Adm., and Psychology departments who are a part of either our *EDGE* Asia or *EDGE* Europe teams that are currently preparing to leave in May of this year.

Students must complete their sophomore year to be eligible to participate. They have a choice of studying and ministering in one of four geographic locations either during their junior or senior year. Our present sites for 2004 are in Asia and Europe and in 2005 they are in Africa and South America.

Prior to participation, students must complete a one-hour Intercultural Ministry Practicum (Fall) and a three hour Intercultural Relationships course (Spring). The focus of the Intercultural Relationships course is upon who they are as individuals and Americans, how they relate to others around them (includes fellow students, host mission staff, home church and individual supporters), and how they relate to local culture and people in the place they are going.

During the six months (the last week in May through a few days prior to Thanksgiving), students complete 18 credit hours of coursework in Cultural Anthropology, World's Living Religions, Intercultural Communication, Strategies for Evangelism and Ch. Planting, History of Missions, and Intercultural Ministry Field Work. Of those six courses, five are presently taught by the combination of GU faculty who accompany the teams and qualified host mission organization staff or national church leaders.

In addition to the formal coursework, there is a healthy amount of non-formal and informal education and ministry experience that also happens. Each student is paired with a missionary mentor with whom they attend church and become involved in their ministries to the extent that language and culture allow.

Students live either with local host families or in an apartment. A good degree of independence is required of them for the purposes of experiencing life in another culture and also for the affect upon the host mission organization staff. Students are expected to cook, clean, shop, and transport themselves within the local economy. So far we have been able to offer the program for approximately \$1000 per month, not including tuition.

### **Description of Training Objectives**

*Academic* – “That the student demonstrate the knowledge and skills foundational to mission work.”

*Vocational* – “That the student confirm the believer’s calling in relation to personal gifts and abilities.”

*Emotional/Affective* – “That the student capture and translate spiritual passion for mission into long-term mission involvement.”

*Relational* – “That the student value team ministry and demonstrate effective teamwork.”

*Ministry Style* – “That the student internalize healthy missionary/church relationships and demonstrate appropriate cultural sensitivity.”

*Spiritual* – “That the student would evidence increasing maturity in their dependence on God.”

*Organizational* – “That the student seriously consider long-term involvement with the host mission organization.”

### **EDGE Program Distinctives**

- Length: Six months (End of May to the end of November)
- Requirement: All Intercultural Studies majors must participate to graduate
- Highly Integrated Learning Context:
  - Formal Missions Training - **18 credit hours of accredited Intercultural Studies coursework**; professors and mentors from five different countries
  - Non-formal Missions Training – **Ministry** alongside missionaries and national believers; experiential learning activities connected to

the intercultural coursework; **personal mentor** provided for each student during the experience



Informal Missions Training – **Daily life in another culture** with a good degree of independence and responsibility; living, studying, and ministering as part of a **team** of students rather than as individuals

- Various degree and concentration options: These include TESL certification, Business Administration (Intercultural, non-profit emphasis), Urban Ministry, Psychology, Drug and Alcohol Counseling, and Youth Work.
- A ten week Summer *EDGE* option is also available at each site for students from any major.

## Future Directions

Grace University is continuing to work with the present partnering organizations to develop two areas that are critical to the success of the program. They are the *academic coursework* and the *mentoring component*.

**Academic.** The academic coursework continues to undergo a close scrutiny as to the *what* and *how*. One question we continue to ask ourselves is “What should the content of missions training be at an undergraduate level?” We are essentially teaching a traditional missions curriculum. I think we are doing a tremendous job in terms of the in-context learning environment. But we continue to seek for additional elements that are both foundational to missions training and are in relation to where undergraduates are in terms of their capacity to integrate certain concepts. Should we be addressing intercultural leadership and generational conflict?

We are also seeking to increasingly integrate adult learning principles into each course to better address the *how*. Using professors from a number of cultural backgrounds is also a challenge but a good one to have. Using professors who have not experienced adult learning environments is also a challenge in this regard.

**Mentoring.** So far we have had a mentoring component on paper but need to do a better job of defining what we mean by mentoring, setting up a structure that is appropriate to the environment, and then seeking

to assess the outcomes that we are hoping for from the mentoring of each student. Presently we are providing mentors for students during the six months of the program but are seeking to provide that as a part of each semester of their time at GU beginning in the Fall of their sophomore year. We are also seeking to use *EDGE* participants as peer-mentors for incoming students and implement that expectation/requirement beginning Fall 05.

One additional challenge has been the use of non-North Americans in the mentoring role. Very rich but at times not very successful. The problem goes back to what I said above more than to the individuals who we use as mentors.

One final area that we are actively seeking to develop is the use of The *EDGE* program by local churches and mission organizations as a training requirement for their prospective missionaries. So far some possible initiatives have been explored but more can be done in this area.

## Learning that LASTS: Five criteria for excellence in training

**Roland Walker and Barbara Colborn**

Jesus was the best missionary trainer of all time. Starting with a few men whose background would not inspire mission executives today, he launched a sustainable missionary movement with very few of the resources that we assume are essential. Since he is the “author and finisher” of the entire missionary enterprise, we would do well to carefully examine and follow his approach.

Our first response may be to say that the differences between Jesus’ situation and ours are so great that we must look elsewhere for standards for ‘best practices.’ He worked with 12 disciples from one culture, rather than the multicultural task we face today. He chose his learners, they didn’t apply to join him. And of course, the big difference in context is that He was God!

Despite the differences between Jesus’ context and ours, the principles found in his approach to training his disciples are timeless, universal ones that we would profit from using today. This paper offers an overview of five principles based on an analysis of Jesus’ approach to missionary training. These five principles form the acronym LASTS. From what the Bible shows us about the impact of Jesus’ disciples, and from what current research into learning indicates, we believe that adults who are taught with this approach will experience lasting transformation—learning that LASTS.

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**Barbara Colborn** (Barbara\_Colborn@sil.org) serves as an Instructional Design Specialist in the Wycliffe International Personnel Section. She has helped teach Learning the LASTS workshops in the USA, Indonesia, the United Kingdom, Germany, and is scheduled to go to Manila this year to help teach an advanced workshop. Before joining Wycliffe in 1997 she worked as a publications editor and designer. Barbara says: “The Learning that LASTS approach has given me the confidence I need to teach. Teaching is part of the path of discipleship for me, and I’m learning how to make disciples through how I teach, not just what I teach.”

**Roland Walker** (roland\_walker@sil.org) joined Wycliffe Bible Translators in 1973 and served as a translator in Irian Jaya, Indonesia from 1978-1990, as well as developing an interest in the social use of language. In 1987 he completed a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics at UCLA and since then has taught ethnolinguistics, sociolinguistics, intercultural communication and training across cultures as part of his assignment. Roland studied with Jane Vella in 1995 and 1997 and has adapted her approach for SIL. He has taught these principles in one-week workshops more than 20 times. Workshop participants have included Asians, N. Africans, Americans and Europeans. Roland served as International Community Development Coordinator for SIL (1997-99) before returning to Indonesia in May 2000. In June 2004 he begins a new assignment in personnel and leadership development with the Indonesian Wycliffe organization.

## The LASTS principles are:

**Learner-centered.** Rather than developing an extensive curriculum, Jesus developed strong *relationships* with his learners. He invested time in a large group of followers and ministered to the masses at times, but he chose 12 to focus on. He showed them great *respect* by knowing them well, adapting his teaching to them – their strengths and their needs-- rather than requiring rigorous prerequisites and the completion of a standard curriculum. He chose content and learning processes that were most *relevant* to them.

Jesus was clear about his agenda. “. . . the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve. . . ” (Matthew 20:28). His learners’ needs shaped his curriculum. Their teachable moments dictated when and how instruction would take place.

Being learner-centered means putting the learners’ needs above our own-- tailoring the content to the learners. It means affirming learners and building on what they already know, thus demonstrating respect for the learners. A learner-centered approach to education means that we continually work to know the learners, and that we never do for learners what they can do for themselves.

**Action with reflection.** Jesus sent his disciples out in pairs so that they could apply the truths that he was teaching them. Then he took them aside to a quiet place to reflect on what they had been doing. (Luke 9:10; 10:17-20). We learn by reflecting on our actions (Proverbs 24:32). The Experiential Learning Cycle is one tool that uses reflection to extract learning from experiences. It uses four questions that lead us into description, analysis, generalizations and application to our next experience. We design tasks for learners to do, so that they can wrestle with concepts, try out skills, and explore their attitudes. Then we provide opportunities for them to reflect on these experiences in a critical way.

**Solving problems.** Jesus was not afraid to ‘let the learners struggle,’ whether the problem they wrestled with was casting a spirit out of a boy, rowing across a lake in a storm, or feeding 5,000 hungry people (‘You give them something to eat.’) They came to know Jesus better and they came to know themselves in the process. They learned what faith in action means.

Jesus wants us to deeply engage in learning with him, so his training program is built around the problems that life brings (James 1:2-5). Coming to God with our needs and drawing on his resources to solve our problems is the normal process of apprenticeship to the Master. Jesus posed the grandest problem of all time in what we call the Great Commission, and He continues to use that problem to



transform those who engage in it as his learners.

**Teamwork.** Jesus longs for us to work together in harmony, learn from one another and love each other deeply. Such oneness is convincing evidence to the world that Jesus is for real. Sharing our differing viewpoints in healthy dialogue stimulates our thinking (Proverbs 27:17). He expects us to help each other learn rather than compete with each other. In the context of working and learning as a team, competitiveness, unforgiveness and envy were uncovered in the twelve. Jesus used such teachable moments to reach his learners on a deep level.

**Self-discovery and self-direction.** “O taste and see” (Psalm 34:8) is inherent in the way God trains us to be his followers. He invites us to follow him, to seek for wisdom, to ask for what we need and want. He wants us to learn to direct our own lives in union with him (2 Timothy 2:12).

When we invite those we teach to make discoveries, they become aware of their potential to use their resources to enhance the learning community. When we invite them to be decision-makers, they take responsibility for their own development.

**Here is how we use the five principles.** We work to understand learners — their strengths and needs. We make learning active by offering learning tasks along with information that is relevant to their needs. Using what they already know and the additional resources we supply, learners solve problems in groups. Then we provide opportunities for them to reflect on these learning experiences. This process not only enables them to acquire specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes, but to more capably direct their own learning for a lifetime.

In the 35-hour training of trainers workshop called Learning that LASTS, we model and teach these principles. Working in pairs, participants apply everything they have seen and heard to designing and teaching two 40-minute modules. They leave knowing they can teach—they just did it!

The goal of Learning that LASTS is to help people serving in Christian ministry to strengthen their skills for training adults. (‘Go into all the world . . . *teaching* them to obey everything I have commanded you.’) In the past five years 600 Wycliffe members and local partners have taken Learning that LASTS. They are applying what they learned cross-culturally to teach Bible studies, linguistics, translation, project management, literacy and many other subjects. Sixty of these alumni have helped teach the workshop, and 20 of those have led the workshop. This approach is helping us work in partnership with national churches and Christian organizations to make God’s Word accessible to all people.



# The Summer Institute of Linguistics at the University of North Dakota: Language and Linguistics Package

**Mark E. Karan**

This presentation is designed to familiarize participants with SIL-related training programs. SIL training is not just for translators and linguists; it is designed for any successful college-level person who wants to be effective cross-linguistically and cross-culturally.

***SIL training is not just for translators and linguists; it is designed for any successful college-level person who desires to be effective cross-linguistically and cross-culturally***

This presentation also discusses how strategic planning of “soft” as well as “hard” curriculum is crucial to effective training programs. And, the presentation shows how elements of current second-language acquisition and phonetics theory are applied in SIL-related training.

## Outline

1. History: Wycliffe, SIL, and SIL Training
2. SIL at UND
3. Overview of Language and Linguistics course set
4. Hard and Soft Curriculum: Subjects & Permeating Themes
5. Phonetics
6. Second Language and Culture Acquisition
7. Advantages of the SIL Training

***Strategic planning of “soft” as well as “hard” curriculum is crucial to effective training programs***

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**Mark E. Karan** (Mark\_Karan@sil.org) has been a member of Wycliffe Bible Translators and the Summer Institute of Linguistics since 1976. Currently serving as Director of the Academic Training Division of SIL International, past responsibilities with SIL include language and dialect survey work, Bible translation, and linguistic consultation in West and Central Africa, and teaching in the USA, France, England, and the Central African Republic. Mark earned a B.A. in English Bible from Northeastern Bible College in 1976, an M.A. in Linguistics from the University of North Dakota in 1983, and a Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of Pennsylvania in 1996.

## **The History of Wycliffe, SIL, and SIL Training**

William Cameron Townsend founded Wycliffe Bible Translators. He was working as a missionary, selling Spanish language Bibles in Guatemala. There was a Cakchiquel Indian who worked alongside of Townsend who had heard Townsend explain how good and great God was, and how God had sent his Word in the form of the Bible. One day on a distribution trip, along a jungle trail, this Cakchiquel man asked Townsend, “If your god is so great, why doesn’t he speak in my language?” This challenge turned into a calling and then into a movement to reach all of the world’s languages with God’s Word.

In 1934 William Cameron Townsend founded Camp Wycliffe, a summer training program on a farm in the state of Arkansas, as a linguistic training school to train people to be involved in this movement. Two students attended. The course was repeated in 1935 with five students. By 1942, “Camp Wycliffe” had grown into two sister organizations, Wycliffe Bible Translators and the Summer Institute of Linguistics (WBT and SIL).

Wycliffe Bible Translators is now a family of Christian mission organizations in countries throughout the world working with churches and other Christian organizations to mobilize people, finances and prayer, and to partner in Bible translation ministries.

SIL International is a service organization that works with people who speak the world’s lesser-known languages. SIL International has been working for more than 60 years to study, develop and document the world’s lesser-known languages. This work has not only contributed to national and international understanding of the richness of human languages, but also has served to contribute to the well being of the peoples themselves. Partnerships are made with host governments, non-governmental organizations, universities, churches and local villages. SIL has carried out linguistic investigation in 1320 languages, spoken by 350 million people in more than 50 countries.

SIL is also involved in providing training in the following areas through a network of over 20 post-secondary programs.

- Cross-cultural, cross-linguistic work
- Linguistic analysis
- Language development
- Literacy
- Translation
- Language and dialect survey

One of these programs is the Summer Institute of Linguistics at the University of North Dakota.

## **SIL at UND**

The Summer Institute of Linguistics at the University of North Dakota has been operating for over 50 years. It is a joint program between the University of North Dakota and SIL International, where students can learn the fundamentals of language and culture acquisition, learn linguistic analysis skills, or continue on if they wish to earn an MA in Linguistics. Thousands of cross-cultural workers have received training through the program. At SIL UND, as in most other SIL-related programs, training is not just for those who plan to work with language-related activities, it is also for any successful college-level person who plans to live and work cross-culturally and cross-linguistically. The introductory course set is designed for both of these target groups.



## **Overview of Language and Linguistics course set**

The courses that make up the introductory course set at SIL UND (The "Language and Linguistics Course set) are:

- Second Language and Culture Acquisition
- Phonetics
- Grammar
- Sociolinguistics

## **Hard and Soft Curriculum: Subjects & Permeating Themes**

Hard and soft curriculum are related to hard and soft learning objectives. Hard learning objectives have to do with knowledge and skills, where soft learning objectives have to do with values and attitudes. Thus, hard curriculum is what we traditionally refer to as curriculum, aimed at what the students know or can do at the end of the training, and soft curriculum has to do with the attitudes and values we want students to have at the end of the training.

***Strategic planning of "soft" as well as "hard" curriculum is crucial to effective training programs***

In preparing the curriculum for a training program, it is advantageous to proactively consider and plan for not only the hard learning objectives, but also the soft learning objectives. Strategic planning of

“soft” as well as “hard” curriculum is crucial to effective training programs. The hard curriculum planning is expressed in terms of courses and course learning objectives or resulting competencies. The soft curriculum (values and attitudes) planning is best expressed in terms of permeating themes.

A sample list of permeating themes (soft curriculum) might be:

- Can-Do Attitude
- Openness to Innovation
- Humility
- Service
- Respect
- Teamwork
- Industriousness
- Appreciation for Diversity
- Personal and Spiritual Growth
- Good Personality Traits
- Morality
- Strong Families
- Capacity Building Orientation
- Multicultural Community
- Life-long Learning
- Service to All
- Use of Appropriate Learning Methodologies
- Professionalism



The Language and Linguistics Course set at SIL UND proactively plans soft learning objectives relating to attitudes and values as well as hard learning objectives relating to knowledge and skills.

The methods of communicating/transmitting soft learning objectives or permeating themes are by nature different from how hard learning objectives are achieved. Some effective ways to communicate or transmit soft learning objective (soft curriculum) are:

- Modeling (Staff choice is critical)
- Modification of practices – e.g., learning methodologies, multicultural community
- Attitude communication & emulation
- Values communication & emulation
- Appropriate intervention
- Storying

## Phonetics

This course trains people to recognize, transcribe and produce all of the sounds that are used in languages around the world. It also provides a good theoretical understanding of how the human vocal apparatus produces these sounds and how the sounds are classified by production criteria. This course is helpful for anyone desiring to speak a second language with a good accent. With a good phonetic understanding, people can understand, for example, how a French “u” sound is different from an English “u” sound, enabling them to produce the French “u” sound instead of speaking French with an English “u” sound.

## Second Language and Culture Acquisition

This course is theory-and-practice based. Recent practical insights and advances in second language acquisition theory are introduced. Students put the theory into practice by working with language resource people from languages around the world. The course equips the student for success in self-directed learning of language and culture through working one-on-one with a speaker of another language. It includes individual mentoring, discussion of strategies, theoretical principles, and second language acquisition literature.

Some of the practical insights and advances in Second Language and Culture acquisition theory that are incorporated are:

- Comprehension First
- Late Production
- Value of Repetition: use of MP3s, Digital Recordings
- Keeping the Affective Filter Down
- “Safe” environment, “Secure Nest” (Thomson), fun, stress-free, safe, “link Language Learning to your hobbies”
- Relevance – what is learned needs to be relevant to what the learner needs to know
- Communicative Approach (learn language in the context of communicative situations)
- Sensory-Rich Resources (visual, audio, tactile)
- Multiple Strategies and Resources (start ASAP)
- Structured Sessions
- Using Computer Programs
- TV, Movies, DVDs



- Children's resources
- Reading (Bible)
- Total Physical Response techniques with actions, photos, objects, story telling

## **Advantages of SIL Training**

As stated earlier, SIL training is not just for those who plan to work in language related ministries, it is also for any college-level person who plans to live and work cross-culturally and cross-linguistically. SIL-related training, like the training described in this presentation, is available in many different locations throughout the world.

Typical advantages of SIL-related training include:

- Training is current, practical, understandable and comprehensive
- Programs are family oriented
- Childcare is usually provided
- Supportive group environment
- Group recreation
- Group meals
- Training is college-level, thus the “lowest common denominator” to which courses are often paced has at least a B average after 2 years of college or university
- Cost is often low, for instance the SIL UND program costs ~\$1800, which includes 10 credit-hours of tuition, books, and 10 weeks of room and board
- Prepares the right people to be field language and culture acquisition coaches
- Prepares people to acquire languages and cultures where there are no language schools
- Prepares people to excel at language schools

Information about SIL-related training options can be found at <http://www.sil.org/training/>.

Information about SIL UND can be found at:  
<http://www.und.sil.org/> Phone: 800 292 1621

E-mail: Director\_silund@sil.org



## Recruiting and Preparing Missionaries in Your Church

**Holly McCallum**

**WHY STUDY** this subject? After all, isn't this a task for mission agencies? Yes, according to the traditional model used by the Western church for the past several centuries, typically mission agencies recruit and train missionaries in preparation for the field. However, my goal in this workshop was to challenge people to consider the New Testament model, where the early church recruited, sent and supported their own missionaries. (See the description in Acts 13 of Paul & Barnabus' first missionary journey to Antioch.) Most people work from the framework that someone else recruits & prepares missionaries, but I proposed that we consider the local church for these jobs! This brings up the question,

**WHAT IS "CHURCH?"** We know that the church is not a building; rather, it is the body of Christ, the "called out ones." (I Cor 12:13, 27) From Genesis to Revelation we read about God's yearning to reach the lost. So, too, the church yearns to reach those who don't yet know Him. So, what is a **spiritually vital church**?

It is a group of believers who are outward focused and therefore, involved with: **Evangelism** (2 Cor 5:18-19 – We are ambassadors for Christ); **Discipleship** (Matt 28:18-20); **Equipping** fellow believers (Eph 4:11-13); **Church planting**; **Helping the poor** (Amos 5:11); and, of course, **MISSIONS!** (John 20:21) Every member of the body of Christ is a vital player. (I Cor 12:7 and Eph 4:16) It is our privilege as members of the Body of Christ to find, train, send and support missionaries. It is members of the local church who know the skills, talents, spiritual gifts, strengths, weaknesses, character issues, etc. of those planning on going to the field. Living in close community and engaging in close relationships gives the local church deep insight that might be otherwise overlooked by mission agencies.

**Recruiting missionaries** can be "tricky" business requiring much prayer and discernment. Sometimes people respond to an emotional appeal to go to the

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*Holly McCallum (mccallumh@xenos.org) is the director of Missions Mobilization for Xenos Christian Fellowship. Xenos currently has 38 missionaries in 6 different fields. Holly teaches classes, leads short-term trips, and helps recruit and oversee missionaries. She serves on the boards for Caleb Project and APMC.*

field. This can cause us to send people prematurely, as well as overlook others God may be transforming over a period of time and “grooming” for the field. We should be looking for people who increasingly have their whole world view transformed (Romans 12.) This takes time. *“The best missionary is not necessarily the one with the PhD in Theology, but the one who is serving and ministering in the local church”* (Taylor, 1997).

The process of mobilizing the entire local church for missions can be viewed on a continuum, or funnel of phases, as follows:

**UNAWARE    AWARE    INTERESTED    CONCERNED    INVOLVED**

\*Moving from UNAWARE to AWARE involves capturing people’s attention through personal contact, videos, brochures, presentations, etc.

\*Moving from AWARE to INTERESTED requires identifying with a felt need or appealing to a personal value through Bible messages which feature God’s heart for all peoples.

\*Moving from INTERESTED to CONCERNED requires introducing a personal dimension to increase desire for involvement. This is where involving people in short-term trips comes into play.

\*Moving from CONCERNED to INVOLVED requires providing a specific opportunity to act.

A different continuum describes 5 phases Xenos uses for individual **missionary preparation**. These phases include:

**PRELIMINARY INTEREST    EXPLORATION    PREPARATION    RACE    APPOINTMENT**

(For detailed information on each phase, please visit our website at <http://www.xenos.org/ministries/mobilizers/go.htm>.)

A helpful tool used to decipher who may be taking steps toward the mission field is the **“GO LIST.”** This is simply a list of names I keep of individuals who are moving in the right direction. For example, as new opportunities are offered and people take the initiative, their names are put on the list in order of priority. We watch and pray for their ministry, their response to frustration & failure, and their ability to maintain deep relationships & resolve conflict, etc. When the time comes to consider new individuals for a particular field, I consult the GO list to come up with possible candidates. Potential candidates are then interviewed,



references are checked and the elders choose the final candidates. Once chosen, it is time for more specific preparation, covering four major areas.

Assessing their ability to apply **BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE** in both personal and ministry contexts. Is God's Word the basis of how they make decisions, approach ministry and relationships, and live out their lives in every area? Are they able to feed themselves, as well as teach others God's Word? Do they have a strong understanding of Ecclesiology, including "doing church" in a cross-cultural context?

Failure, as well as victory in **MINISTRY EXPERIENCE** is also very important. For example, have they ever led someone to Christ and worked with a young believer? Have they successfully discipled someone to maturity? Do they possess good listening and people skills? Are they able to love the unlovable and do they exemplify servant leadership? Can they work with a team? Do they exemplify someone who has learned from their failures? (Failure is an essential ingredient in order to be "successful" on the field.) Do they have an understanding and respect for the spiritual warfare they will be entering into on the field?

**CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING** includes some knowledge of Anthropology and the study of their target field. Previous hands-on experience with a short-term trip or with cross-cultural ministry in our Urban Concern inner-city ministry is very valuable. Established missionaries who are on home-assignment also provide training to missionary candidates, as well as people in the church whose profession and expertise might benefit the potential missionary in some way.

Finally, a candidate's **CHARACTER AND INNER LIFE** is also taken into consideration. Are they open about their weaknesses and sin, or do they have a secret sin life? Do they have a "learner" mentality, rather than a "let me show you how to do it the right way" mentality? Do they abide in the Vine?

In conclusion, we are not necessarily looking for the apostolically gifted, seminary-trained person who looks good on the outside. Rather, we are looking for someone who has come to appreciate that abiding in Christ is the only way to live out the Christian life. Abiding in Christ bears fruit that will remain.

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## Less Me ... More We: Why partnering is an outstanding model for training

**George Schultz**

### Introduction: Kinds of Partnerships

There are many different kinds of partnerships. Some of them might be described as follows.

1. **Full Partnership.** A voluntary contract between two or more persons or organizations to place their money, efforts, labor, and skills or some one or all of them in lawful commerce or business, and to divide the profits and bear the loss in certain proportions, according to the interest of each in the partnership. Each partner is fully liable for all debts, and all capital produced or acquired becomes partnership property.
2. **Limited Partnership.** A form of business in which certain partners are liable only to the extent of their investment but do not participate in the management of the business.
3. **Association.** A grouping of people for mutually beneficial purposes or for the furtherance of some goal. Associations are usually found among not-for-profit organizations.
4. **Alliance.** The cooperation of two companies to achieve economic goals such as lower costs, greater productivity, competitiveness, and vitality. Alliances can be very loose in relationships.
5. **Coalition.** A temporary alliance of distinct parties, persons, or states for joint action or to achieve a common purpose.

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**George Schultz, Jr.** ([gscultz@cit-online.org](mailto:gscultz@cit-online.org)) served on the field from 1980 to 1994 in Canada, Alaska, and Russia doing demographic and receptivity survey work in Minnesota, Ontario and Manitoba, teaching and serving as director of the Arctic Bible Institute, planting a church in an Athabaskan village in Alaska, serving as Director of Missionary Training Outreach (summer missionary program), Alaska Field Director, Director of Siberian Ministries, and Russian Field Director. Since 1995, George has served as the director of the Center for Intercultural Training (CIT), a pre-field missionary training program in North Carolina. The CIT program now services a partnership for the training of missionaries from a variety of mission agencies and churches. George holds a B.A. in Biblical Studies, the M.Div. from Denver Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary and the D.Min. from Columbia International University. His dissertation was entitled Models of Missionary Training: An Assessment of Alternative Approaches to Training for Cross-Cultural Ministry.

6. **Affiliate.** An organization whose management is connected by contract with that of another organization. This connection can be made through ownership of stock by a parent corporation or through a community of interest.
7. **Joint Venture.** An agreement by two or more parties to work together, usually limited to one project. They will share in profits and losses. This differs from partnership which forms the basis of cooperation on many projects.
8. **Syndicate.** Has a meaning similar to joint venture but is mostly limited to conducting some business transaction, usually financial.
9. **Consortium.** A joint venture owned by more than two organizations. Together they promote a common objective or engage in a project beneficial to all members usually entailing a sharing of resources.
10. **CIT Definition.** A cooperation between organizations who share properties and services for the common purpose of missionary training.

## **I. Motivation for Developing a Training Partnership**

- A. Common ground
  1. Missionary attrition
  2. All agencies do some form of training
  3. Financial and personal cost
  4. Concern for quality
- B. Research indicates advantages of training partnership. (IFMA respondents)
  1. Access to trainers and experts outside of agency
  2. Enhanced learning through exposure to larger training groups
  3. Demonstrates a greater unity of the body of Christ
  4. Larger range of training options
  5. Shared costs of trainers and facilities
  6. Additional training available at times appropriate to the need of the trainer
  7. In control of content of training

## **II. Why the Partnership works – underlying principles**

- A. Parallel goals of many foster cooperation
- B. Allows for joint ownership/control/decision-making (steering committee,

annual meetings)

- C. Eliminates duplication – reduced costs (personnel/trainers, facilities)
- D. Full-time facilitator – caretaker
- E. Agencies provide trainers at little or no cost
- F. Joint development of curriculum
  - 1. Focus on the felt needs (basic curriculum)
  - 2. Minimizes peripheral material
  - 3. Able to adjust quickly to changing needs (Core 5)
  - 4. No one size fits all so develop that which fits most
    - a. Training fits needs regardless of context (people groups/countries)
    - b. Training fits needs regardless of type of ministry
- G. Agency feedback
- H. Financial incentive (partner discounts, no membership dues)

### **III. Strong, Highly-Focused Curriculum**

CIT provides the training to meet the goals of the partnership. The agency sets training goals for missionary and the agency decides what training their missionaries need to take:

- A. Full-term package
- B. Core-Five package
  - 1. Equipping for Cross-Cultural Life & Ministry
  - 2. Language Acquisition
  - 3. Sharpening Your Interpersonal Skills
  - 4. Effective Teams & Team Leaders
  - 5. Spiritual Formation
- C. Bible – OT & NT Survey, Doctrine Survey, Acts, Studying/Using Scripture
- D. Summer Intensive
- E. Specialty courses – Chronological Bible Storying, Church Planting Models  
Ethnomusicology

- F. Out-of-class learning
  - 1. Close community living
  - 2. Major responsibilities
  - 3. Church assignments
  - 4. Peer evaluations
  - 5. Small group discipling
  - 6. Matching staff w/students for encouragement
  - 7. Personal growth issues

#### IV. Major Student Outcomes

- A. Prepared for the stresses of cross-cultural entry
- B. Become students of their target culture
- C. Researched and formulated a preliminary strategy of ministry
- D. Developed an understanding of “team” and the role of leadership/followership
- E. Equipped to handle interpersonal issues, conflicts, and disagreements
- F. Practiced skills of language learning
- G. Taken steps to spiritual freedom
- H. Prepared to minister out of the gospel and their Sonship
- I. Developed a solid Biblical base

## Revisiting Your Childhood Home Using the Grid and Group Theory And the Image of God

***Pete and Sheryl Takagi Silzer***

Everyone has encountered some kind of misunderstanding in their interactions with others, whether in their own culture or in a different culture. These misunderstandings are often unexpected and cause stress. Over time these little stresses cause an automatic negative response towards certain people. Misunderstandings can be caused by different role expectations, visiting customs, eating preferences, work habits, and concepts about cleanliness. If these misunderstandings are not resolved, they lead to long-term stress and create a sense of alienation. John Condon, a pioneer in cross-cultural studies, suggested that a study of one's home could help a person overcome cultural misunderstandings:

. . . seeing the home as a microcosm of society, the place where each person first learns how to communicate within the norms of his culture. We should each think back to our own homes and recall as best we can where, when, how, and with whom we first learned to communicate.<sup>1</sup>

Although Condon's article recommended using house floor plans to learn about one's own culture as long ago as 1975, few programs have used this important

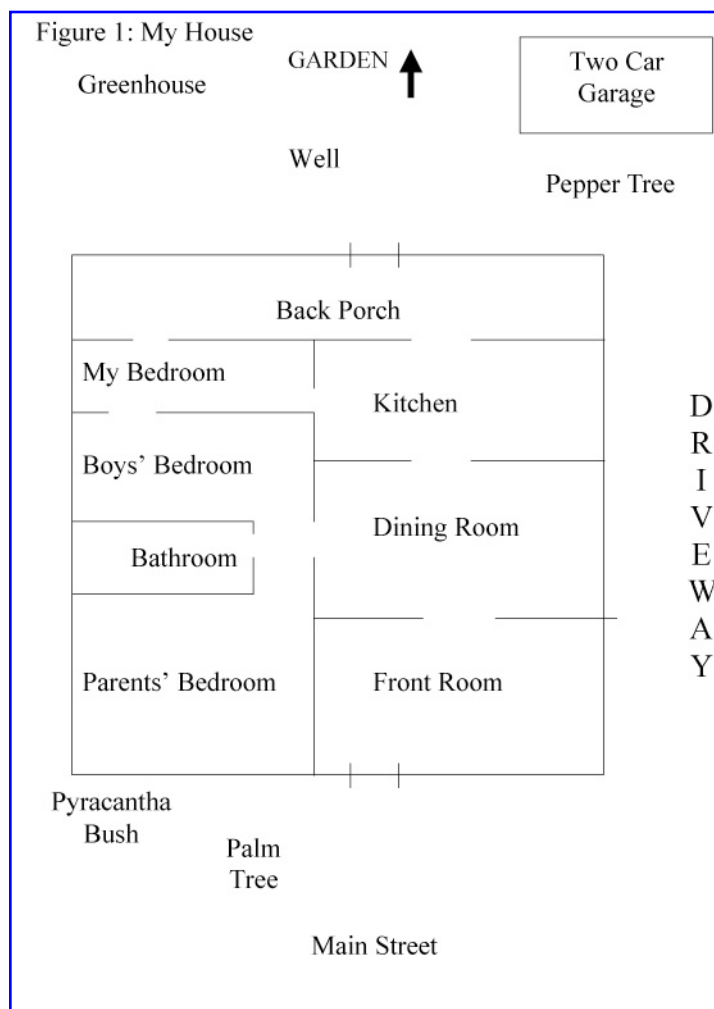
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**Peter James Silzer** has been with SIL since 1972, as translator in PNG, 1974-75, Indonesia, 1975-1992, and Biola University, 1992-present. He has been involved in missionary training at SIL since 1972, and Biola since 1992, conducted seminars in Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Australia, and the US, and been a Perspectives speaker since 1997. He is currently Director of SIL at Biola Cooperative Program. Peter holds a B.A. from Concordia Lutheran Senior College, and the PhD in Linguistics, from the Australian National University.

**Sheryl Takagi Silzer** (SherSilzer@aol.com) has been with SIL since 1967 as translator in Colombia, SA, 1968-1972, PNG, 1974-75, Indonesia, 1975-1992, and Biola University, 1992-present. She has worked in missionary training at SIL since 1967, Biola School of Intercultural Studies since 1994, and Talbot School of Theology since 1998 (Asian American Studies), conducted seminars in Indonesia, Philippines, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Australia, and the US, and been a Perspectives speaker since 1997. She currently serves as adjunct professor at Biola University (School of Intercultural Studies and Talbot School of Theology). Sheryl holds a BA in Spanish, from UCLA; MA, Intercultural Studies from Biola University; MA, Theology emphasis from Talbot Theological School; and, PhD, Intercultural Studies from Fuller School of World Mission.

tool to help people become aware of their own culture. Most researchers use house floor plans to study other cultures. We have chosen to use the house floor plan as a tool to help students with their cultural self discovery before they learn to use it with other cultures. The training program developed here<sup>2</sup> came out of my own (Sheryl's) experience of extreme cross-cultural stress<sup>3</sup> and the need to find relief. I found that (contrary to adaptation theories), my cross-cultural stress increased rather than decreased over time. I came to realize that my responses were not always right or wrong as either choice resulted in stress. I also saw how my own cultural values conflicted with biblical values. My responses and values produced on-going stress that could only be diminished by restoring God's image in my life. After a period of study and reflection on my field experiences, I developed a training program that integrates the use of the house floor plan, the Grid and Group anthropological theory, the concept of the image of God, and linguistic concepts.

When I compared the house floor plan of my childhood home with that of an

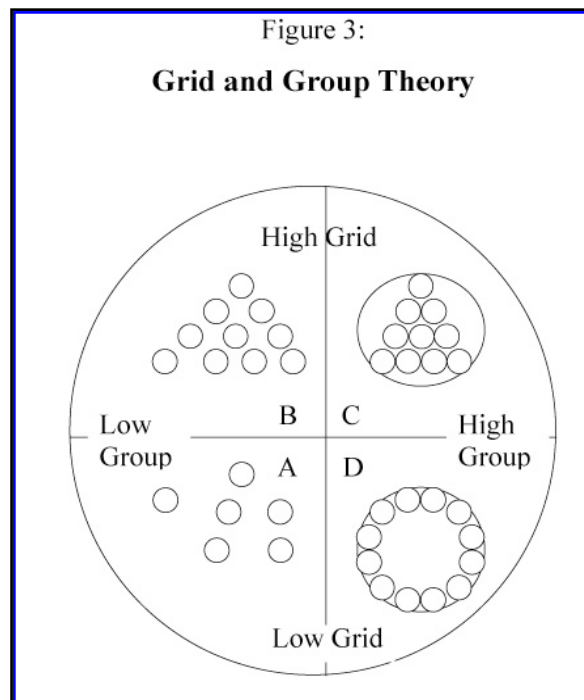
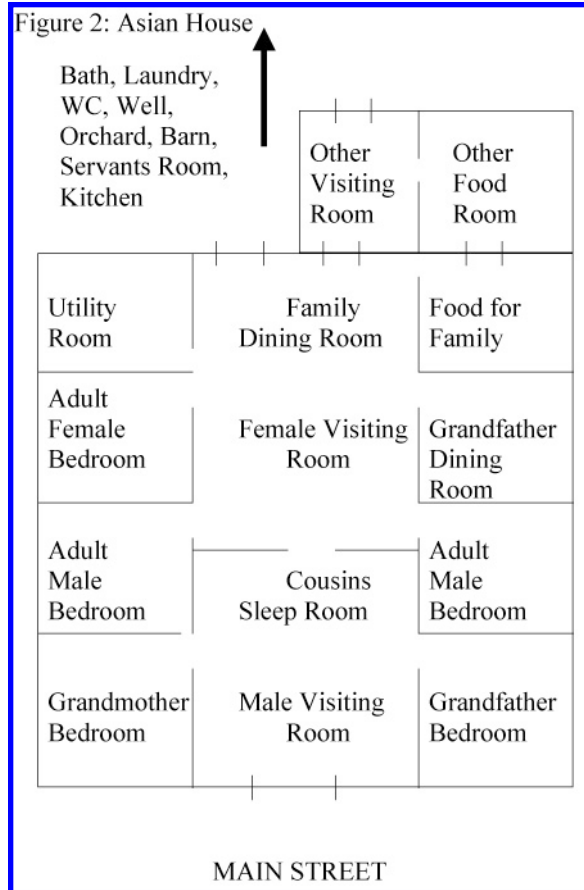


Asian friend, I realized how the house floor plan was a microcosm of culture. This comparison revealed obvious cultural differences (See Figure 1 and 2).

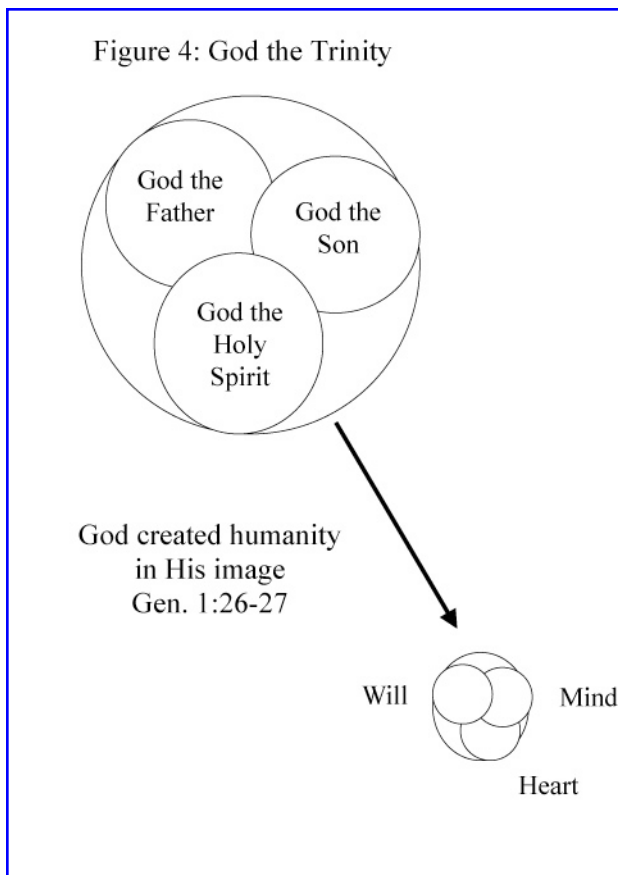
The Asian house has clear distinctions based on age and gender, as well as social class. These distinctions are indicative of a High Grid culture. There are also High Group characteristics in the use of common areas, such as the sleeping arrangements for the cousins. Through my study of this Asian house floor plan I recognized the cultural differences and came to understand the significance of these differences. The Grid and Group theory of culture provides a framework of

cultural types or ideals to understand these differences. Through this exercise I began to see that my own cultural identity was formed in my childhood home through the everyday practices of eating, working, sleeping, visiting, and cleaning. These activities shaped my cultural ideal as a Low Grid, Low Group individual.

Mary Douglas, a British social anthropologist, developed the Grid and Group theory after studying a variety of cultures around the world, from very industrialized nations to agricultural based societies. She found that there were two main recurring themes—differences and similarities. She called the differences GRID and the similarities GROUP (See Figure 3). GRID refers to differences such as age, gender, and class that shape behavior. GROUP refers to similarities that reinforce group belonging and identity. These two dimensions form four different types or cultural ideals: A= Individuating (Low Grid, Low Group), B= Subjugating (High Grid, Low Group), C=Integrating (High Grid, High Group), and D=Equalizing (Low Grid, High Group). The preference for a particular cultural type reinforces a cultural bias towards the other types. The four cultural types are part of a whole; thus, understanding one of the types helps in understanding the other types. A person from a Low Grid, Low Group society such as the United States will gain insights into Asian cultures that have High Grid, High Group ideals, and vice versa.







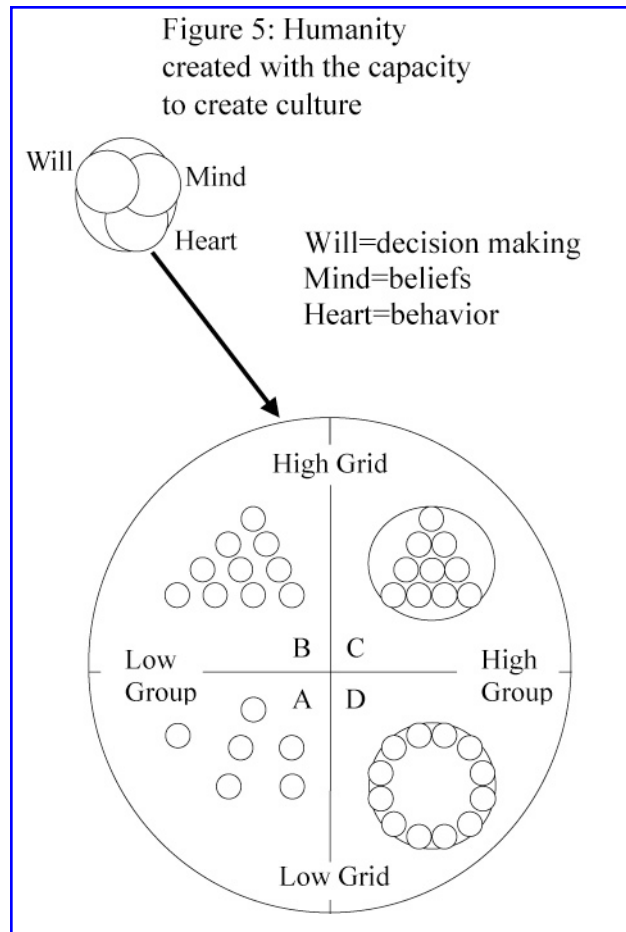
God created all of humanity in His image (Gen. 1:26-27) (See Figure 4). This image includes the authority of God the Father, the truth of God the Son, and the relationships created by God the Holy Spirit. Humanity in turn has utilized its capacity to create culture, although each culture shows signs of being affected by the Fall (See Figure 5). At the end of time the scene before the throne (Rev. 7:9) reveals that the image of God will be visible through different ethnicities, languages, and nationalities. The image of God has been viewed as substantive (the human capacity to make decisions), functional (the responsibility to take care of creation), and relational (interaction with one another).<sup>4</sup> These three views can be equated with the human will, mind, and heart respectively. Due to the Fall,

the image of God is no longer perfect. It is now distorted in culture and needs to be restored. Human culture, for example, may respect authority of the individual or of the group but does not necessarily reflect a proper respect for the authority of God. Understanding our cultural self as well as that of others can facilitate this restoration.

Language can also provide insights into cultural values. As students look at their house floor plan and compare it with a cross-cultural partner they also compare cultural metaphors, key terms, and proverbs from the two languages. In the North American culture, a dime can be "spent," "saved," or "wasted." In the same manner time can be "spent," "saved," or "wasted." The Western cultural metaphor that "time is money" is reflected in many common expressions. Learning the words associated with the house and key family relations also helps one learn cultural values. At the same time proverbs such as "home is where the heart is," "a man's home is his castle," or "a home without children will not know happiness" all express different values of the home.

The training combines these four elements above in four areas: 1) physical

aspects of the home (the floor plan and surrounding area), geography, climate, transportation, flora, fauna, etc.; 2) the role and responsibilities of the family members or significant others (family tree), and nurturing practices; 3) activities in the home as they relate to different rooms: hospitality (front room/living room, porch, sitting room, etc.); food (preparation, presentation, distribution, etc.); work (inside or outside the home, economic basis, etc.); rest (sleep, siesta, celebration of rites of passage); cleaning (physical home, health, and possessions); and 4) addressing present day conflicts (how cultural practices form moral standards, comparing these standards with biblical morality, and conflict resolution).



A brief example of this training can be demonstrated by two people drawing and discussing the house floor plan of the home where they spent the most time while growing up. (For those who have lived in many homes, the one which contains the most memories would be the most helpful. Although there are different locations, the cultural practices most likely remain the same.) Drawing the house takes only a few minutes unless one has difficulty remembering their home. Once this is completed, each person shares their home with a partner. Then individuals are invited to share what they learned from the exercise, whether about themselves or about others. A number of common observations come out of this exercise.

1. It is amazing to discover how little we know about others even if we have worked with them for a number of years.
2. How different other homes are from ours.
3. It is often difficult to remember details of our childhood homes because we seldom talk about them.
4. The connection developed between partners in just a few minutes is surprising. They discover similarities in the use of space or shared unique features of the home.

5. The questions that come to mind in this exercise are excellent questions for culture learning.

The combination of the house floor plan, the Grid and Group theory, the concept of the image of God, and language study is a powerful tool to develop cultural self-awareness and understanding of other cultures.

### **Resources**

<sup>1</sup> Cogdon, J. and Fathi, Y., *An Introduction to Intercultural Communication* (Yarnouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1998). p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> These materials have been used in a workshop setting with women in Asia as well as in a multicultural classroom setting at Biola University since 1998. The course is most effective when students have significant cross-cultural experience.

<sup>3</sup> Silzer, S., "Combating Chronic Stress by Restoring God's Image." *In Frontline Women: Negotiating Cross-Cultural Issues in Ministry*, M. Kraft, ed. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2003), pgs. 165-176.

<sup>4</sup> Ciocchi, D, and Moreland, J. (eds.), *Christian Perspectives on Being Human* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993), pgs. 22-23.

## Perspectives on the World Christian Movement

**Bob Stevens and Meg Crossman**

### What is *Perspectives*?

*Perspectives* is a course of vision—a vision that mobilizes and equips the people of God to live a life of passion and purpose as Jesus did. *Perspectives* is also a course of purpose—a purpose to create a movement to help God's people embrace their destiny of extending the blessing of Abraham received to every people group.

*"Perspectives is a catalytic course designed to equip the people of God for strategic participation in His plan to reach all peoples, tongues, tribes and nations."* —*Perspectives* Coordinators Field Council, Raleigh, NC July 1995

The *Perspectives* course is both a training and mobilization tool that is valuable to missions organizations and local churches. Over 60 mission agencies recommend this course to their "pre-candidates." Field research has shown that missionaries who have been through *Perspectives* have a greater chance of making it through their second term. Tom Telford, of APMC, reports in his annual review of top mission churches in North America that these top churches require their mission committee members to take *Perspectives*. As a mobilization tool, *Perspectives* exposes students to God's heart and the Holy Spirit takes the content to motivate them to further pursue what God might have for them.

*Perspectives* classes are held across North America in the spring and fall, usually in local churches, with summer and January intensive classes in Pasadena, CA

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**Bob Stevens** ([bsuscwmse@aol.com](mailto:bsuscwmse@aol.com)) has served fifteen years as the director of the South East Regional Office of the U.S. Center for World Mission, in Raleigh, NC. In the past 17 years he has helped supervise 183 *Perspectives* classes in the southeast and led 42 *Perspectives* Coordinators Workshops. He chaired the first meeting of the *Perspectives* field council in 1995 in Raleigh and has served since the beginning on the Executive Coordinators Council. Bob co-edited *African American Experience in World Missions: A Call Beyond Community*, which gives an overview of the biblical challenge, historical and cultural examples, and strategic need of African American involvement with world evangelization. Bob holds a B.S. in Chemical Engineering. He is married to Ellen and has four children.

**Meg Crossman** ([MegCrossman@cox.net](mailto:MegCrossman@cox.net)) has been working with *Perspectives* and *Perspectives*-related programs for 17 years in Arizona, completing 77 classes with ten new classes projected for this Spring. As Editor of *Worldwide Perspectives* and *Perspectives Exposure*, she has worked to make the *Perspectives* material as user-friendly as possible for churches and lay people.

at the US Center for World Mission (USCWM). The course presents the biblical, historical, strategic and cultural facets of God's work among the nations, from Genesis to Revelation and employs integrative case studies. Having a different instructor each week brings depth and experience to the classes from their personal walk with God, their agency, denomination, school, or church ethos as well as their passion for a particular field of service. Each instructor's style of presentation adds to this diversity. Trained coordinators who arrange for the guest speakers and facilitate creative interaction lead the classes. Each site location offers graduate and undergraduate credit. Online classes are also available.

## History of the Course

*Perspectives* arose after the Urbana Student Conference in 1973, where there was an upsurge of the number of students showing renewed interest in missions and many committing themselves to advance the Kingdom worldwide. Dr. Ralph Winter, founder of the USCWM, organized the Summer Institute of International Studies and offered the first *Perspectives* course in Wheaton, IL in the summer of 1974, then called *Understanding World Evangelization*. After the establishment of the USCWM in 1976, the operating base for the class moved to Pasadena. *Perspectives* was first offered by extension at Penn State in 1980. The first edition of the *Perspectives Reader* and *Study Guide* was completed in 1982 and by 1986 there were 6000 alumni. That summer regional coordinator workshops were held in five cities in the US. By 1992 there were over 40 classes per year across the U.S. and Canada with 18,000 alumni. By 1999, when the third edition of the *Perspectives Reader* and *Study Guide* were released, *Perspectives* was offered in 80 locations annually and the number of alumni had grown to 35,000. At the beginning of 2004, more than 55,000 people have taken the course at more than 150 locations. Over 700 speakers serve the classes in the U.S. and Canada. In addition to North American classes, other locations have included Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Egypt, Germany, India, Japan, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria, Peru, Romania, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, and Venezuela. The *Perspectives* concept has spawned several other, similar programs as well as a number of publications, adapted to local or regional needs. For example, *Misión Mundial* (World Mission) was developed for Latin American readers and *Worldwide Perspectives* is an adaptation used by the Arizona Perspectives Partnership in more than a dozen states. Other books, studies, and seminars continue to build on *Perspectives* themes. The original *Reader* has been translated into Korean, Russian, French, and Mandarin, as well as English versions for the Philippines and South Asia.

## Content of the Course

More than 70 authors with the best ideas and practices from a wide spectrum of the evangelical mission world contribute articles to the *Reader*, covering almost all of the major issues in missions. The *Study Guide*, used by the USCWM programs, pulls together the anthology of articles from the reader into a cohesive curriculum. The missiological concepts inherent in *Perspectives* have been distilled by Steve Hawthorne, author of the *Study Guide*, as follows:

1. God initiates and advances work in history to accomplish His purpose.
2. God calls His people to join Him in fulfilling His purpose.
3. God's purpose is to bless all peoples so that Christ will be served and glorified among all peoples.
4. God accomplishes His purpose by triumphing over evil in order to rescue and bless people and to establish His kingdom rule throughout the earth.
5. The Bible is a unified story of God's purpose.
6. God's work in history has continuity and will come to an ultimate culmination.
7. The Christian movement has brought about positive social transformation.
8. The mission task can and will be completed.
9. The world's population can be viewed in terms of people groups.
10. The progress of world evangelization can be assessed in terms of church-planting movements within people groups.
11. Completing the mission task requires the initiation and growth of church-planting movements that follow social avenues of influence.
12. Completing the task requires effective cross-cultural evangelism that follows communication patterns within cultures.
13. Completing the task requires strategic holism in which community development is integrated with church planting.
14. Completing the task requires collaborative efforts of churches and mission agencies from diverse cultures and traditions.
15. God calls His people to embrace strategic sacrifice and suffering with Christ in order to accomplish His global purpose.
16. By participating in the world Christian movement, every believer can find a way to live with vital, strategic significance in God's global purpose.

To summarize, God initiates mission with the end that He will finish the task and we get to be co-blessers with Him. God is at work in history pursuing the fulfillment of His purpose. This leads to a compelling HOPE, a prophetic certainty that God will accomplish His purpose. Instead of doing things for

God, we become energized pursuers of God's glory to see that glory proclaimed among the nations. A self-centered worldview is transformed into a God-centered worldview. For further explanation on each of the Core Ideas, visit [www.perspectives.org/about/coreideas.html](http://www.perspectives.org/about/coreideas.html).

## How *Perspectives* Mobilizes

As *Perspectives* employs the gifts of people with differing backgrounds and talents, encourages churches to work together, and opens the eyes of God's people to His work among all peoples, it has a dynamic mobilizing effect. Churches begin to see not only the needs of the unreached, but they also see their own specific ability to contribute to God's work in the world. They embark on an adventure of finding God's particular call to them. They realize the need to partner with others and to prepare their people. They understand the difference it can make for their body when missions is at the heart of their church.

*Perspectives* often lays the groundwork for many kinds of networking. Churches hear new instructors, who are frequently asked to consult with missions committees or teach at church mission conferences. Short-term visits are planned through the agencies which instructors represent. Possible church-based teams are developed with a view to the least reached areas. Research is done by students that serve the unique vision of their church and connects them to others as advocates focused on the same peoples. Grass roots movements develop in various regions. Partnerships grow naturally by on-going consultations.

Carol Davis of Global Spectrum, one of the instructors in great demand says, "*Perspectives* classes are the most exciting groups I speak to all year. They are like 'melted wax' ready to be shaped for the purposes of God." Dennis Cochrane with Wycliffe Bible Translators says that he would rather speak to a *Perspectives* class than any other group. "The *Perspectives* network of coordinators works hard to find those who are most interested in pursuing and learning about God's heart. I have seen lasting fruit come from the classes where I have been privileged to teach that literally touch the ends of the earth."

Because it is trans-agency and trans-denominational in its presentation and broad in its theological and cultural scope, *Perspectives* enlarges the vision of everyone it touches. Churches find newly significant roles; agencies are asking new questions; lay professionals and skilled workers of all kinds take hold of new opportunities for involvement and service. It is difficult to overestimate the positive impact of this course for all who are involved in it, year after year.



Visit a class near you. Sit in on a presentation. Buy a copy of the materials. *Perspectives* is a major mobilizing force in this generation and its effects are only just beginning to be fully felt.

It is our prayer that it will continue to change paradigms and energize God's people wherever it is taken, expanding His Kingdom and exalting His Glory throughout the earth. For North American locations, visit [www.perspectives.org](http://www.perspectives.org) or [www.worldwideperspectives.org](http://www.worldwideperspectives.org).

### ***Perspectives* is Nested into a Continuum of Curriculum**

At the USCWM, *Perspectives* has spawned three other academic training programs: a one-year undergraduate program called *INSIGHT – the Intensive Study of Integrated Global History and Theology*, a one-year Bible and Mission graduate program called *World Christian Foundations*, and a K-12 curriculum. For more information visit [www.uscwm.org/insight](http://www.uscwm.org/insight) and [www.worldchristianfoundations.org](http://www.worldchristianfoundations.org).

### **Conclusion**

*Perspectives* is a biblical journey that integrates the global heart of God into the daily life of the Christian. The training and mobilization that has taken place through this course is a testimony to God's desire to remember his covenant with Abraham to bring about the blessing of the all the families and peoples on earth. The course has enabled the life experiences and lessons of so many faithful instructors and coordinators to be passed onto others. Many involved with the *Perspectives* have contributed additional valuable books and seminars that have multiplied the vision of *Perspectives* throughout North America and the world that are too numerous to mention. We thank the NTMF for the opportunity to present our passion and experience with this wonderful tool for the advance of God's kingdom.



## WorldView

### An International Agency Committed to Creating Understanding of God's Truth in Every Culture.

**Don Smith**

WorldView has developed its approach to training for mission service - short, mid or long-term, through more than 40 years of involvement in cross-cultural missionary service and training, working with multiple ethnic groups in dozens of countries. We have designed training programs after recognizing both felt and real needs through the extensive and diverse inter-cultural experiences of WorldView staff.

Six distinctives provide a framework for development of training with each group we are assisting, and with whom we design each training program:

1. Integrated Christian Communication- a "bird's eye view" of how we do mission.
2. Introducing an easily understood framework for learning about culture and change .
3. Teaching participants how to go as learners.
4. Using a simple but powerful approach to learning a culture.
5. Training through "doing it."
6. Use of the Internet for pre-field preparation, on-field interaction, and post-field retrospect (debriefing).

We are concerned with specifically Christian communication, having its **foundation** within the perfect communion/communication of the Godhead and extending through the **framework** of society, expressed at the **functional** level

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*Donald K. Smith (office@worldviewcenter.org) is Dean of WorldView Institute, and formerly Distinguished Professor of Intercultural Communication and Missiology at Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon, for twenty-one years. He and Mrs. Smith began the International Institute of Christian Communication (IICC) in 1964, which today sponsors WorldView Center (a graduate level international living-and-learning community) and WorldView Institute in Portland. A University of Oregon Ph.D., Don worked as a missionary journalist and educator in Africa for 30 years, based in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Kenya. Focus on church leadership development led to the founding of Daystar University in Nairobi, Kenya by Dr. and Mrs. Smith. Dr. Smith's experience includes teaching, editing, publishing, developing literacy materials in African languages, anthropological research, evangelism, preaching and supervising Bible translation programs in more than 40 languages. As a consultant, he has helped over 70 different Christian groups in about 50 countries. His books, *Creating Understanding* and *Make Haste Slowly*, are used widely in missions training. Through IICC/WorldView, he continues an extensive overseas ministry, focusing on emerging Third World mission societies and leadership of national churches.*

through the various communication arts. More than content or style defines truly Christian communication.

The challenge is to proclaim, make known, communicate the life of Christ. His life must be present and evident in any who seek to “do mission.” Specific skills provide opportunity to share that Life. But without intimacy of communication with God that cannot happen regardless of professional abilities. So – prayer is foundational, as is the practical ability to make His Word relevant in each context of ministry. Emphasis is given to spiritual formation and growth.

This **foundation** of communication, the experiencing of God, is at the center of mission. That experience is expressed through the **framework** of society by the use of **functional** communication tools.

### **Begin With Listening**

Even though we bring the incomparable Message of Christ, we must first learn how it will be understood. Then we can create understanding of that Message through meaningful proclamation. Only when we listen and learn the heart of others is the way open to share the life of Christ that is in us.

WorldView sessions develop the skills to listen and build understanding of other people, and of other cultures. We call it “culture mapping” - learning the framework of each society.

### **Learning About Onions and Culture**

We use a unique model of culture to give a model that helps to learn how to function and communicate within another culture - the “Culture Onion.” The culture onion gives a picture of how behaviors point to deeper structures, values and beliefs that are the real substance of a culture, and how change happens in any culture.

The clear path to learning a culture taught by WorldView is how to observe, learn, and use the twelve signal systems (“languages”) of every culture.

### **Learn By Doing**

The way into another culture is learned by doing. WorldView guides mini-field experiences during training sessions, then debriefs to see what was well done, and how the learning can be developed into a clear witness of Christ.

As we begin to grasp how a culture functions, we can find the points where the Gospel Message can be made comprehensible to the people of that culture. We

learn to reach the heart, which is the goal of mission.

### **Using the Internet**

WorldView training is more than residential sessions. Use of the Internet begins the training before arriving at WorldView Center and extends it after the time at WorldView. All WorldView training sessions have four parts: 1) pre-residential preparation, 2) residential sessions, 3) on-field interaction, and 4) post-field retrospect.

We desire to begin pre-residential training eight weeks before the intensive residential training. In-residence varies from one day to two weeks, as developed with the church or agency to meet their special needs. On-field service varies from two weeks to two years, or longer, as determined by the church or agency. Post-field retrospect (debriefing) is completed within six weeks of return to their home base. That means the total training time is from sixteen weeks to two and a half years, as planned with the sending group, but with a minimal time away from home and busy schedules.

Sample schedules for one-day, four-day, one-week, and two-week residential sessions will be sent on request. Further information about WorldView and WorldView Center is on our website at WorldView Center.

email: [office@worldviewcenter.org](mailto:office@worldviewcenter.org)  
mailing address: WorldView Center  
6012 S.E. Yamhill Street  
Portland, Oregon USA 97215  
Phone: 503-235-3818

## Best Practice Standards for Missionary Training

**Dave Broucek**

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This paper was presented at the IFMA/EFMA Personnel Conference held at the IMB Missionary Learning Center, Rockville, Virginia, December 2003, and subsequently distributed at the NMTF in January 2004.

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Often, we acquire the most stimulating ideas only when we step outside familiar territory.

My familiar territory is non-formal education and self-directed adult learning in the context of a mission agency. Yet for the past three years, I have also served on the board of trustees of a formal educational institution. Every time I attend a board meeting, I am struck by a recurring impression – schools take seriously the practice of benchmarking and quality improvement. Yes, they must meet minimum requirements in order to be accredited, but the best ones look **beyond mere “compliance” to excellence**. We mission agencies have a lot to learn from schools.

Not only from schools. I have a friend who is a blood pathologist. Every two years his laboratory undergoes a comprehensive inspection by a team of external, peer examiners. On the off years, his lab conducts a rigorous self-assessment. The inspections and assessments are based on **published standards of excellence**.<sup>1</sup> The standards themselves are tightened and improved from year to year as the whole profession learns how to do its work better. We mission agencies have a lot to learn from hospitals.

Not only from hospitals. “Best practice standards” is an idea whose time has come for thousands of organizations in hundreds of disciplines.<sup>2</sup>

*Has the time come for missionary training to embrace best practice standards?*

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*Dave Broucek (dbroucek@teamworld.org) serves as Training & Research Coordinator at The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM). He began this assignment in 1995 following sixteen years of field-based ministry in adult Biblical education and church planting and development in Trinidad & Tobago.*

I think it has, and in this presentation I want to explore four questions.

- ⊙ What is meant by “best practice standards”?
- ⊙ Is it possible to name best practice standards?
  - What do best practices look like?
  - How might best practice standards be implemented?

My goal is to **raise questions and stimulate thinking not to impose a pre-determined solution.**

### **What is meant by “best practice standards”?**

To some the phrase is incongruous. A concerned colleague told me that “standards” implies convergent thinking and minimal requirements while “best practice” implies divergent thinking and excellence. He is more interested in the latter than the former.

He has a point. Standardization implies that everyone looks the same. Standard grade is inferior to premium grade. A car with standard equipment is ordinary.

But “standard” doesn’t have to imply “average,” and “standards” don’t have to imply “conformity.” A standard reference work is the best in its field. A standard (n.) is simply “an acknowledged measure of comparison for quantitative or qualitative value; a criterion.”

Synonyms of standard include “benchmark, criterion, gauge, measure, touchstone, yardstick.” One dictionary states: “These nouns denote a point of reference against which individuals are compared and evaluated: a book that is a standard of literary excellence; a painting that is a benchmark of quality; criteria for hiring an excellent teacher.”<sup>3</sup>

Viewed in this light, standards are a path to excellence not mediocrity.

As for conformity, we can avoid it by delineating more carefully what type of standards we mean. Consider the following contrasts.

**1. Closed versus open standards.**

Closed standards are specific and static. Open standards allow for diversity and innovation.

**2. Imposed versus evolving/emergent standards.**

Imposed standards are prescribed by power. Emergent standards develop through collaboration.

**3. Accepted practice versus best practice standards.**

Acceptable practice describes lowest common denominators. Best practices describe excellence.<sup>4</sup>

I don't know about you, but I can get excited about the standards that empower me. In each of these pairs, the first type doesn't, but the latter certainly does.

*So what do "best practice standards" mean?*

Summing up in a short definition: **Standards are agreed-upon criteria for performance excellence.**

### **Is it possible to name best practice standards?**

I don't want to skip this question or treat it carelessly. If we ignore the difficulties, the complexities in the process will come back to haunt us.

Let's try to name some of the difficulties inherent in describing a set of standards for missionary training.

#### **1) Great diversity in missionary work**

Missionaries are evangelists and teachers, linguists and doctors, community development specialists and bookkeepers, musicians and radio engineers. We call them by the same name, but their job assignments are quite varied.

I once had opportunity to dialogue about missionary selection and training with a Coast Guard commander who works in the field of performance technology. He wrote, "You say it, but I think it is a profound point--there are many different jobs in the field. I wonder if the name 'missionary' is really of any value to you as you consider selection and training... . The term is so overloaded with meaning that it holds little practical application. What you describe is a world of work with 20-50 jobs in it. I don't think the rest of us in the corporate & military world would consider trying to define the selection [and training] criteria for that many jobs in one shot."

Actually, there do seem to be universal qualities that apply to all missionaries (Spirit-filled living, hardiness, intercultural understanding, and so forth) but there are also specific ministry skills that apply to specific assignments. The commander's point, and I think it is a good one, is that simply attending to the generic characteristics is not enough anymore.

#### **2) Large number of players**

Schools provide missionary training. Churches provide training. Sending agencies provide training. Nonformal training organizations provide missionary training.

Can we create standards that apply to all?

### 3) Difficulty in defining missionary effectiveness

It's clear enough that training is meant to enhance missionary effectiveness. But what do we mean by "effectiveness"?

Jim Reapsome acknowledged this difficulty in his Final Analysis column "What Standard?" in the Oct. 24, 2003 issue of *World Pulse*.<sup>5</sup> He participated in a session with what he called "topnotch missionary educators" and admitted, "We agreed that our goal was missionary effectiveness, but we had no valid way of measuring efficacy on the field."

### 4) Wide divergence among organizations

The organizations in which we do training are just so different. Think of the variables.

Some organization are very **large** (such as IMB and Wycliffe/SIL, not to mention YWAM and CCC), others are **mid-size** (such as SIM, OMF, and ABWE), and some are very **small** (like the organization that told me they lack the 8 full-time employees required for membership in IFMA).

Some organizations do all their training **in-house**, while others **out-source** their training, and still others have a blend.<sup>6</sup> For example, New Tribes Mission runs its own Bible Institute and Mission Institute while other organizations utilize third-party training providers such as Mission Training International and the Center for Intercultural Training.

Some **local churches** create their own sending structures<sup>7</sup>, while others make use of parachurch **mission agencies**.

Some organizations send missionaries from one country. Others are **multinational corporations** with sending bases in a dozen or more countries.

We could also mention differences in the **length of training** required by different organizations and the **length of service** for which they train (from short-term to career).

We differ in the size of our **training staffs**. And we certainly differ in the amount of **budget** that we have available.

### 5) Resistance to imposed standards

I confess. I bristle when someone comes along and tells me that they know what's best for me. Maybe you do too. Pascal wrote, "People are generally better persuaded by the reasons which they have themselves discovered than by those which have come into the mind of others" (*Pensées*). Things haven't changed much since the 1600s.

I also admit to feeling a curious mixture of annoyance and envy when I realize

that one or more of my peers is doing a better job than I am. Of course, this less-than-worthy attitude shouldn't exist in me or in anyone else. But it sometimes intrudes and gets in the way.

Yet, in spite of my all-too-human foibles, I admit that I am keenly interested in learning from my peers and colleagues.<sup>8</sup> So are you. That's why we come to professional conferences like this.

At our best, we don't care who gets the credit. We only care that the Lord's work is being done effectively and that God gets the glory.

#### **6) Expense and lack of manpower**

Many of us feel like we're barely keeping our heads above water financially and in work load. Where are we going to get the time and money to do more?

I wrote to Jonathan Lewis, editor of the World Evangelical Alliance Missions Commission publication *Training for Cross-Cultural Ministries*, about best training practices. He replied,

... many of these ['good practices'] require a personalization of training and focus that can be expensive and time consuming. The question is not so much if trainers are implementing good practices as much as if the agencies, or those who have to pay for it, would put up with the time and costs. In my experience, when talking good practice to trainers, you are talking to the convinced. Agencies most often require missionary candidates to assume their own cost of training. The church seldom chips in. So the agency doesn't want to scare off candidates by requiring expensive or time consuming training, the church assumes the agency will train adequately, and the candidate can't afford to spend the money (and perhaps assume they don't need it).

What Jonathan's observation means is that best practices should not merely pressure us to "do more" but must address the question of how we can do a better job of training with the modest budgets that we have.

*Given this divergence, is it possible to apply consistent standards that apply to all of us?*

In spite of the difficulties, I believe that it is possible to name and describe standards for excellence in missionary training.

Why do I believe this? One reason is that best practice standards have already been created for some sectors of the missionary enterprise.



Mission organizations have long recognized the need to adhere to standards in the financial realm. Our accounting departments follow the standards set by the Federal Accounting Standards Board, and the associations to which we belong – such as IFMA, EFMA, and the newer ECFA – require fiscal accountability of their members in light of these standards. We’ve been adhering to financial standards for so long that we take them for granted.

In the ministry realm, those involved in sending short-term missionaries have created best practice standards. Pioneered by Global Connections in the UK (formerly Evangelical Missionary Alliance), there are now published guidelines in Britain, Canada, and the United States.<sup>9</sup>

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada has also tried their hand at creating a Code of Best Practice in Member Care.

At least one of our organizations has taken the process further and has qualified for ISO 9000 certification.<sup>10</sup> They are the only religious training organization I know of that has done this. For this seminar I have asked Steve Hoke, vice president for people development for Church Resource Ministries, to describe why CRM took this step and how they went about it.

These examples prove that mission organizations can submit themselves to best practice standards. The process needs to become more widespread.

### **What do “best practices” look like?**

Fortunately, we’re not starting from scratch. Hundreds of years of successes and failures in mission have taught us a lot about what’s best.

Consider, for example, the fine thinking represented in two World Evangelical Alliance publications.

Robert Ferris, 1995, *Establishing ministry training: A manual for programme developers*, Pasadena, Ca.: William Carey Library, and

David Harley, 1995, *Preparing to serve: Training for cross-cultural mission*, Pasadena, Ca.: William Carey Library.

Many of us are familiar with these works and others like them.<sup>11</sup> Any attempt to articulate best practice standards in missionary training has a rich literature base upon which to draw.

There is another source for best practices – the professional world of training and development. This territory may be less familiar to many of us than the world of missions, but it offers valuable insights.

For example, the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) is a society

of professional trainers representing businesses, schools, and non-profit organizations. Its annual convention draws 11,000 participants. ASTD is not an accrediting agency. Through publications, seminars and conferences it stimulates quality in all aspects of training.

Of particular interest are its annual “Excellence in Practice” awards. The awards are based on criteria by which all applicants are evaluated. If the diversity within missionary organizations seems overwhelming, it’s nothing compared to the range of diversity in ASTD, yet they have found a way to evaluate any training program using six criteria.

Quoting directly from the ASTD web site, the criteria are:<sup>12</sup>

1. **“Needs Identification**  
Indication that the practice was an appropriate response to the problem or need.
2. **Design Values**  
Evidence that the intervention was designed and implemented in a way that considered the best interests of the organization as well as those of employees.
3. **Alignment**  
Evidence of, and degree of alignment with, other training, learning, and performance improvement practices, as well as organizational goals, to achieve desired outcomes.  
Evidence of partnerships within and outside the organization (e.g., with senior management, frontline supervisors, unions, external resources, etc.).
4. **Evaluation Strategy**  
Evidence of a clear, measurable, and feasible evaluation plan.
5. **Results**  
Evidence of actual or anticipated individual/team impact.  
Evidence of actual or anticipated organizational impact.
6. **Shared Learning**  
Indications that this practice can be transferred and replicated in other organizations.  
Extent of the diffusion of this practice in the field. Opportunities for other professionals to learn from this practice.”

If we were to apply these criteria to ourselves, it would mean that . . .

- We will take steps to identify learning needs in our organizations and address them in appropriate ways. We will help individual missionaries to assess their personal and professional development needs and find ways to address them.
- We will take into account the best interests of both the organization and the learners targeted.
- We will align our training interventions with the mission, vision, and values of our organizations. There will be consistency between our recruiting strategies, our screening and selection practices, our training programs, and our actual work on the field.

- We will evaluate our programs on a regular basis. We will consider such factors as time, costs, staff count, mistakes & slip-ups, and user satisfaction.
- We will track the effects of training on the missionaries who participate. What specific attitudes and behaviors are observed as a result of the training? Is the impact of these behaviors short-term or long-term? What is the impact of the training on the organization's effectiveness?
- We will foster shared learning, within the organization and without. What are the ways in which what a missionary learns is benefiting other missionaries? And what is your organization doing to share what it is learning with other organizations?

Please note that the ASTD criteria do not specify a particular content. That's what makes them applicable to a wide range of organizations. We might be tempted to bypass "secular" criteria because they don't mention spiritual formation, intercultural understanding, ministry skills, etc. (the "stuff" of missionary training). But they are not antithetical to missionary training. By following these criteria we can arrive at the specific content we need.

For this seminar I have asked mission representatives whose organizations serve as exemplars of the criteria named above to tell what they are doing.

Dave Dougherty describes the leadership development program which OMF has implemented. (See the summary in the Appendix.) OMF identified a gap in their organization (Needs identification). They convened two consultations to which they invited any that were interested (Shared learning). They designed a user-friendly program that addresses the need at four levels (Design values).

Ben Sells describes for us the way that the training offered through the Missionary Learning Center which he directs fits with the International Mission Board's mission, vision, values, and strategies (Alignment). Not many of our organizations are as large as the IMB, but we can all be as intentional in linking our training with both the overall vision and the area-specific goals of our organizations.

Joyce Prettol describes how Wycliffe arrives at the content of their training program. We know that Wycliffe specializes in translation and provides linguistic training to its members. SIL even offers accredited degrees in linguistics. But Wycliffe has also taken a careful look at the non-linguistic qualities that their members need and has taken steps to address these needs (Needs identification, Design values, and Alignment). They are one example of an organization that does a good job in addressing both generic and specific training needs.

Paul Strand contributes a description of what Bethany Fellowship does to instill deep-rooted spirituality in the missionaries it trains. Paul cites field-based research (Shared learning) which shows that spirituality corresponds more closely with effectiveness than

do knowledge and skills. Bethany has built into their program very intentional activities to reinforce and strengthen the missionary's practice of prayer and dependence on God (Alignment and Design values).

Frankly, some other ASTD criteria (Evaluation Strategy and Results) are less common in mission circles. In talking with colleagues, it becomes apparent that many of us ask for feedback from the participants at training events. That's good. But we tend to ask for them to evaluate the event rather than ask them to state or demonstrate what they learned. Even when we do assess their learning, the assessment is immediate. We aren't very good at evaluating the effect of our training a year later. Nor have we found ways to evaluate the difference in the organization's effectiveness that our training makes.

We need to conscientiously and creatively figure out how to do a better job of evaluation and monitoring of results.

### **How might best practice standards be implemented?**

Let me first state how I think that best practice standards should NOT be implemented.

- I don't think that we need a prescribed curriculum for all agencies and churches to follow.
- I don't think that we need prescribed measurements for budgets, libraries, staffs, or contact hours, or anything like that.

Excessive specificity will lead to the convergent thinking and minimal requirements that my concerned colleague rightly decries.

*What, then, do we need?*

I think we need a **voluntary, ongoing, noncompetitive process of self-assessment, benchmarking, continuous improvement, and external evaluation that lead to outstanding performance.**

"Where in the world did you get that mouthful?" you might ask. Well, I've been investigating another source of ideas outside my, and maybe your, familiar territory.

Ralph Enlow and Bob Kallgren, provost and vice-president for corporate planning at Columbia International University, introduced me to the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Program. The Baldrige program was established by the U.S. Congress in 1987.<sup>13</sup> It is a voluntary incentive program to promote performance excellence in organizations. Like the ASTD, it gives annual awards for excellence, but it is much broader, giving awards in the categories of manufacturing, service, small business, education, and health care.

The actions I named are the heart of the Baldrige process.

### Self-assessment

Those who crafted the process recognize that if you're going to improve, you have to do the hard work of self-assessment.

You start by writing an Organizational Profile – a snapshot of your organization, descriptions of how you operate and the key challenges you face. Many organizations find this exercise to be eye-opening in and of itself.

Do you have a profile of your training program? Would we missionary trainers find it helpful to have a model or a template for creating such a profile?

As a member of the Baldrige panel of judges states, "Self-assessment can provide an impetus for learning, a stimulus for growth, and a trigger for action."

### Benchmarks of excellence

As you continue your self-assessment, you answer approximately 85 questions grouped into seven categories. These seven categories form the Criteria for Performance Excellence. They are a tool for understanding your organization's strengths and opportunities for improvement.

The criteria are a set of expectations or requirements that define the critical factors that drive organizational success. They are nonprescriptive in the sense that they focus on results, not on procedures, techniques, tools, or structure which vary according to an organization's type and size. The criteria are meant to support innovation and diversity in approaches.

Think of the value to missionary training practitioners if we had such a tool for evaluating ourselves.

### Continuous improvement

The Baldrige process examines not only what you are doing at the present moment, but how you are improving over time. You must show that you are measuring what needs to be measured and that you are basing your decisions and actions on the evidence that you uncover. They call it "management by fact" (as opposed, I suppose, to management by fiction).

The emphasis on improvement over time is why the self-assessment must be ongoing, not a one-time snapshot.

Monitoring improvement, I believe, provides hope for all of us. Few of us in missionary

training feel that we're doing all that we should be doing. Some of us fear that if our training programs were to be given a summative evaluation, we might flunk. If, on the other hand, we receive affirmation and reinforcement when we show change and improvement, then we are motivated to keep on improving.

#### External evaluation

All award applications are reviewed by a Board of Examiners who are specially trained volunteer experts. The examiners provide a feedback report of approximately 50 pages at the conclusion of the review process. The report contains an applicant-specific listing of strengths and opportunities for improvement.

The examiners also provide on-site visits to at least some of the organizations.

Think of the benefit to your training program if you could have expert consultants give you their wise evaluation and recommendations.

That's the process in a nutshell – self-assessment, criteria for excellence, continuous improvement, and external evaluation.<sup>14</sup>

Well, not quite all. I added two words, “voluntary” and “noncompetitive.” Let me make a case for these additions.

#### Voluntary

Though I introduced this paper with references to accreditation programs for schools and hospitals that are obligatory or nearly obligatory, I intentionally focused on the ASTD and Baldrige awards programs which are voluntary. Neither of these is an accreditation or certification program. Yet both have proven effective in defining and promoting performance excellence and motivating organizations toward improvement.

One reason I stress voluntary is that I fear the creation of another layer of cumbersome and top-heavy bureaucracy in the missions community.

If you or I had the desire, we could do a self-assessment (using, for example, the ASTD criteria or other criteria of our choosing) and then invite colleagues right from this Conference to visit our organization and give us valuable feedback on our training programs. We could be doing this sort of thing now without ever creating a structure. We really don't have to wait until a formal mechanism is in place.

The practice would be like my recent kitchen renovation. I visited friends who had done a good job remodeling their kitchens and also gained professional insights from the store consultant (criteria for excellence). As I worked, I revised my actions when I became aware of better ways to accomplish the task (self-assessment and continuous improvement). Knowledgeable friends, one an experienced electrician, stopped by to give correction and advice and sometimes lend a hand (external evaluation).

Some of us may cringe at the amateur analogy. They will want more professionalism in our field, and they may be right. But, frankly, if we ever lose the spirit of helping one another as friends, we're in trouble.

### Non-competitive

Competition is deeply rooted in American culture – in sports, business, education, even the arts. Life itself is defined as competition. The ASTD and Baldrige programs derive a large part of their appeal from this motive.

Interestingly, though, while watching taped interviews with Baldrige winners, I heard them repeatedly say that the real significance of the program is not the award. The winners consistently said that it was the process that brought value to their organization, whether they ever won an award or not. I also learned that many organizations use the materials who never apply for an award.

We in the church should view our relationships differently. How about **cooperation** as a motive rather than competition? Honestly, the Scriptural phrase from Hebrews 10:24 – “stimulating one another to love and good deeds” – kept running through my mind as I compiled the information for this presentation.

Dr. Kennedy, my pathologist friend who described the rigor and toughness of laboratory inspections, said, “It’s all meant for the benefit of the patient.”

He’s right. It’s not about you or me. It’s all meant for the good of the cause and the glory of God.

### Commencement

My target audience for this presentation is training directors and training coordinators in mission agencies as well as mission pastors and global mission task forces in local churches – those who are responsible to see that missionaries get the training they need to be effective.

My objectives are to

1. Stimulate a desire to take seek continuous improvement
2. Raise questions that cause us to wrestle more deeply with the issues
3. Suggest categories by which missionary training programs can be assessed
4. Plant the seed thought of peer-to-peer evaluation teams

Striving for improvement is not new in the evangelical missionary training enterprise. We have been helping each other improve through publications. I mentioned several fine works above. We have also been helping each other improve through networking.



IFMA/EFMA's Personnel Conference and Next Step's National Missionary Training Forum are two primary venues for peer-to-peer sharing of ideas and information.

What we lack are agreed-upon criteria of excellence, self-assessment tools, and peer examinations.

I hope that I have planted enough seeds to produce a crop of follow-up discussions and action by those who are interested. It will be worth it.



## Resources

<sup>1</sup> The standards are published by the College of American Pathologists (CAP). "The primary goal of the CAP Laboratory Accreditation Programs is laboratory improvement through professional peer-review, education, and compliance with established performance standards." The Laboratory General Checklist (123 pages!) can be found at [www.cap.org/apps/docs/laboratory\\_accreditation/lap\\_info/progdescrit.pdf](http://www.cap.org/apps/docs/laboratory_accreditation/lap_info/progdescrit.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> A rough indicator of growing interest is the number of Internet sites discussing best practices. Six months ago, I ran the phrase "best practice standards" through Google and got 15,000 hits. One week ago, I got 21,400 hits.

<sup>3</sup> The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition. Copyright © 2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company.

<sup>4</sup> The three kinds of standards were posted by Mahir. Domuratzki on June 19, 2000, in an online study group. The names are his; the descriptions are mine.

See <http://seminar.jura.uni-sb.de/publ/ss00/seminar/ss2000/int/studygroup2/PEDAGOGY/msgs/97.html>

<sup>5</sup> Reapsome's article is available online at [https://www.gospelcom.net/bgc/worldpulseonline/wp\\_article\\_read.php?ArticleID=438](https://www.gospelcom.net/bgc/worldpulseonline/wp_article_read.php?ArticleID=438)

<sup>6</sup> George Schultz of the Center for Intercultural Training (CIT) is presenting a workshop the question of outsourcing versus training in-house in this very Personnel Conference. See his article "The Best Missionary Training Model?" *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, January, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Missionary sending is not necessarily confined to the megachurches. See John Rowell, 1998, *Magnify your vision for the small church*, Atlanta: Northside Community Church.

<sup>8</sup> Back in January I told the Personnel Conf. planning committee, when they asked for workshop suggestions, that if someone presented a workshop on best practice standards for mission training, I would definitely attend that one. Be careful when you open your mouth!

<sup>9</sup> The full text of the Global Connections short-term mission code, a definition of benchmarking, suggestions for implementation, plus a list of UK organizations which have formally adopted the code can be found at [www.globalconnections.co.uk/code.asp](http://www.globalconnections.co.uk/code.asp)

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada EFC publishes an attractive thirty-page booklet "The Guide to Best Practice in Short-term Mission." The complete text of the code plus forms for adopting the code as an organization can be found at [www.globalmission.org/canada/index.htm](http://www.globalmission.org/canada/index.htm).

More recently, a coalition of U.S. short-term including representatives from Campus Crusade for



Christ, Youth With A Mission, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, the Assemblies of God, and the Southern Baptist Convention, crafted “Standards of Excellence in Short-Term Mission.” A brief article announcing the creation of the standards appeared in *Christianity Today* in September 2003 ([www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/010/19.30.html](http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/010/19.30.html)). The standards themselves and how they may be implemented can be found at [www.stmstandards.org](http://www.stmstandards.org).

<sup>10</sup> ISO 9000 is a European approach to maintaining quality standards published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), Geneva, Switzerland.

<sup>11</sup> These texts, plus many other valuable publications in both English and Spanish, are available for download from [www.missionarytraining.com](http://www.missionarytraining.com). For a stimulating perspective from New Zealand, see the paper by Derek Christensen, “Training for Mission,” posted on Seedbed, a web site devoted to innovation in mission ([www.seedbed.info/english/papers/2.pdf](http://www.seedbed.info/english/papers/2.pdf)).

<sup>12</sup> The criteria for the Excellence in Practice award, as well as the names of the annual award winners, can be found at [www.astd.org/virtual\\_community/awards/excellence\\_awards\\_nom.html](http://www.astd.org/virtual_community/awards/excellence_awards_nom.html)

<sup>13</sup> I do not intend to be chauvinistic by citing a U.S. example. Actually, a number of countries have established quality awards programs. Japan, for example, gives the Deming Prize to its companies that excel. The quality movement is global.

<sup>14</sup> If you want more than a “nutshell” description of the Baldrige program, a variety of highly informative publications are available online, including “Frequently Asked Questions about the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award,” “Why Baldrige?,” “Getting Started with the Baldrige National Quality Program,” and “Education Criteria for Performance Excellence” at [www.quality.nist.gov](http://www.quality.nist.gov). Just follow the links.