

Fifteen Tough Questions For Team Leaders

Greg Livingstone

These questions address expectations and reality on your team -- encouraging you all to love the Lord with all your mind and heart.

I feel the urgency of these questions even more than when I circulated a comparable list in 1985. Schedule an afternoon, an evening, or a weekend to carefully review the questions -- by yourself, with two or three others, or maybe with your whole team. Then, when your answers lie before you, ask, "So what do we do?"

1. Now that your team has field experience, how would you reiterate or sharpen your goals?
2. What is your expectancy level? Can we tell what you're going after by your prayer requests? With what are you preoccupied, e.g., security, protection, breakthrough, a group of believers?
3. Do you have a written step-by-step plan of action? Are copies in the hands of your team members, your sending base, and IO?
4. Do you see clearly how each team member will contribute toward planting a church (movement)? Are you thinking "church" (and working back from that goal to your daily schedule), or are you just thinking outreach, presence evangelism, or possibly throwing everything on the sovereignty of God? What are you trusting God to do this year?
5. Are you aware of your ministry gift and skills, and are you doing a job which fits them? Are you teaming up with people who have complementary gifts? How are you going to make sure that friend-making, evangelism, helping new believers walk with Jesus, and motivating faithful men to become elders is actually occurring? Are you clear on the steps toward planting a church with national elders? Which team member is going to do what task?
6. Do you understand 2 Timothy 2:2 and practice it each week? Are you praying and getting supporters to claim faithful men and women? What is each team member doing toward discipling faithful men or women?
7. To what degree does the team have disciple-makers (people in actual evangelistic ministry) versus facilitators (people in support ministry), or is everyone able to do both? What is the language progress of each team member? To what end? Do you need to concentrate on recruiting specifically-gifted persons?
8. Is each team member spending at least 30-40 hours a week in language acquisition, enculturation, making friends, and/or teaching the gospel? To what degree is a preoccupation with "existence" limiting fruitful hours among the people you seek to win?
9. To what degree are you progressing in bonding with the people, becoming one with them? How is this reflected in your children's schooling and play? What signs indicate that you are making close friends among your host people? Do your prayer letters and reports communicate progress here, or do they carry only vague devotionals?
10. By what principles do team members choose their housing location? How is their choice of housing helping to plant churches?
11. To what degree are you "doing your job" versus ministering? Are you eager to keep changing jobs until you have the one MOST conducive to ministry?
12. How are you going to have investigative Bible studies with open Muslims? With new believers? What exactly are you doing to help the believers work together toward seeing a New Testament church become a reality?
13. Given the dismal history of institutional missionary work NOT leading to church planting,
 - (a) how aware is the team of those failures in missionary history?
 - (b) what specific plans have you made to avoid the mistakes of the past which have led to institutions, but not to churches?
14. Are there other Muslim-convert churches in your region? Have you visited them? What can you learn from them? Did they result from institutional work or another method?
15. What are ways the Field Director's office or the sending bases could help you in any of the above?