

Timely Reporting in Church Planting Movements

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In MentorNet #51, "Seeing the Harvest Through Simple Maps", we discussed the importance of accurate maps in military strategy and in effectively harvesting "ripe fields" (John 4:35-38). Review it here: <http://www.mentornet.ws/mentornet51.html>

Reporting for Timely Planning

Fighters must do timely reporting so that commanders can create and update their maps. As situations on the ground change, new information must be passed up the chain of command. As battles are being waged, commanders at various levels need information from the field, in order to adjust battle plans, to defeat their enemy and to set captives free. Imagine the chaos and defeat that would happen to troops who just went out fighting with no plans, no commands, no control structure, no reporting of real-time events to their superiors.

Likewise in spiritual warfare, in evangelism and church planting, planning and reporting are essential to effectively harvest for our Supreme Commander. In Matthew 10, Mark 6, Luke 9 & 10, and other passages, you see Jesus layout out a strategy to effectively harvest amongst the nations. You see him planning and reporting:

- Praying (Luke 10:2)
- Giving instructions (Luke 10:1-20)
- Sending out (Luke 10:1)
- Hearing reports (Luke 10:17)
- Giving more instructions (10:20)

Thus, we recommend five actions to take at every level of reporting:

1. Pray, especially to raise up more workers.
2. Report, review past reports and hear new ones.
3. Share biblical insights that meet current needs.
4. Plan actions, where to go, what to do there and what to say.
5. Pray, always about every plan and their details.

Five Actions Points in Planning

Jesus commanded his followers to make disciples who obey all that He commanded. You leaders make disciples of apprentice leaders by mentoring them. Mentoring leaders is a way that you love churches through their leaders. Through mentoring apprentice leaders, you will make disciples of scores, hundreds even thousands through your apprentices by helping them to make disciples.

Action 1. Prayer. Pray for the apprentice who is giving the report, that the Holy Spirit will reveal his plan for immediate implementation, and pray for new workers whom your apprentice will train, in turn.

Action 2. Report. You must learn about problems and opportunities in each new church and region. Review what has happened since the previous session and how plans were followed. If plans were not followed, and not progress was made, then you may have to revise those plans and implemented them before you make new ones. You are teaching workers to obey the commands of Jesus by planning with them how to do so. If a worker cannot implement agreed plans, then he may not be an effective leader. Rely on the Holy Spirit to help you sense which questions to ask in order to learn needs and opportunities in apprentices' churches and cells.

Mentors and leaders prepare simple report forms by which workers compile and submit current church statistics and training-accountability relations. See the appendix on page 3.

Action 3. Share. Pray and seek biblical insight geared towards helping resolve problems and to take advantage of opportunities that become apparent from past and new reports. If your apprentices prefer to learn orally, then share insight in the form of Bible stories, skits, dramas, songs, then practice new skills to be implemented. Your apprentices will teach others in the way that you teach them, so you must adapt your teaching methods to the ways that folks learn best in their culture.

Action 4. Plan. Help newer apprentices to plan exactly what they will do with their ministry groups. If they are new workers, then you must give them clear, specific instructions. In most cultures, it is not enough to provide principles and leave workers to figure out for themselves what to do. Jesus never said, 'Teach my principles'. He said, 'If you love me, you will obey my commandments'. Obedience to Jesus Christ is foundational. The principles get implemented as workers simply obey Jesus.

Action 5. Pray. See Action 1.

An Example of the Five Actions

In India a few weeks ago, Edward Aw witnessed a leader send out two church planters (CPers) to a village to share the gospel according to Luke 10. The CPers went and did so, spending the entire day with a gathering of 25 folks who came to hear the gospel and to be healed. Although someone invited the CPers to stay for a few days, they declined and returned home.

Next morning, they called on their leader and reported back what had happened. Immediately two issues became apparent. First, after sharing the gospel, the CPers failed to ask if anyone wanted to follow Jesus! Second, they failed to realize that being invited to stay for a few days was a sure sign they had found a 'child of peace'! The leader immediately revised their plan and sent the CPers back to that village the next day with specific instructions to invite folks to follow Jesus, and to stay a few days if invited.

Humbly, the CPers went back. This time even more people gathered. After all was said and done that day, about 30 folks from different family groups repented and believed. Using MentorNet #51, "Seeing the Harvest Through Simple Maps", the leader and the CPers laid strategy to reach the entire village through those families.

Other resources

Edward Aw's single-page mapping guide for field workers

<http://www.paul-timothy.net/docs/harvest_mapping_a4.pdf

<http://www.paul-timothy.net/docs/harvest_mapping_ltr.pdf>

Patrick O'Connor's *Reproducible Pastoral Training*, to multiply churches

<<http://missionbooks.org/wcl/customer/product.php?productid=533&cat=1&page=1>>

Mentoring tools and sites, visit <<http://www.MentorAndMultiply.com>>

Train & Multiply®, Pastoral training, <<http://www.TrainAndMultiply.com>>

Free training materials for new leaders & missionaries <<http://www.Paul-Timothy.net>>

Download training software, now free, "*Come, Let Us Disciple the Nations*"

<<http://www.paul-timothy.net/dn/index.html>>

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