



PARTNERSHIPS



Leaders

Version 1.3

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Partnerships

Introduction to the Course



Development Associates International

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Course Description:

The course develops a comprehensive biblical and theological perspective on partnerships and the strategic importance for organizations and ministries to work together. For those organizations considering engaging in a partnership, the course gives clear and comprehensive steps on how to explore partnership opportunities and launch and develop partnerships to operate effectively. This course explores in detail issues that make partnerships work and skills to succeed such as team work, dealing with conflict, and building trust. Finally the course gives advice in evaluating partnership outcomes so as to achieve goals.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course the student will be able to:

- Develop an argument that working together is a biblical imperative
- Explain the difference between a simple and complex partnership and give examples of both
- Explain the difference between a horizontal and vertical partnership and give examples of both
- Describe the impact of different types of ministry at different stages in the process
- State ways in which you will approach ministry differently as a result of any new understanding you have about what the Scripture has to say about partnership
- Describe in outline the three stages of partnership
- Describe three different methods of exploring a partnership and identify success and failure factors for each one
- State the aspects and agenda for meetings to launch a partnership
- List characteristics of effective and ineffective teams
- Describe the eight team roles defined by Meredith Belbin
- Describe how conflict can damage a partnership and what needs to be done to de-escalate conflict
- List ways in which cultural differences can impact a partnership and how to minimize the differences and maximize multi-cultural understanding

Required Reading:

Ernie Addicott, *Body Matters – a Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission* (Interdev Partnership Associates, 2005)

Module Units:

- Unit 1: Partnership – a theological perspective
- Unit 2: What do we mean by “partnership”?
- Unit 3: The strategic importance of working together in partnership
- Unit 4: Exploring a partnership
- Unit 5: Launching a partnership 1
- Unit 6: Launching a partnership 2: a Reflection and Review

Unit 7: The Operations Stage of a partnership
 Unit 8: Developing Effective Groups and Teams in partnerships
 Unit 9: Partnerships and Conflict
 Unit 10: Trust, Evaluation and other key issues in Partnerships

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Course Information

This course in “Partnership in a Christian Ministry Context” is one of several courses leading to a Masters degree on Organizational Leadership and Management. Twenty years ago, the norm for ministry for both churches and para-church organizations was independence and insularism; today there is a greater recognition of the need for interdependence. Today, we recognize that we can no longer “go it alone”, but that we need to cooperate and collaborate with other churches and ministries if we are really going to be effective in winning the world for Christ. There has also been a greater recognition that working together in unity is at the centre of God’s heart, and that interdependence and not independence is what God requires of his people. This course offers a biblical foundation to the subject, explores some different models of partnership, provides a practical approach to the building of a partnership and explores some key issues in the partnering process.

Course Structure

This course is made up of ten units. These are designed so that normally a person will need 12 -14 weeks to complete the readings and carry out the tasks. It involves thoughtful engagement with the written materials, responding to tasks that accompany the texts, the completion of assignments to be sent to the professor at the end of each unit, and a final project of applying ethical decision making to a specific issue in your own context.

Expectations for the Course

The Course is divided into 10 Units, with each Unit consisting of a series of thoughtful information input, interspersed with exercises which will help you reflect on the written material or on the additional readings which you are asked to do, and which you will find at the end of each unit. As you respond to the questions in the “Think about it?” boxes, try not to read ahead, but stop and respond to the questions which you are asked, and write your answers in the boxes provided. At the end of each Unit you will find the Assignment for the Unit which you are asked to complete. As you work through the course material, you may find it helpful whenever you read something that is new to you, to mark the passage or idea in some special way, perhaps with an exclamation mark (!) in the margin next to the text. And whenever you read something you initially disagree with, mark that passage or idea in a different way, perhaps with a question mark (?) in the margin. This will leave a visible trail for you to follow in identifying what you are learning and in what you may want to return to for further analysis and study.

Our expectation is that this course will help you in your understanding of the importance of partnerships in ministry today. We also hope that this course will give you tools to help you develop a partnership which could enhance your own ministry, whether you are working in a church or a para-church setting. Indeed you will get more out of the course if you follow the processes provided in the course to develop a partnership yourself. Indeed, we hope and pray that the fruit of your taking this course will not be a series of written assignments, or the acquisition of more knowledge ABOUT ministry partnerships, but that you develop a partnership which will help you and others be more effective in your ministry! May the Lord give you understanding of the material, and the courage to step out in faith and build partnerships!

Author



This course has been prepared by John Rogers, who has wide and lengthy international experience of facilitating partnerships and in training in partnering. John’s first experience in partnership development was in Pakistan where he was based between 1985 and 1987 and where he developed a partnership of media ministries to focus on Muslim outreach. In 1991, he joined Interdev (an international partnership advocacy and training ministry) and served as International Director of Training until 2003, creating and delivering a number of different types of partnership training courses in 26 countries; he has also created special partnership training workshops for a number of international ministries. During this period he was also involved in the development and facilitation of a number of international ministry partnerships, principally in Central Asia, and also consulted on partnerships in Southern Africa, India and Indonesia. Since the formal closure of Interdev in 2003, John served as Executive Director of the Langham Partnership in UK until 2006 when he joined Development Associates International (DAI) as Senior Consultant for Non-Formal Training and Adult Education. He has subsequently undertaken a major revision of the “Teaching and Learning for Impact” Course, which he has taught to cohorts in Uganda, Nigeria and Nepal. John and his wife Kathryn are members of a large evangelical Anglican Church on the western edge of London (UK), where he serves on the lay leadership team. He also serves on the Board of Feba Radio.

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| Title | Author | Publisher |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
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| Working Together | James P. Lewis | McGraw-Hill |
| The Difference Engine | Dearing & Murphy | Gower |
| Alliance Competence | Spekman, Isabella & MacAvoy | Wiley |
| Partnering Intelligence | Stephen Dent | Davis Black |
| Partnership and Participation | Taket & White | Wiley |
| Building Strategic Relationships | Daniel Rickett | Partners International |
| Dance Lessons | Bell & Sea | Berrett-Koehler |
| Organizing Genius | Biederman & Bennis | Perseus Press |
| Smart Alliances | Harbison & Peker | Jossey-Bass |
| Facilitation | | |
| Facilitation | Trevor Bentley | McGraw-Hill |
| Facilitation Skills | Frances & Roland Bee | Institute of Personnel & Development |
| Masterful Facilitation | A. Glenn Kiser | Amacom |
| Team Development | | |
| The Performance Factor | Pat MacMillan | Broadman & Homan |
| The New Why Teams Don't Work | Robins & Finlay | Orion Business Books |
| Cross-Cultural Team Building | Mel Berger | McGraw-Hill |
| Management Teams | R Meredith Belbin | Butterworth/Heinemann |
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Conflict & Reconciliation

Making Peace with Conflict

Conflict Mediation across Cultures

Peacing Together

Building Peace

Schrock-Shenk & Rossler

David W. Augsburger

David Cormack

John Paul Lederach

Herald Press

Westminster/John Knox

MARC

US Institute of Peace Press

Partnerships

Unit 1

PARTNERSHIP – A THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE



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Unit 1 – Partnership – A Theological Perspective

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 Clive Calver & Rob Warner: “Together We Stand: Evangelical Convictions, Unity and Vision” 18
 Bruce Milne “The Message of John” 19

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this unit you will be able to.....

- List Biblical references which encourage believers to work together in partnering relationships
- Describe how the “body” image in the writing of the Apostle Paul relates to believers working together in partnership
- Describe how unity between believers is a witness to an unbelieving world
- Develop an argument to support the view that working together is a Biblical imperative for believers
- State ways in which you will approach ministry differently as a result of any new understanding you have about what the Scriptures have to say about partnership

Note: The Assignments at the end of Units 1, 4 and 6 are to be completed submitted to the professor after completing each assignment. In addition you should submit your response to the Assignments following any TWO of Units 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10

Lecture Notes & Workbook

Introduction Unit 1

This course is focused on Partnership. It's about the need for functional unity in the Church, the benefits which accrue when we work together and some practical guidance on how to make ministry partnerships "work."

As we begin, I want us to look together at a case study of a partnership. We'll look at who the partners were, the vision they had for working together, some of the struggles they had – and ultimately the benefits of their partnership.

And we find this case study in the New Testament. You may have always thought of it as an account of one of the healing miracles of Jesus. But when you reflect on the incident through a partnership lens we can see it as a powerful account of a partnership in action.

I'd like you to take your Bibles and read Mark 2: 1-12 and then answer the following questions:

Think about it?

Answer Box #1

Read Mark 2: 1-12

Who were the partners in this partnership?

Why did they form the partnership?

What were some of the obstacles they had to face and how did they overcome them?

What benefits did they see of working together?



I think this account in Mark 2 (we can also find the account in Luke 5 and a summary of the healing in Matthew 9) is one of the most powerful pictures of partnership in action in the Bible.

It is an account of a group of men and their paralysed friend. We don't know how many were in this partnership, but what we do know is that there was a group of people, which included a paralysed man who came to the house where Jesus was preaching. We also

know that four of them carried the paralytic. As a partnership they were working together for one purpose – to bring their friend to Jesus so he could be healed. They had a vision of how life could be better for their friend – and for them – if only they could get Jesus to see him, feel for his plight and heal him. And so, hearing that Jesus was in town, they carried their paralysed friend on his mat to the house where they had heard that Jesus was teaching.

I suspect they thought the task was going to be a lot easier than it actually turned out to be! I am sure they didn't expect such large crowds had been drawn to the area nor did they anticipate the whole area around the door into the house was completely filled with people. When they got to the house, they found that there was no way for them to get into the room where Jesus was teaching. So what did they do? They could have turned away and taken the paralysed man back home again – but they didn't give up so easily! There were clearly some creative problem solvers in the group! They carried the man up the external stairs to the roof and then did the unthinkable! They broke open the roof tiles, and made what must have been quite a large opening in the roof – it was certainly large enough to lower the paralysed man on his mat through the hole! This was no quick fix solution for time – it must have taken them some time to open up a hole in the roof. And I often wonder what the people in the room below must have been thinking as they heard all the noise from the roof above their heads – and why no one tried to stop these people from vandalising the house!

This group of partners were so committed to reaching their goal that they would let nothing get in their way. And they were rewarded – they had the joy of seeing Jesus healing their friend – and of hearing those words “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.”

And let's be clear – this outcome was achieved because the friends worked together. It wasn't something the paralytic could have done on his own – he needed the others to carry him. The friends also needed the paralysed man to be willing to go where they wanted him to go. And this wouldn't have worked with just one or two people either. It needed a larger group of people – to carry the man on his mat to the house, then up the stairs and finally to break through the roof and lower their friend into the room!

Here, in these 12 verses from Marks' Gospel, we have a wonderful case study of a partnership. It is a great story of a healing – but it is also a wonderful picture of people working together – demonstrating the power of collaborative action – and the amazing impact it can have.

As we look at the church in our present day, there have been and there are increasing attempts for ministries to work together and for churches to work together in partnership at various levels and in various ways. But that has not always been the case. Relationships among church and ministry leaders have been fractured and the church – whether in Europe, America, Africa or Asia, has been characterized (and caricatured) by division rather than by unity: a characteristic far from the expectations of the Psalmist regarding the relationship between God's people. One of the many Psalms that King David wrote was Psalm 133.

The Psalmist here is David. David was a person who experienced more than his fair share of trouble in his life. Trouble, which was caused by the lack of unity between him and King Saul, by the lack of unity between his generals, by the lack of unity within his own family. Just think of the impact that lack of unity had on his own life – and on the lives of the people living in his kingdom too!

But David also knew something about the blessings that come from living in unity. When there was unity in the army, there was success on the battle-field; when there was unity within the government there was prosperity for the people.

In Psalm 133, David writes about the blessings which unity brings.

Think about it?**Answer Box # 2**

Read Psalm 133
What does the Psalmist say about unity in this psalm?

**learning**

The first thing I see in this psalm is that when brothers live together in unity it is described as being “good and pleasant.” It’s interesting that Eugene Peterson in “The Message” translates these words as “wonderful” and “beautiful.” Unity is something that is seen as being positive, it is something which is very good!

And then David gives us two pictures.

The first is a picture of precious oil being poured on the head of the high priest. Although we may find the thought of oil being poured over our head as being quite uncomfortable, perhaps even something which is unpleasant, the picture we are given is one of sacrifice (the oil was precious – and therefore costly) and of fragrance (the oil was sweet-smelling).

The second picture is of the dew of Mount Hermon falling on Mount Zion. Dew is something that brings refreshment – and those living on dry and dusty Mount Zion (Jerusalem) longed for the refreshing dew for which Mount Hermon was renowned. So to the description of “good” and “pleasant”, we can add that unity is something that has an attractive aroma about it – and it is also very refreshing.

And finally, David adds the comment that where there is unity – there God bestows (commands) his blessing.

So, the overall impression we get from this psalm is that unity amongst His people is something that God thinks is very important. And if God thinks it’s important – then we should think it’s important too!

Think about it?**Answer Box # 3**

Read the Article: “Partnership – more than a Buzzword” by Frampton F Fox. You will find the article at the end of unit one in the Reading Section!

In the article, Fox states “The greatest scriptural precedent for formal partnership in ministry is God’s own model of how he did ministry throughout biblical history.”

1. What evidence does Fox point to support his view that God modeled partnership throughout Biblical history?
2. Can you suggest other evidence from Scripture to support the view that God modeled partnership?

**learning**

In his article, Fox talks about God creating the universe in a partnership relationship, and he also talks about God, at various times, working in partnership with Adam and Eve (Gen 1: 28-30, 2:15-20), with Noah (Gen 6: 13-22), with Abraham (Gen 12: 1-3), Isaac (Gen 26:24) and Jacob (Gen 35:11-12), and with Moses (Ex 3:12, 19:5-8ff). He refers to a partnership between God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit in the redemptive purpose and in the establishing the church (John 15). Fox also talks about the partnership that Jesus had with his 12 disciples (Matt 16:18, 28:18-20, Acts 1:8).

It may be helpful for you to check back on these Scriptures before you continue with this unit. For each one ask yourself whether you agree that these are verses which talk about partnership. It might be helpful to write in the section for your own notes alongside, the heading “Scriptures which speak of partnership” and list those reference that you think do have something to say about partnership.

In the Scriptures, we have seen specific situations where God very clearly modelled partnership. As we examine the Scriptures there are also specific encouragements for God’s people to work together. We’re going to take some time to explore three passages in the writings of the Apostle Paul – his letters to the church in Rome, to the church in Corinth and to the church in Ephesus. First of all, I want you to read what Paul writes to the Romans in Chapter 12 verses 1 to 8 and then answer the questions about this passage.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 4

Read Romans 12: 1-8

In this passage Paul urges his readers to be “transformed.” In what ways do we need to be transformed?



learning

First, some background: Paul, in the proceeding chapters in Romans had been focusing on the amazing mercy of God. And now he’s going to apply it! Paul argues that because we are recipients of God’s mercy and because of this he urges us to be “living sacrifices” – and a sacrifice is something that is totally devoted to God. Therefore, he argues that our lives should be totally devoted to God, and says this is what would be pleasing to God. Now because we should be totally devoted to God, Paul urges us to be transformed.

I wonder how you responded to the question I asked. Paul talks about us being “transformed by the renewing of our minds”, and that we shouldn’t “conform any longer to the pattern of this world.” What that says to me is that we shouldn’t be thinking in the same way

as the world thinks. We need to be thinking in different ways. And it is as we transform our thinking, then we “will be able to test and approve what God’s will is.”

So with that background, another question for you to think about:



Answer Box # 5

In what ways do we need to transform our thinking? (look specifically at verses 3-5)

I’m sure there are lots of different ways in which we need to transform our thinking! But what does Paul specifically point to in this passage? It’s about our status. He says “do not think of yourself more highly than you ought.” Self-importance is not what is important in God’s eyes! And so, we need to transform how we think of ourselves in relation to other members of Christ’s church. If we look ahead to verse 10, we see Paul underlining this concept, because he states very clearly that we should “honour one another above ourselves.” Most people in the world today think of themselves as being more important, or worthy of greater honour, than other people around them. So, to think of others as being more important than ourselves is a radical concept! This needs transformed thinking!

Returning to verses 3-5, Paul now introduces the analogy of the human body as a picture of the church body. We all know that the human body is made up of many different parts and that the different parts all need to be working healthily in order for it to function well. We often need reminding that the body of Christ (which we often call the Church) is also made up of many different parts and that the different parts need to be working harmoniously together if the body of Christ – the Church – is to work effectively.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 6

Why are the different gifts described in verses 6-8 so important?



Well, there are a number of gifts highlighted by Paul in these next verses. We've got prophesying, serving, teaching, encouraging, contributing to the needs of others, leadership and showing mercy. That's quite a variety of gifts and I find it very interesting that such ordinary tasks as "serving" and "showing mercy" are included in the same list as "prophesying" and "leadership." We often try to put the different gifts needed in a church or ministry in a hierarchy going from what we see as the most important to the least important. I don't think Paul was giving a list of gifts in order of importance here – but if he was – notice the gift which is next to the last in the list – it is leadership – and serving and encouraging come before it in this list! I don't think there is any sense of any of these gifts being more important than the others. The point is that each of these gifts are important in the building up of the individual congregations and also in the building up of the wider Church, and each of these very different gifts is important if the Church is going to be effective in its outreach and in the discipling of its members.

Having understood that we need to transform our thinking in terms of how we think about ourselves and others in the church, we need to see how Paul applies this teaching in his first letter to the church in Corinth.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 7

Read 1 Corinthians 12: 12-27

What attitude do we find in the eye and the head?

What attitude do we find in the foot and the ear?

What is wrong with both these attitudes?

How do these attitudes affect the ministry of the Church?

As I read this passage, it seems to me that both the eye and the head have got a rather over-inflated sense of their own importance. Yes, the head is important – we won't get far if we don't have a head, but we would be confined to a wheel-chair if we didn't have any feet! Similarly the eye is important, without it we couldn't see – and just think how handicapped are people who are blind. But in the same way that the eye is important, so is the hand! What we see here is that both the head and the eye are thinking of themselves as being more important than they ought! They have a superiority problem!

But the foot and the ear have problems too. The foot thinks it's not as important as a hand, and the ear thinks it's not as important as the eye. However, quite clearly our movement would be seriously restricted without a foot; and we would have a serious hearing problem without the ear. As far as the foot and the ear are concerned, they both have inferiority problems!

As you reflected on these two attitudes, I hope you saw that it is wrong to think too highly of ourselves – but it is equally wrong to think too lowly of ourselves. It is wrong to think we that our gifts are either more important – or more inferior to the gifts that have been given to others.

Both attitudes of superiority and of inferiority have a serious negative impact on the ministry of the church. If we think the gifts we have are more important or more highly valued than the gifts which others in the church have been given, we can give the feeling to other people that they really aren't needed, or that what they bring is of little importance to the life and ministry of the local church.

Similarly, if we think we are not “worthy” and we hold back on being willing to serve and use our gifts – we hinder the growth and work of the church – because we are not playing the part in the life and ministry of the church that God wants us to play.

The key point that Paul is encouraging us to remember in this passage is that there are different gifts that are needed for a healthy and effective church. None of us have all the gifts. However; all of us have some of the gifts that are needed for the church to operate effectively. Therefore, as each part of our physical body is necessary for us to function in a healthy and “normal” way, so each part of the Church body is needed for there to be effective and “healthy” ministry. As I read this chapter in the first letter to the Corinthians, there is one verse which is central to the whole argument. The central verse of this passage is 1 Corinthians 12:23: “there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.” If there is to be no division in the body – that means there must be unity.

The concept of unity was such a critically important one for the Apostle Paul. Because, not only does he address the subject in writing to the church in Rome (Romans 12) and to the church in Corinth (1 Corinthians 12), but also he refers to the subject of unity when he writes to the church in Ephesus.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 8

Read Ephesians 4: 1-6 & 11-16: In what ways does verses 1-6 link back to 1 Cor 12?

Why does Paul instruct his readers to “bear with one another in love” (v2) and to “make every effort to keep the unity of the spirit”? (v3)

In verse 11, Paul lists roles which God gave to the church. What was the purpose for the giving of these roles?



learning

Paul encourages his readers to be “completely humble.” In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul was encouraging his readers that they shouldn’t think too highly of themselves, and if we don’t think of ourselves as being superior – or as being inferior to others, then we are likely to be people of humility – recognizing and rejoicing in the gifts we have, and using them for the benefit of the church.

It is also important to note that unity doesn’t come naturally – we need to work at it, otherwise why would Paul encourage us to “make every effort to keep the unity of the spirit”? Unity is something we have to work hard at! And we need understand that we need to work at our relationships with one another – Paul tells us to “bear with one another in love.” Sometimes we don’t get on very well with other members of our church – or of the worldwide church – but it’s something we are encouraged to work hard at!

Turning to verses 11-16, we have a list of different roles which have been given to the church. The apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and the teachers are given for a purpose – and for one purpose only. And what is that? It is to prepare God’s people – the members of the church – for “works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” In our churches, we need those with leadership gifts who can give wise and Godly leadership to the church; we need those with prophetic or preaching gifts who can preach the Word of God faithfully; we need those with gifts of evangelism who are able to share their faith appropriately and powerfully with those outside the community of faith; we need those with pastoral gifts who can get alongside the people and support them in their various physical, emotional and spiritual needs; we need those with teaching gifts who can explain the Bible in various contexts and to various groups in ways that are appropriate to their needs – to the adults, the young people, the children

If we move outside the church, and apply this teaching appropriately to a ministry or mission setting, we could substitute the words apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers for others roles; roles such as Scripture translators, radio broadcasters, evangelists, relief workers, agriculturalists, engineers, and disciplers. Each of these roles are needed if the body of Christ is going to be built up.

And then Paul brings us back to the “body” picture again as we read verses 15 and 16. And who is described as the head of the body? Verse 15 clearly states that the head is Christ, and “from him the whole body grows and builds itself up.” Jesus is the head of a single body.

And this speaks very powerfully to me about an issue we really do need to understand. I’ve had people say to me that they accept the one-ness of each individual congregation – and that they believe this is what Paul is talking about when he’s talking about “unity” in the church. They believe he is saying that within a single congregation there should be no division. But I don’t believe this view adequately takes into consideration what Paul is saying in Ephesians 4: 15. Read what he says again. He’s saying “we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is Christ”, and then he goes on to say “From him the whole body....grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work” (v16). Paul is saying that there is one head – and there is one body. He isn’t talking about one head with many bodies! A creature with one head but many bodies would be a monster! Therefore, the body picture that Paul uses in Romans, Corinthians and in Ephesians, refers to the need for unity both within individual congregations as well as the necessity for unity within the wider “universal” church.

And note how Paul describes the body in Ephesians 4. He talks about the “whole body” and uses words like “joined” and “held together” and “supporting ligaments.” It’s a very powerful picture”

Think about it?**learning**

Answer Box #9

What picture comes into your head as you reflect on Ephesians 4: 16?
Describe it (or if you feel comfortable – draw it).

Submit this exercise with your end of unit Assignment

What Ephesians 4: 16 gives to me is more than a picture of unity. Paul uses words like “joined” and “held together.” To me words like this speak of “connectivity.” And it isn’t that we are joined (or connected) to Christ – to the head. It is more than that – for we see in these words that the whole body is joined – each part of the body is connected to each other. And we’re talking about a real body here and the connectivity needs to be real – it needs to be concrete. We’re not talking about some metaphysical unity or about some vague, spiritual nice feeling. As a friend of mine says, “if we can’t see the connectivity, we don’t really have it!”

So, what does connectivity look like? Five churches working together to provide a city-centre shelter for the homeless – that’s connectivity. Three ministries working together to translate the Bible into a specific language – that’s connectivity. All the ministries working to reach an unreached people group meeting together to discuss how together they can best reach the people with the Gospel – that’s connectivity. It is a real “working together.”

Some people have called the unity – or the connectivity – which we see in Ephesians 4: 16 by a single word: Partnership.

We’ve spent some time thinking about what Paul says about partnership. But Paul wasn’t the only one in the New Testament who considered partnership – or visible unity among Christians to be important.

Just moments before Jesus was arrested; just hours before he was crucified, Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemene – and one of the key elements in this prayer was for the unity of believers.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 10

Read John 17: 20-26 and then read the extract from “The Gospel of John” by Bruce Milne

Bruce Milne argues that Jesus prays that

1. the church might be united
2. the world might be persuaded
3. his mission might be completed

Think about it?



Answer Box # 11

How does the unity of the church result in the world being persuaded and the mission of Jesus being completed?

Jesus very clearly states that our unity will be a witness. There is a watching world which is looking at the church, and the disunity within the church (and between churches) is seen by those outside the church and are often given by them as reasons why they don't believe. As Bruce Milne notes “the gospel proclaimed from the pulpit is either confirmed ... or it is contradicted ... by the quality of the relationships in the pews.” It is our unity which “will let the world know that you sent me” – and as the world is persuaded, so the mission of Jesus (and the mission he has given to us) will be completed.

Several years ago, a group of young Muslims from a country in North Africa were asked why they had made the decision to follow Christ. Their response was that they had noticed that the believers they were in touch with knew each other and loved each other.

There had been an established partnership of ministries in that area, who were intentionally working together in collaboration. By working together in unity, these ministries had “let the world know”; their unity had resulted in part of the world being persuaded and on more part of the mission of Jesus being completed.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 12

Finally, read the extract from “Together We Stand: Evangelical Convictions, Unity and Vision” by Clive Calver & Rob Warner.

Why do Calver and Warner argue that the word “koinonia” has much greater depth of meaning than simply “fellowship?”

Read the Section “Bodywork – it’s God’s idea” on pages 5-8 of the Supplementary Text “Body Matters – A Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission”

You should now be ready to tackle the Assignments for this Unit.



Final Assignment

Final Assignment

NOTE: this Assignment is compulsory

Submit the description or the picture which you produced following your reflection on Ephesians 4:16

In the New Testament, the Greek word “koinonia” is often translated as “fellowship”, but Calver and Warner suggest that such a translation “devalues its true meaning.” From your reading of the extract from “Together We Stand” describe how you would define “koinonia.”

Write an article for a church magazine on “Working with others in ministry: what the Bible says!”

List ways in which you will approach your ministry differently as a result of this unit.

READINGS



“Partnership – More than a buzzword”

by Frampton F Fox in EMQ VOL 37, No 3 July 2001

Partnership, per se, is a highly workable and pragmatic concept that is certainly compatible with the teachings of the Bible. Depending on how we define partnership, we may even assert that “partnership is biblical.” However it may be more accurate to say that partnership can be effected in a biblical manner.

Broadly speaking, partnership is a neutral term like the word relationship. It cannot be judged as good or bad until a specific case is measured by the clear teachings of Scripture. Partnership is a convention of society that is a necessity for social beings. Anytime we do something together in cooperation with another entity, we have engaged to some degree in partnership. The cooperation may simply be an unspoken agreement to stay out of each other’s way. T Theodore Srinivagasam aptly terms this type of partnership in isolation as distinct from a partnership in dynamic relationships (Srinivagasam 1994, 32). Geographical comity arrangements are one example of isolation partnership. We may not be emboldened to call this “cold-war approach” a biblical partnership, but we could argue that it has proven expedient and to the ultimate glory of God in many instances.

Certainly, when we bring this empty term to the well of Scripture and fill it with biblical meaning we raise our expectations exponentially. However, scriptural integrity does not allow us to lift the concept of organizational partnership to the level of an institution like marriage. The Bible makes clear that marriage has been invented, instructed, and demanded by God for cohabiting men and women. Partnership as it is being popularly used in missions circles, though compatible with human nature and potentially in harmony with God’s teachings, is not demanded in that same authoritative manner.

Mission efforts need to fill partnership arrangements with biblical meaning and test them by two standards. First, by the relationship principles taught in Philippians and in other parts of God’s Word. Second, by their own pragmatic merit. The caution is that in the effort to find a biblical basis, we should not read out mission methodology into the Bible in an attempt to sanctify it. To protect the integrity of this new wind of cooperation, perhaps we need to temper statements like the following:

“Partnership includes the sharing of all resources for the furtherance of the gospel (Phil 2:25, 4:15; Rom 15:24). It is a normative way of advancing the gospel, especially when it is introduced from the very beginning (Bush 1990, 29)

This statement contains at least two matters that need to be balanced. First, can we assert with clear scriptural authority that partnership, as Bush defines it and including the concept of sharing all resources, is normative? Second, if it is normative, is it consistent to qualify this by saying especially if it has been introduced early? Though we may appreciate the sentiments that motivate such statements, they sometimes confuse more than they clarify. It might be clearer to say that when a partnership expressed in the pooling of resources is practiced from the beginning of an effort, it can be a very effective and scripturally encouraged method of furthering the gospel. They are many specifics the Bible does not address.

If mission partnership is viewed as something from God for the body of Christ, where in the discussion do we place all the cooperative agreements between mission organizations, or personnel, and secular agencies? For example, there are two missionary Bible translators who were able to remain for many years in a closed South American country through an arrangement with the Ministry of Education of that atheistic government. The same would be true for many modern tentmaking and development missionaries who fulfil the functions of a mission partnership without reference to theological concerns. Does a biblically based partnership philosophy apply to these partnerships, or are they outside the fold? Restricting the discussion to Christian, or mission partnerships makes it more tidy. Yet it does not seem to do justice to the increasing reality of these valid blended agreements involving non-religious affiliations.

To further complicate the issues, some have called for expatriate missionaries to go home (Wakatam 1990, 127). Others counter this with a cry not for moratorium, but for mutuality. In answering Wakatama, Panya Baba says missionaries do need to sacrifice their identity and relinquish decision-making to the church. He also calls on the national church to voluntarily involve the missionary participant in the decision-making process (Baba 1990, 132). Some say it is cost-effective to hire nationals rather than missionaries. Roger Hedlund, writing from the Indian context, warns of the dangers of bogus national evangelists and of well-meaning foreign workers who come in to compete with the local structures. Foreign workers who come in to complement the existing work will be welcome. "Mutuality is the key" Hedlund 1990, 277).

It does not seem that the Bible is at all specific on whether missionary partner relationships, serving beside the national brethren, are preferable to participant relationships, operating under the national church. Again, we must allow latitude for the Spirit of God to lead missionaries and nationals to discern their specific situation and judge how best to work together. The principle of mutuality, equality, and reciprocity is the issue in whatever form is applied.

Having raised some questions and hinted at some parameters, what does the Bible say about Christian together in partnership? The study of the *koinonia* word family has definite implications for understanding partnership in missions. Those who are yoked by common experience in the body of Christ are called on to express that yoking in interpersonal relationships through: identification with each other as equals, empathy with those who suffer, participation in suffering, and sharing of material resources. It is significant that the word formerly used by the Jews to describe the uncleanness of the Gentiles was chosen by the Holy Spirit to express the bringing together of all ethnic groups in Christ. This was expressed by unprecedented signs of racial and spiritual unity: touching (Gal 2:9); eating together (1 Cor 10:16); and financial pooling as family (Acts 4:32). This togetherness was one of the four basic tenets of the New Testament church from its inception (Acts 2:42).

The application challenge is for us to find radical signs of racial and spiritual unity and to visibly express what we invisibly acknowledge, including personal interaction and financial interdependency. There does not seem to be any explicit reference to organizational or structural partnerships. Yet, these principles of biblical fellowship should guide all relationships in the local church and the wider body of Christ. If a structured partnership between Christians seems expedient, then these dynamics would apply, as would other biblical relationship principles like those found in Philippians.

To move closer toward finding a biblical basis for structural partnering relationships, the clearest indications may be found in observing how God does ministry throughout the scope of Scripture. God's first missionary act to reach out to another who would need him spiritually was done in the context of a consensus relationship, "let us make man...." God makes an apparently verbal, cooperative

agreement with Adam and Eve that later was recorded by Moses (Gen 1:28-30, 2:15-20). God, the landowner, supplied resources to Adam, the share-cropper and taxonomist. Adam fulfilled his responsibilities and God allowed him to enjoy the produce. Spiritually, the first couple broke their contract with God and lost the benefits thereof. Cain was rejected because he had obviously not followed the understood expectations regarding sacrifice. When Cain refused to abide by the terms of the way things were to be done, the close relationship was dissolved. When God dealt with Noah it was by a prescribed plan. The plan included a one hundred and fifty-year program of ship building, animal preservation, and preaching. The plan included explicit instructions for the ark, the animals, and Noah's family. They did their part and God did his.

God called Abram to build a people and established a covenant with him and his descendents: "you do this and I will do that" (Gen 12:1-3). God renewed this cooperative covenant to subsequent generations with Isaac and Jacob (Gen 26:24, 35:11). God calls Moses to partner with him to reach the goal of delivering Israel from bondage (Ex 3:13). Through Moses, God established the first written agreement made with Israel as His covenant nation (Ex 19:5-8ff).

The work of the Godhead in effecting redemption and establishing the church is a study in divine partnership, where the Father sent the Son and the Son sends the Spirit, all with the mutual goal of a harvest in mind (John 15). Scripture reveals something of the Godhead's own interdependent relationships and individual responsibilities. In Matt 16:18, Christ offers opportunity and delegates authority to Peter and the other disciples to join him in building his redemptive vehicle, the church. The Lord Jesus Christ in his mission to establish his Church chose twelve. He trained them, empowered them, and entrusted them in a mutual relationship toward a common goal (Matt 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). It is beyond the scope of this survey, and perhaps even beyond explanation, to delve into the mystery of God's sovereign work and his work through fallen agents of free will.

Any application of the life of the infinite God to our finite lives must, of course, recognize that God is not dependent on man. Yet God in his wisdom chooses to somehow limit himself to work in, through, and in spite of men as agents tainted by the fall. This may be likened to Elijah instructing that excessive amounts of water be poured over the sacrifice on Mt. Carmel. Thus, insuring that whatever was done would testify to God's glory and not man's. God does not need man. Yet, he has marvellously limited himself to work in something very much like an interdependent partnership with man to effect his goal of redemption. For the purposes of this study, suffice it to say that we have a part as God's fellow workers (2 Cor 6:1), God has a greater part (Col 1:29), and the mutual goal will be reached (Rev 5:9,10). The greatest scriptural precedent for formal partnership in ministry is God's own model of how he did ministry throughout biblical history.

Extract from

"Why Strategic Partnerships? A look at new strategies for evangelism"

by Phill Butler in "Partners in the Gospel: the strategic role of partnership in world evangelization"

by James H Kraakevik & Dotsey Welliver (Eds) Published by the Billy Graham Centre, 1992



reading

A strong Biblical mandate supports partnerships. First, *God's character is the course of community and cooperation*. Before the world was created, God was living in fellowship with other beings. Because he creates in kind and is always true to himself, it follows that he would create man in his own image – to live and work in relationship, in community.

In the book of Genesis, multiple times in the first eleven chapters, God refers to himself in the *plural*. Read the books of Daniel, Job, Ephesians. Again and again we see the words about the principalities and powers in heavenly places and the angels and other forces looking down. They are interacting with the sons of men in what is obviously a cosmic process – not just a time- and history-bound process.

So, community, relationships, how we operate in the field – these are born out of the character of God. This is not something we learn from secular models (though they frequently confirm the truth). This is not driven by anthropology and sociology but rather by rather by God's character.

Second, Paul gives what I like to call the integrated assets model in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4 – *the body of Christ working as the orchestrated function of all the different, Spirit-inspired parts*. Partnerships allow these varied, God-given elements to consciously function together for Christ's glory.

Now let's look at a third aspect to the Biblical mandate for partnerships. From Genesis to Revelation *two levels of communication are outlined in Scripture*. From beginning to end we see clearly that there is *individual witness*, exemplified by a legion of personalities. But equally clearly there runs throughout Scripture what I believe to be the primary form of witness – *community witness*. This form towers above the other and is the principal validation of individual witness.

For example, when God made his promise to Abraham in Genesis, he did not say He would make him happy, wealthy, or bright, as an individual. He said, "I am going to make you a great nation." In Nehemiah when Israel was being carted off into captivity and brought back, the nations stood in awe. They laughed when Israel was captured and then stood in awe and wondered as God restored the nation. Israel was a community witness to a community of nations. Jesus' high priestly prayer raises the same issue when he suggests that our relationships are the telltale indicator of authenticity to the community around us.

A fourth level of concern in the Scripture mandating partnership is the fact that *the Holy Spirit of God is only released when God's people dwell in unity*.

We frequently wonder why we do not see the power of God breaking through in the last great bastions of darkness. Could it be because we are living in dissension and fragmentation? Psalm 133 states that the Holy Spirit of God rests only where God's people dwell in unity.

And functional partnerships give us the practical opportunity to deal with the "nuts and bolts" of working unity. I have never yet seen a partnership come together because people first met to talk about unity. This never happens. We come together regarding functional, practical issues, and as work progresses effectively on these issues, trust and unity begin to emerge.

A fifth Scriptural reason also indicates why partnerships strategies are critical at grassroots level. Jesus said that the *credibility of the Gospel* is established by how we work together. A large portion of what we actually say is what we do.

Frequently we just want to give our audience a litany of theological truths, a cognitive experience. Now, remarkably, some people do respond to that type of message and their lives are transformed. Praise God, it has happened millions of times. But a desire for real effectiveness requires we listen to the mandate of the Scripture. Jesus says, “the world has every right to say, ‘Ah ha, you’re a fake’, if they don’t see my followers living and working together in unity.” (Pgs 34-35)



Extract from

Clive Calver & Rob Warner: “Together We Stand: Evangelical Convictions, Unity and Vision”

Published by Hodder & Stoughton, 1996; Pages 33-34

The Greek noun *Koinonia*, and the adjectives and verbs associated with it, occur no less than 45 times in the New Testament. The word is usually translated as “communion” or “fellowship”, yet it had been borrowed from everyday life in New Testament times. In secular society it was used to describe friendship and co-operation in business, sports and personal relationships. Among the Greek philosophers it [*koinonia*] was something to be pursued – an ideal of brotherly love and co-operation. This word was used by the early Christian writers to express the quality of relationships required within the local church. It is employed three times by Luke, seven by John, once by Matthew, three by Peter, three by the author of the epistle of the Hebrews and no less than 28 times by Paul. It is therefore a significant term for our Christian unity.

Koinonia implies far more than unity in terms of a common faith or shared membership in a single institution. It can never be reduced to a concept of “fellowship” which means little more than a sense of good-natured friendliness among believers! For this only devalues its rich meaning. True *koinonia* means far more. In both classical and New Testament Greek, its primary focus is not simply an association with others, but refers to our joint participation in something which we share together. In other words, it means a personal relationship, or partnership, based on mutual commitment to each other and to a common purpose, often springing from the fact that both parties already participate in something together ...

The concept is therefore one of partnership. This idea does not relate to our contemporary idea of a partner as a sexual mate but denotes a close personal relationship with others who are also “in Christ.” Our partnership is not based on what we do – but in whom we share.

We do not share together in sin or false teaching (1 Cor 10:20); 1 Tim 5:22; 2 John 11; Rev 18:4), but are in partnership with God himself – Father, Son and Holy Spirit (1 Cor 1:9; 2 Cor 13:14, Phil 2:1; 1 John 1:3,6). This sense of “oneness” in Jesus Christ stems from our *koinonia* together and represents alone the foundation stone for all true biblical unity.

Such partnership can overcome all barriers presented by racial or social divisions. This was witnessed by the church in Antioch. A black man (Simeon called “niger”), an ex-Sanhedrin member (Saul of Tarsus), a wealthy Cypriot (Barnabas), a member of the Judean royalty (King Herod’s foster brother Manaia), and presumably the usual sprinkling of slaves all met as one body in Christ. They shared the leadership together. Here Jews and Gentiles discovered a partnership in Jesus which overcame all the anti-Semitism and anti-gentilism of the centuries because they were one in the Spirit of God.

It was at Antioch that *koinonia* partnership could be seen in action. “The man at the very peak of the social pile and the man at the bottom met together in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ and they were one in a beauty of relationships.” (Francis Schaeffer)

Extract from

Bruce Milne “The Message of John”

(Published by Inter-Varsity Press, 1993) pages 247-252)



This final section of Jesus’ prayer is a deeply moving one because it brings Jesus into direct relationship with us. There are hints elsewhere of Jesus’ recognition that further generations of believers would arise and express allegiance to him. Nowhere in the New Testament, however, is that larger company so clearly in Jesus’ direct vision as here. Jesus is poised between the conclusion of his earthly task and the glory awaiting him at the Father’s side. Like a mountaineer gazing out from an eminence across the expanding vista as range succeeds range into the distant horizon, so Jesus gazes out across the rolling centuries. He beholds and embraces the harvest of the ages, the church of the Redeemer, gathered from every nation, people, language and tribe. He is praying for us.

He prays three things.

1. He prays that the church may be *united*. *That all of them may be one* (21); *May they be brought to complete unity* (23). This unity for which Jesus prays is amplified in the surrounding phrases.

It is first a *supernatural* unity, defined by and included in the unity of the Father and the Son: *cf. as we are one* (21-22). The life we share as Christians is therefore nothing less than a participation in the life of the Godhead! ‘It is a unity which not merely reflects but actually participates in the unity of God – the unity of love and obedience which binds the Son to the Father’ (L Newbigin). Earlier, Jesus had explained that new life in terms of the ministry of the Holy Spirit (3:1f), the life of the kingdom of God, by which we are ‘born anew’ into the family of God (1:12). Accordingly it is a unity which is brought about, not by the efforts of human ingenuity, but by Jesus giving us the glory that the Father had given to him (22). Glory, in this context, has a meaning similar to that in verses 4-5, the glory of the revelation of the Father through the Son, completed by the cross and resurrection. Paul’s perspective is identical in Ephesians 4:3: ‘keep the unity of the Spirit...’. Our part is not to create this. Patently we cannot. Our responsibility lies in maintaining and expressing it.

Secondly, the unity of the church is a *tangible* one, which will cause the world to believe (21) that Jesus was sent by the Father and that the Father loves the church. This unity will make a definite impact on the world. Just as Jesus disclosed the unseen God to the world by becoming flesh (1:14), so the church will be a visible revelation of the unseen Father and his love. Thus while the unity Jesus prays for us is not organizationally produced, it is equally not historically invisible. The world needs to see our unity.

Thirdly, the unity of the church is *evangelical*. It is a unity which is derived from the witness of the church, and which produces faith on the part of at least some of those who encounter it, *so that the world may believe that you have sent me ...* (21,23). It finds expression in the context of making known the message which elicits faith, *those who will believe in me through their message* (20).

“This is not simply a “unity of love.” It is a unity predicted on adherence to the revelation the Father mediated to the first disciples through his Son, the revelation they accepted (verses 6,8) and then passed on.’ (D A Carson).

The challenge of Jesus’ prayer is inescapable. He envisages and petitions his Father for a unity among his followers, which, grounded in a relationship with the Father through Son and Spirit, is sufficiently visible to promote a positive response to the church in its mission.

We can apply this challenge to the local congregation. Here is where the world most immediately encounters the church. There, relationships are to be such that the watching world will come to recognize not only that Jesus is the true revelation of God, but also that *you ... have loved them even as you have loved me*. Our churches are to be ‘love centres’ where relationships between members are a persuasive reflection of the mutually supportive, utterly loyal and eternally accepting love of the Father and the Son. This is true whether the relationships are of men with women, young with mature, laity with clergy, new members with long-standing members, rich with poor, cultured with unsophisticated, socially upper with socially lower, leadership with membership, new converts with established Christians, racially other with racially traditional, and whatever other polarities the church embraces.

Beyond the local church, also, the challenge is unavoidable. Unity at the expense of truth is not supported by this passage. The mediaeval church is witness to a ‘unity’ which certainly did not cause the world to ‘believe’; quite the reverse. It was a unity maintained at the expense of the truth of the gospel revealed by Jesus. That unity had to be sacrificed, at least in the short term, to recover the gospel. It is impossible to believe, however, that the present fragmentation of the Protestant churches (on a recent computation the global denominational total was over twenty-two thousand!) is tolerable in the light of Jesus’ prayer. Where the Holy Spirit has created the common life of the body of Christ among us, and agreement on the fundamentals of the revelation given through Jesus is present, it is unthinkable to pursue the mission of Jesus in isolation from, and even in competition with, those who are as truly the beloved objects of Jesus’ prayer as we are.

There is encouragement as well as challenge, however, in Jesus’ prayer, on two accounts. First, the unity Jesus prayed for is a reality which God himself gives. We do not have to create anything. Our challenge is to give authentic expression to that which God has already worked in our midst. The churches are already one in God. We need to allow that supernatural unity to find expression both in the local church and between the churches.

We can also draw encouragement from the fact that Jesus prays for the unity, and Jesus’ prayer prevails. If our prayers in Jesus’ name are assured of any answer, how much more Jesus’ prayer in Jesus’ name! He cannot be denied, nor will he be. Despite all the contrary indications, the church is one, and will be one, in the glory of the consummation. This assurance does not absolve us from working for the expression of that unity in the present, but it does deliver us from an unbelieving despair. Jesus has prevailed. All Christians, and all churches, will one day love one another as the Father loves the Son and the Son loves the Father.

2. Jesus prays that the world may be *persuaded*. There is some disagreement as to whether the *hina* (‘in order that’ or ‘so that’ in verses 22 and 23) expresses purpose (ie ‘May they be one “with a view to” the world coming to believe’; unity as the precondition of faith) or’ more probably, whether it expresses consequence (ie the unity will in fact result in the world’s coming to believe).

Even on the second alternative the importance of the 'coming to believe' is evident. Jesus desires that the world may be persuaded; he longs that it may come to him. We have already witnessed this yearning during his public ministry. It is a yearning which is not contradicted by his conviction that only those whom the Father has given him will in fact respond. The heart of Jesus is as wide and broad as the heart of the God who so loved the world as to send his only Son. The same love underlies his refusal to pray that the disciples may be taken out of the world (15), but rather accepts that they will be left here, in order to fulfil the mission to the whole world. He prays that the world may believe, and the means of answering his prayer is the mission of his people.

This mission has two hands. The 'first hand' is that of proclamation, the communicating to the world of the revelation of the Father in the Son, climaxed by his self-sacrifice for the world's sin. This revelation (6) is commonly expressed in words (8), and must be shared in words so that the world may believe that the mission of Jesus is authentically the mission of the Father in him, and hence that he is the Saviour and Lord of sinners.

But the mission has a 'second hand'. It is visible as well as verbal, relational as well as audible. The content of this 'second hand' is clearly stated in verse 23: *May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you ... have loved them even as you have loved me.* Well may (R) Brown (*in the "Gospel according to John"*) exclaim that the 'standard of comparison is breathtaking'. Indeed it is! The Father's love for his Son in all its richness is persuasively reproduced in the mutual relationships of the Christian congregation! Nothing less than that is Jesus' prayer.

This 'second hand' represents a dimension in evangelism which is commonly ignored or underestimated, and yet which is central to Jesus' evangelistic strategy for his church (cf 13:34-35). The local church is the obvious point of application. A group of Christians who are so knit together in the love of God that others can say of them, 'Look how they love each other,' is a church where the gospel will be 'the power of God for salvation' (Romans 1:16). Evangelism is a community act. It is the proclamation of the church's relationship as well as its convictions. The preacher is only the spokesperson of the community. The gospel proclaimed from the pulpit is either confirmed, and hence immeasurably enhanced, or it is contradicted, and hence immeasurably weakened, by the quality of the relationships in the pews. In this sense *every* Christian *is* a witness. Every time we gather together we either strengthen or weaken the evangelistic appeal of our church by the quality of our relationships with our fellow church members.

The biggest barriers to effective evangelism according to the prayer of Jesus are not so much outdated methods, or inadequate presentations of the gospel, as realities like gossip, insensitivity, negative criticism, jealousy, backbiting, an unforgiving spirit, a 'root of bitterness' failure to appreciate others, self-preoccupation, greed, selfishness and every other form of lovelessness. These are the squalid enemies of effective evangelism which render the gospel fruitless and send countless thousands into eternity without a Saviour. 'The glorious gospel of the blessed God', which is committed to our trust, is being openly contradicted and veiled by the sinful relationships within the community which is commissioned to communicate it. We need look no further to understand why the church's impact on the community is frequently so minimal in spite of the greatness of our message. We are fighting with only one hand!

Roger Fredrikson, in his commentary on John, recounts a deeply moving moment when a church he was pasturing shared a public service of reconciliation with another congregation more than twenty years after an angry division. 'As we sang, "Great is Thy Faithfulness" many people embraced in the crowded sanctuary and their tears of gratitude and joy were mingled. The next day on the street people stopped some of us saying they had heard the "good news." The message we proclaimed had become ... credible.'

3. Jesus prays that his mission may be *completed* (24-26). The conclusion of the prayer returns to the themes of its beginning, in particular to the glory which Jesus prayed might be revealed in him and hence offered to the Father (1, 5). Jesus prays that those the Father has given him *may be with me where I am, and to see my glory* (24). The reference appears to reach beyond the glory immediately disclosed in the cross to the revelation of the glory of Christ at his parousia. Here is the 'finishing of the work the Father has given him to do', the presentation of all those whom the Father has given him, from all the ages and from around the globe, before 'him who sits upon the throne' (Rev 5:13).

'With me' is the language of love. The beloved longs for the lover's presence. So Jesus, in these final moments, as the last grains of sand trickle through the hour glass before his rendezvous with darkness, gazes across the rolling aeons of the future and anticipates the embrace of his beloved bride in the glory that is to be.

'We have seen his glory,' was John's testimony as he contemplated Jesus' earthly ministry, a glory that has been unveiled as the story has unfolded. Shortly we shall gaze upon the 'glory' of his awful sacrifice and triumphant resurrection, and over the centuries the Spirit will glorify him as he takes what is Christ's and makes it known to his disciples (16:14). But beyond all these 'glories' is the sure promise of a further unveiling, as at his coming the glory which Christ had with the Father is laid open to our eyes. Until that day of glory we walk by faith, not sight. The church must travel on her pilgrim way, the *ecclesia militans*, in a world that 'does not know' the Father, but sustained on her journey by the revelation of Jesus given and renewed (26), by the love of the Father embracing and supporting us and, above all, by the presence of Jesus in our midst and within our hearts (26).

Partnerships

Unit 2

What do we mean by "partnership"?



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Version 1.3

Unit 2 - What do we mean by "partnership"?

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Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this unit you will be able to.....

- State that different people often have different mental pictures of what a partnership is and describe some of these different concepts of partnership
- Explain the difference between a simple partnership and a complex partnership and give examples of both
- Describe the dangers of trying to impose too much structure on a partnership
- Explain the difference between a Horizontal Partnership and a Vertical Partnership and give examples of both

Reading: In addition to reading in this unit: "Body Matters – a Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission" by Ernie Addicott, published by Interdev Partnership Associates 2005 : Pages 13-22, 88-95, 98-103

Lecture Notes & Workbook

Introduction

I receive regularly newsletters from a number of Christian ministries. This morning I received a newsletter from one of these ministries. The head-line on the front page read "Our new partnership in Perth, Australia", and the main story described how the two ministries had reached an agreement to work together to fulfil needs they both had.

In the secular world and in the ministry world today, there is almost a requirement for people to work together "in partnership." We are constantly hearing of new "partnerships" in the business world – particularly in the west. And churches and mission groups are also talking about working in "partnership." But what does the word mean?

What are some words or phrases which you would use if you were asked to describe to someone the meaning of the word "partnership"? Take a few minutes to think and write down your ideas.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 1

Words / phrases to describe the meaning of the word "partnership."



learning

You probably came up with quite a number of words. Some words and phrases which other people have suggested in the past have included the following:

Working Together
Synergy
Co-operative
Relationships
Difficult

Effective
Collaboration
Hard-work
Shared skills and shared resources
Greater strength

You probably included some of these words in your list – but maybe I’ve listed some that you didn’t have – and you may have some words that I haven’t included in my list!

Whenever we are talking about the word “partnership”, we need to remember that different people often have different pictures in their minds when they are using the word “partnership.” People think about partnership in different ways. And depending on the way they think about the word “partnership”, people develop partnerships in different ways.

Some definitions of “partnership”

Think about it?

Answer Box # 2

Please turn to the Readings for Unit 2 and read the selection of definitions of partnership which are given there.

What do you identify as some of the common threads of these definitions?



One of the common threads which I hope you identified was the word “relationship.” Good, strong relationships are critical to the effectiveness of a partnership. And we will return to this theme many times during this course.

Another common thread which you may have identified is that the partners work together for a specific purpose, goal, task or action.

Some people don’t like the word “partnership” at all. They feel it’s over-used and prefer to use other words such as Alliances, Coalitions, Consortiums, or Collaboration. However, it is important to understand that an Alliance, a Coalition, a Consortium or a collaborative venture all involve working together for a common task or purpose and also involve relationships. So, whether we are talking about alliances or coalitions or partnerships, they each essentially involve the same things. They’re all about working together to achieve a common task or purpose. For the purposes of this course, we will use the word “partnership”, recognizing that we are using it as an all-embracing word which includes words like “alliance”, “coalition”, “consortium” and “collaborative ventures.”

Types of Partnership

One of the challenges we have as we try to communicate what the word partnership means is that there are many different types of partnerships, and these different types of partnership vary in their degree of complexity.

Some partnerships are very simple – there are just two organizations, or ministries or churches which partner together. However, other partnerships are much more complex, with a number of organizations, ministries or partnerships which are working together.

And it's not just the number of ministries involved which have an impact on the degree of complexity. Some partnerships have a well-defined structure, while others have a much less strongly defined structure.

One important facet of working in partnership is that each ministry or organizations maintains its own identity. Usually the partners are only working together for part of their work. A group of churches might partner together to run a Christian Coffee-shop in their town. They are partners in the coffee-shop venture and in nothing more. They don't hold joint worship-services, they don't hold joint prayer-meetings, they don't do evangelism together. They simply partner together to run a Christian Coffee-shop.

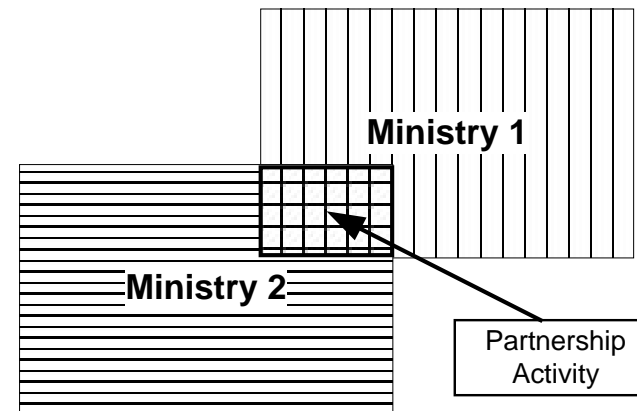
Similarly, a group of churches might partner together to run a special event, such as an evangelistic outreach in their community. Each church continues to have its own services on Sundays, to have its own prayer meetings and Bible Study Groups. But they work together on this one project.

Simple Partnerships

It's always best to begin simply and add complexity.

A simple partnership is easy to understand. A simple partnership is where only two groups, ministries or organizations agree to work together. As we've already discussed, they don't have to work together on everything, but they work together on one or two specific projects or objectives, and both ministries expect to benefit from their working together.

If you like pictures, the next diagram might help you visualize what a Simple Partnership will look like. Two ministries have agreed to work together on some activity. There's lots of work they are doing on their own – but they come together to work on some things together – their partnering activity in the diagram is the small box where they intersect.



In some examples of simple partnerships, the agreement to work together is open-ended. In other examples, a specific time-limit for the life of the partnership is set. Perhaps the two partners agree to work together for one year or two years, or whatever time-limit is set. Or they may agree to work together until they have met the objectives which they set.

Partnerships have become increasingly common in the business world. In the past one company might have taken over another, or the two companies might have merged, or a company might have expanded into areas in which they had little or no expertise. But today companies recognize that they need to keep focused on their own expertise, and develop partnerships with others who can

provide the products and services they need to satisfy and meet their customers' requirements. For example, the global fast-food chain, MacDonald's has a partnership (which they call an "Alliance") with Coca Cola. MacDonald's have agreed in their outlets to sell Coca Cola and only Coca Cola. So, when you go to MacDonald's you can't get a Pepsi – because they only sell Coke!

In the ministry world, there are many examples of these simple partnerships – where just two ministries work together. It may be two churches, or two para-church agencies or a church and a para-church ministry, who agree to work together on a specific project or who agree to co-operate together in some form of ministry.

Some simple partnerships are church-to-church partnerships. This is where two churches partner together. It may be two churches in the same town, in the same country or even in different countries. Many church-to-church partnerships consist of a church in the western-world partnering with a church in the non-western world.

Other simple partnerships are ministry-to-ministry partnerships. These are where two para-church ministries partner together. It may be western ministries, it may be two non-western ministries or it may be a western ministry and a non-western ministry.

Yet other simple partnerships are church-to-ministry partnerships. These are where one church and one para-church ministry partner together. Both partners may be western; both partners may be non-western; or the partners may be one of each.

In a simple partnership both partners bring something to the partnership – and both partners benefit from the relationship.

Think about it?

Answer Box #



learning

Think about ministry situations that you are involved in or are aware of.

List all the Simple Partnerships (that's partnerships where there are only two partners) you are part of or are aware of, by completing as much of the following table as possible. (If you run out of space, continue on an additional piece of paper).

| Who are the partners? | In existence how long? | Why are these partners working together? |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

When we enter into a simple partnership it doesn't mean that the two ministries merge. What it means is that **for part of their work** (not for all their work), they co-operate together.

Sometimes these Simple Partnerships will specifically exclude other partners from joining the partnership. Sometimes a partnership may be open to new partners joining the partnership. However, once you have more than two members in a partnership, it becomes more complex!

Complex Partnerships: "Multi-Member Partnerships"

Although there are many partnerships which only consist of two partners, there are an increasing number of situations around the world where Christian work and ministry is being done by partnerships consisting of a number of churches or a number of agencies – or a mixture of both. These types of partnerships are more complex than the simple partnership consisting of two partners. These complex partnerships of three or more partners can perhaps be best described as "Multi-Member Partnerships."

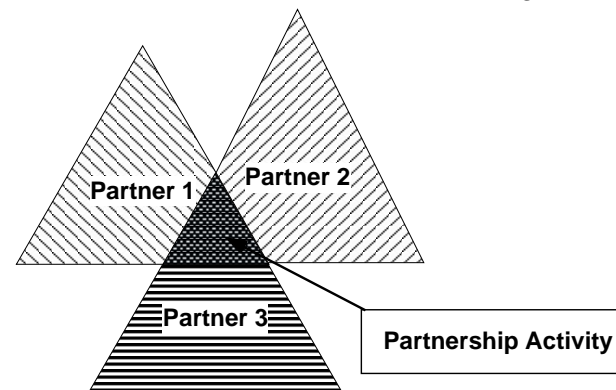
In the same way as in Simple Partnerships, each partner brings something into the partnership and each partner expects to benefit from working together. However, now rather than each partner having to relate to the other partner, in a multi-member partnership, each partner needs to relate to all the other partners – and that can get quite challenging!

To the right you'll find another diagram which illustrates three ministries working together.

Here we have three ministries. Each of these three ministries continues to work independently on some projects, but all three are working in partnership on a specific project. Where they overlap – and where we have the dark crosshatching is where they are partnering together.

In the business world there are lots of multi-member partnerships. For example the "Star Alliance" is a partnership of a number of international airlines who partner together to encourage customer loyalty and who arrange their flight schedules together for the convenience of its customers who may need to take a journey involving more than one airline.

In the ministry world there are multi-member partnerships as well.



In the same way that in simple partnerships some were church-to-church, others were ministry-to-ministry and yet others were church-to-ministry, so in complex partnerships you can have situations where some complex partnerships consist only of churches, others consist only of para-church ministries and yet others consist of a mixture of both!

Think about it?

Answer Box #

Think about ministry situations that you are involved in or are aware of.

List all the Complex Partnerships (that's partnerships where there are three or more partners) you are part of or are aware of, by completing as much of the following table as possible. (If you run out of space, continue on an additional piece of paper).



| Who are the partners? | In existence how long? | Why are these partners working together? |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Some of the multi-member partnerships that I'm aware of include:

- partnerships which are focused on different unreached peoples in the world, and bring together the various ministries who are seeking to reach them with the Gospel to work together rather than work separately, or in competition.

- partnerships focused on bringing the Gospel to different cities in the world.
- partnerships of relief and development ministries where the ministries involved plan and work together to bring the most effective help and support to the people they are working with
- partnerships focused on bring support to refugees
- partnerships focused on ministries involved with children – specifically children at risk

Structure of Partnerships

As well as recognizing that we can have either simple partnerships or multi-member partnerships, we also need to understand that partnerships can be structured in different ways. Some partnerships are highly structured, while others have little structure – and there's everything in between as well!

As humans, we have a tendency to want to have everything nicely structured. But many very effective partnerships have managed to work with little structure – especially in the early days of the partnership. One of the concerns that some possible partners have is that by entering into a partnership situation, they will lose a lot of their own autonomy. This concern can become a major fear if they see they are entering into a situation where everything is highly structured. They begin to suspect that the reason they have been encouraged to enter into the partnership is because someone else from another ministry or church is wanting to control them and their resources.

Several years ago I attended a meeting where a group of four ministries had decided to form a partnership for an unreached people group. These four ministries had met together and had agreed on a protocol, which included rules and regulations for joining the partnership, a membership fee, what activities the partnership would undertake and the level of the membership fee. They also wrote into the documentation that these four ministries would form the Steering Committee and that decisions of the Steering Committee would be binding on all members of the partnership. The meeting I attended was one which they had called to invite other ministries and churches to join them in their partnership.

Answer Box # 5

As you read this short case-study, what are some of the concerns you might have about joining this partnership?



learning

I don't know what your concerns were. But the dozen or so ministries and churches which had been invited to this meeting were very concerned that they were being asked to join a partnership which already had a very strong structure and that they would have little opportunity to shape the structure or the ministry which the partnership would undertake. They felt they were being asked to sign-up to

the agenda of others, and that they had no opportunity to influence or even suggest areas of ministry which the partnership would work on. In fact, in essence they would be told what to do by the founding partners – and they didn't like the idea at all!

The feelings in the meeting were so strong, that the original four founding partners closed the meeting, and re-thought how they would develop the partnership in ways which would involve other churches and ministries.

Of course, some partnerships need a lot of structure. There are partnerships around the world today – especially partnerships in semi-closed countries where ministries have had to come together, because the government will only allow a single entity to work in the country. So, in order to minister in that setting, ministries have formed a highly structured partnership, with an executive director, a management structure and a constitution and by-laws.

Also, some long-running partnerships have found that as they mature, they need more structure. However, the length and depth of the relationships which have developed over the life-time of the partnership have been such that the high degree of trust which is needed in an effective partnership has been built up over the years.

As you begin to work on developing a partnership – try to keep as little structure as possible at the beginning of your partnership together.

Horizontal Partnerships and Vertical Partnership

We now come to another way of trying to understand partnerships. Some partnerships only consist of similar ministries working together. Other partnerships consist of different ministries working together.

When different ministries who all have a similar ministry focus are working together in partnership, this is called a "Horizontal Partnership."

So if we have a number of different Bible Translation ministries who are working together, they would be working in a Horizontal Partnership. Similarly a group of ministries working in radio together are working in a Horizontal Partnership, as are a group of medical ministries working together on medical work

| HORIZONTAL PARTNERSHIPS | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|---------------------------|
| | <i>Ministries</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Local Churches | | | | | | | | | | | People Group / Country |
| Church Planting | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ministries | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Literature | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bible Translation | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tracts | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Radio | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cassettes | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Children at Risk Ministries | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Agricultural Development | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Medical Work | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Relief | | | | | | | | | | | | |

In the example of Horizontal Partnerships above Ministries A, B, C and D all have work in Bible Translation, and they are working together on a Bible Translation project.

Ministries D, E, F, G and H are all either ministries focused entirely on Radio or ministries which have some radio work, and they are working together in partnership on a radio broadcasting project. They may be working together on different aspects of broadcasting the Gospel in the same language; for example, one could be providing the transmission facilities, another producing the programmes, another contributing features to the programme, yet another focusing on the follow-up and one providing literature to be used in the follow-up.

Ministries H, I and J are working together on medical work – perhaps providing personnel for a hospital.

Note that Ministry D is working in both Bible Translation and in Radio, and that Ministry H has work in Radio and in Medical Work.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 6

List the Horizontal Partnerships you know of by listing the type of ministry partnership and the ministries/churches who are partners



Whereas we call similar types of ministries working together a Horizontal Partnership, when **different** types of ministry work together in partnership, we call this a "Vertical Partnership."

In a Vertical Partnership, we have different types of ministry working together. So we may have Bible Translation, Radio ministries, medical and agricultural development ministries and Church Planting ministries all working together to reach out to the same group of people in a country or in a region, or in a city. The different types of ministry are working together and are intentionally linking and integrating the work they are doing, because they believe it is Biblical to do so, and because they also believe that by working together it will have a powerful and positive impact on their efforts. The diagram below gives some examples of Vertical Partnerships.

| VERTICAL PARTNERSHIPS | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| | <i>People Group / Country / City</i> | | |
| | X | Y | Z |
| Local Churches | | | |
| Church Planting | | ↑ | ↑ |
| Ministries | | | |
| Literature | ↑ | | |
| Bible Translation | | | |
| Tracts | | | |
| Radio | | | |
| Cassettes | | | |
| Children at Risk | | | |
| Ministries | | | |
| Agricultural | | ↑ | ↑ |
| Development | | | |
| Medical Work | | | |
| Relief | | | |

The examples in the diagram gives some illustrations of various Vertical Partnerships.

- One illustrates a Radio Ministry which is broadcasting programmes in a particular language. The Radio Ministry is working in partnership with tract and literature ministries which are developing materials which are linked to the content of the radio programmes. The literature and the tracts are offered to listeners on air. A Cassette ministry is also working in partnership with these ministries, producing cassettes of the programmes, and distributing them to those who can't listen to the radio

- Another illustrates a partnership of local churches and church planting ministries who are working with Medical, Agricultural Development and Relief Ministries in an area where there has been war or a natural disaster. This partnership is helping needy people both practically and spiritually
- The third illustration shows all the ministries working in a specific area working together and intentionally linking the different types of ministry to give greater impact to the work of evangelism and church planting

One very good example of a Vertical Partnership is the work which is being done by a variety of different ministries to get Christian literature and other resources into a particular closed country. One of the biggest challenges for ministries working to reach this country has been getting Bibles, Christian literature, tapes and videos into the region. None of these items can be imported into the country and it isn't possible to load up a container and take them in – because the vehicle will be stopped at the borders – and turned away!

However, there are thousands of workers from this country living in some neighbouring countries either studying or working. And every summer they return to their homes to visit families and friends. Most of these workers and students travel back on the ferries which travel between the ports of their host countries and the ports of their home countries. Because of the vast numbers of people who are trying to travel, the travelers are often waiting in queues for hours and sometimes even days!

Since the early 1990s, each summer, there have been an army of Christians who are stationed at the ports where these workers are leaving from. These Christians are armed with Bibles, with Christian literature, with audio tapes and with video tapes – and they are giving them away to the men and women who are waiting in the queues for the ferries. Many of them accept the materials they are given – although some refuse. So, in this way every year Christian materials are being taken into the country!

Many different ministries and churches are involved in this distribution project – with some ministries making materials available (including cassette, radio, literature, Bible Translation ministries), and other ministries, churches and individual Christians being involved in the distribution teams and in the personal evangelism as some people talk with the folk in the queues. Across the world people are praying for this project throughout the year, and during the distribution season those who are praying are kept up to date with information from the project co-ordinator. It is one of the best examples of a vertical partnership, and over the years more than two and a half million Christian items – literature, tapes, bibles and books – have been distributed in this way and have been taken into this closed country, which seems “impossible” to get Christian materials into!

Think about it?

Answer Box # 7

List any Vertical Partnerships you know of by listing the ministries/churches who are partners, the type of ministry each is engaged in and the focus of the partnership.



learning

Types of Partnership in Kabuli

In some of your earlier courses, you have already been introduced to the country of Kabuli. You will probably not be surprised to learn that there is a lot of partnering going on within the ministry context in Kabuli!

I want you to read the following descriptions of partnerships which have been developed by different churches and ministries to reach out to the people of Kabuli:

Partnership 1: The World Ambassadors of God (WAG) Seminary at Moshulu in Kabuli has a partnership with the International Christian College of Stuttgart by which the German partner is committed to provide an annual grant of €10,000 to the Seminary in Kabuli.

Partnership 2: Moshulu Bible Church has a partnership with Central Community Church in Pittsburg which is providing funding for the pastor's salary.

Partnership 3: Worldwide Evangelical Assistance and Relief (WEAR), New Horizons Mission and Better World Mission are working in partnership to provide development projects to improve the conditions of the people living in Happy Valley.

Partnership 4: Southern Association of Languages (SAL), Kingdom Signposts (the publishing arm of World Ambassadors of God Mission), Living Stones Mission (LSM) are working together and developing Daily Bible Read Notes in Kabuli.

Partnership 5: No Borders, the Voice of Faith and the Northern Presbyterian Congregations of North America (NPCNA) are working in partnership together on a "Jesus Film Project", with NPCNA providing the funding, the Voice of Faith promoting the film in Kabuli and No Borders being responsible for the distribution and follow-up.

Partnership 6: Better World Mission, Living Stones Mission, New Horizons Mission, Southern Association of Languages, World Ambassadors of God Mission, Worldwide Evangelical Assistance and Relief and the Voice of Faith are working together in partnership to reach the Bendistani People (an unreached people group living in the northern mountainous region of Kabuli) with the Gospel.

Here we have six very different partnerships. Some are partnerships where a western institution or church is providing financial aid to their "partner" in Kabuli. Others are partnerships where ministries focusing on a similar type of work are working together to make their ministry more effective. And others are partnerships where different types of ministries are working together in order to make an impact for the Gospel.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 8

EXERCISE:

- Review each of the partnerships described above, and for each one state whether
- it is a Simple or a Multi-Ministry Partnership
 - it is a Horizontal or a Vertical Partnership



learning

Before you turn to the Assignments, read pages 13-22, 88-95, 98-103 of the Supplementary text: "Body Matters – a Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission" by Ernie Addicott

Assignment



Final Assignment

1. Describe the difference between a Network and a Partnership
2. Describe the difference between a Simple Partnership and a Complex Partnership. Give examples of each.
3. Describe the difference between a Horizontal Partnership and a Vertical Partnership. Give examples of each – which should be different from the examples given in this unit.
4. In your own words define the word "partnership."
5. Write an article of between 250 and 300 words which highlights some of the challenges when different people mean different things when talking about partnerships

Readings



UNIT 2 - Readings: What do we mean by “Partnership”?

Definitions of Partnership

- A. Partnership is a close working relationship between individuals and/or organizations, who agree to work together for a specific purpose because they can achieve more together than by themselves. (*Interdev*)
- B. A partnership is a complementary relationship driven by a common purpose and sustained by a willingness to learn and grow together in obedience to God (*Daniel Rickett in “Building Strategic Relationships” published by Partners International*)
- C. Partnership is where two or more organizations with separate structures of accountability act together as partners in some common task. It is usually assumed that the partners are equal, however it is recognized that in the earlier stages of the work there may be some inequality. (*Ann Taket & Leroy White in “Partnership and Participation” published by Wiley*)
- D. A partnership is designed to take joint collaborative action and to achieve things together that one cannot achieve separately. Simply put, a partnership is an agreement to do something together that will benefit all involved. A partnership asks the question: are there things we can do together that we cannot do separately? If so, what are they?
- E. A Partnership is the association of two or more autonomous bodies who have formed a trusting relationship and fulfil agreed-upon expectations. They do this by sharing complementary gifts and abilities in order to achieve a common goal. (*Daniel Rickett in “Building Strategic Relationships” published by Partners International*)
- F. Partnership is a collaboration among members of the Body of Christ who are working together in functional unity and mutual respect to effectively achieve common goals in the advancing of God’s Kingdom. (*Definition developed at an Interdev Partnership Training Workshop in 2003*)

Partnerships

Unit 3

The strategic importance of working together in partnership



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Version 1.3

Unit 3 - The strategic importance of working together in partnership

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Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this unit you will be able to.....

- Explain that Evangelism and Church Planting is a process and be able to describe the steps in that process
- Explain that the same person or ministry does not have to be responsible for each step in the process, and the value of linking ministries to ensure the process is as effective as possible
- Describe the impact of different types of ministry at different stages in the process
- State the importance of being focused on outcomes
- State ways in which you will approach ministry differently as a result of any new understanding you have about what the Scriptures have to say about partnership

Note: The Assignments at the end of Units 1, 4 and 6 are to be completed submitted to the professor after completing each assignment. In addition you should submit your response to the Assignments following any TWO of Units 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10

Lecture Notes & Workbook

Introduction Unit 3

So far in this course, we have taken time to consider what the Bible says about working together in partnership and we have examined some of the words which different people use to describe the process of working together.

As we discussed in Unit 2, other people may chose to use words like alliance or collaboration, whereas we have chosen to use the word “partnership.”

It’s not always easy to work together with others. It is often easier to work on our own. But although working independently might be easy. It may not be the most strategic or even the wisest thing to do. So, in this module we are focusing on why working together in partnership is a key strategy for the building of the kingdom of God.

When we begin to talk about strategies we can get so focused on the methods we are using, that we forget about the people involved. We can be so focused on what we are doing today – or what we might do tomorrow, that we forget what is the ultimate outcome of our ministry and work. As Christians, we must always bear in mind that what we do in our church or ministry and the strategies we employ is for one purpose – to reach people with the Gospel, to bring them into the church, to mature them in their faith and to bring glory to God.

Think about someone you know who needs to hear the gospel. Now ask yourself two questions:

Think about it?

Answer Box # 1

What do I need to do to bring him/her to that point of commitment?

What might others do to bring him/her to that point of commitment?



learning

Putting the Pieces together

When my children were little, they loved to play with jigsaws. A jigsaw is a picture – perhaps a beautiful scene, or a building, or an animal, or even a country or continent! However, the jigsaw comes in lots of small pieces – everyone shaped a little differently. The game is to fit the pieces together in order to make the picture! Sometimes the jigsaw has just a few pieces – perhaps as few as 24 pieces; but other times there are literally hundreds of pieces which need to be put together in the right order to create a picture of beauty.

Earlier this year, as a family – but this time a larger one, because our once young children are now married, we went to stay together in another part of our country. Our younger daughter brought with her a jigsaw, and gave us the challenge to complete the puzzle by the end of the week we were together. She gave each of us one-sixth of the pieces, and every spare minute, when we weren't out walking, or sight-seeing, or cooking or cleaning up, each of us were trying to use our pieces – all with the objective of completing the task. Sometimes it was difficult, sometimes it was much easier. Sometimes we saw where our pieces fitted well with the pieces of one of the other members of the family. Other times we struggled to get our pieces to fit anywhere! When we were discouraged and couldn't find places for our pieces to fit, we often discovered that another member of the family was able to find places for his/her pieces to fit – and then we were able to use our pieces. However, as the week drew to a close, we were almost finished! And we reached the point where the picture was almost complete, but we had each run out of the pieces we had been given! There were pieces missing! Had our daughter bought a dud puzzle?

No, she hadn't, because eventually we spotted a number of pieces of the puzzle which had fallen on the floor. We picked them up, and discovered that these pieces fitted perfectly – and we were able to complete our task. Everybody was delighted that we had been able to complete the task – and we celebrated our success!

In many ways, our working as a family on this jigsaw puzzle was like different ministries working together in partnership.

Complete the table below, by writing in the ministry equivalent of the example where we as a family worked on the jigsaw:

| <i>Family working on a Puzzle</i> | <i>Ministry equivalent</i> |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Each member of the family had different pieces of the puzzle | |
| Each member of the family was focused on trying to complete the puzzle | |
| Sometimes the piece one member of the family had fitted well with the pieces another person had | |
| Sometimes we struggled to find places for our pieces to fit | |
| Sometime we were discouraged | |
| The success of other members of the family often gave us the opportunity to find places where our pieces could fit | |
| We could only produce the picture if we worked together | |
| We couldn't complete the task until we found the lost pieces | |

| | |
|---|--|
| When the task was completed – everyone in the family was delighted! | |
|---|--|

I hope you were able to complete each of the boxes! I don't know how you responded – but my responses are given in the table below:

| <i>Family working on a Puzzle</i> | <i>Ministry equivalent</i> |
|--|---|
| Each member of the family had different pieces of the puzzle | Each ministry has different gifts |
| Each member of the family was focused on trying to complete the puzzle | Each ministry is focused on sharing the gospel |
| Sometimes the piece one member of the family had fitted well with the pieces another person had | Sometimes the work of one ministry fits well with the work of another ministry |
| Sometimes we struggled to find places for our pieces to fit | Sometimes we struggle in our work |
| Sometime we were discouraged | Sometimes we can be discouraged in our ministries |
| The success of other members of the family often gave us the opportunity to find places where our pieces could fit | When another ministry has success it often leads to new opportunities for us |
| We could only produce the picture if we worked together | There are times when we need to work together with others for there to be success in our ministries |
| We couldn't complete the task until we found the lost pieces | Sometimes we need to look for other ministries to help us complete the work we are trying to do |
| When the task was completed – everyone in the family was delighted! | When a ministry task is completed – we all share pleasure in a job well done. |

Thinking about the jigsaw puzzle, it is important to note that everyone in the family had something to contribute – we all had our pieces, and it was only in using our pieces that the picture could be completed. If I had decided that I was bored, or didn't want to take part in the exercise, the rest of the family would have been discouraged – and could not have completed the picture – because I wasn't willing to use the pieces I had been given.

There are times in ministry when we need to make use of the gifts which God has given to us – when we need to contribute to the greater whole, rather than focus on our own needs and interests. If we do, it may be that the greater purposes of God will be thwarted – and we will be the one standing in the way of what God wants to achieve.

There may also be times when we realize that we can't complete a job on our own – and we need to go and find the pieces which will "fit" to complete the picture!

Seeing the work of ministry as a process

Think about it?



Answer Box # 2

Take your Bibles and read John 4: 34-38 and 1 Corinthians 3: 4-7

Here Jesus and Paul are using the illustration of the harvest to talk about evangelism. If you are a farmer, what do these verses state that you need to do if you want to have a good harvest?

Is there anything which isn't included in these verses which you think ought to be added to the list of things to do to get a good harvest?

Both Jesus and Paul talk about the need for sowing the seed, watering the plants and then reaping the harvest.

However, if you try to sow your seed on hard ground, you won't have much success, so in addition you need to prepare the ground. Now that might just mean digging over the soil in order to prepare it; but it might require much harder work – like removing weeds, or digging our rocks!

You might have also added to the list activities such as removing the weeds, or fertilizing the ground. These are also needed if a farmer is going to get a really good harvest.

We can show these activities on a chart which begins with preparing the ground and ending with reaping

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|--|
| Prepare the ground | Sowing the seed | Watering the plants | Reaping the crop | |
|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|--|

Now, what I have done here is just include the big “broad” strokes – the main “headlines” rather than the detail which you may have included in your list of activities.

I would like us now to relate the agricultural process which results in the harvest, to the evangelism process which results in faith.

Some of the words which have been used for describing the process which many people go through as they move through the process from being unbelievers to coming to faith in Christ are the following:

- Believing
- Antagonistic or apathetic
- Seeking
- Interested

Think about it?**Answer Box # 3**

Read the Article “Peter, Paul and the Engel Scale” and review the diagram on the Engel Scale, both of which you will find in the “Readings” Section for this Unit.

Now read the following comment on the Engel Scale, which was sent to a web-discussion group on the subject.

The Engel scale "concept" is a useful tool for outreach, but bogs hopelessly if we limit it to the precise positions or steps on the scale that James Engel first published. Jim wouldn't even limit himself to those, I don't think. Put whatever stages you find in real life on the scale. Extend it as far as you want in either direction. Better, draw it as a path of life toward a cross on a hill, with signposts and side roads along the way.

Irrelevant? The progression of the Engel scale in Scripture is called sowing, watering and reaping. On the plus side it is making disciples. In Acts 19, when Paul met the disciples of unknown origin, his first question to them was, "Where are you blokes on the Engel scale?"

My flippant paraphrase is conceptually true: Paul did not start preaching or teaching until he had asked questions to determine where his audience was. Paul wanted to know how much they knew, what they had experienced as relationship to God, and therefore what they needed to know or do. He did not waste his time nor theirs addressing irrelevant issues. That is simply good, Biblical communication. Engel is merely a diagrammatic way to express that concept.

Do you think the Engel Scale is a helpful way of describing the evangelism process? Write down what you think.

**learning**

Different Tasks and Different Ministries

Think about it?



Answer Box # 4

Before we move on, look back at John 4: 34-38 again. Does Jesus say that the same person has to be responsible for each step in the agricultural process? What do you think?

Jesus clearly doesn't expect the same person to be involved at each stage of the agricultural process (although they might be!). It is possible for more than one person to be involved – and it is also possible that different people might be involved at different stages of the process.

Similarly it is just as likely that different people will be involved at different stages of the evangelism process.

Now let's try to apply some of this discussion.

Answer Box # 5

List as many different types of ministry as you can think of. (I'm not looking for ministry names, but types of ministry!) To get you started, one type of ministry would be radio broadcasting. Now list some others....

Now as you think about the evangelism process – and as you think about these types of ministry, using the chart below, list against each of the stages in the evangelism process those types of ministry which you think will be particularly strategic at that stage of the process. For example, if you think that Bible Study Groups will be most effective in the Antagonistic/Apathetic Stage, write “Bible Study Groups” in that section of the chart (try not to have every type of ministry against each stage! – but try to structure your thinking so that each type of ministry only appears, at the most, twice in the chart.)

| Stages | Ministries |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Antagonistic/ Apathetic | |
| Showing Interest | |
| Seeking | |
| Believing | |
| Maturing | |

As I think about this task, I tend to think that radio is particularly strong in the Antagonistic/Apathetic Stage, this is because of its reach and that as it can be non-threatening it can soften people’s attitudes towards Christians and Christianity. Radio also is very good in the maturing stage, when it can focus on the teaching and the preaching aspects of ministry. However it is not so strong at the point where people actually come to faith – because there it needs more of a personal approach, it’s best for someone to get alongside the person who is developing towards faith and help them think through and answer the questions they have.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 6

As we look at John 4: 34-38 one more time, what did Jesus say about the reaper rejoicing?



Jesus very clearly said that the reaper wouldn't rejoice on his own – but that the sower and the reaper would rejoice together! Too often when we celebrate the coming of a repentant sinner into the kingdom it's the reaper who celebrates, and the ones who have gone before – the stone-clearers, the sowers, and the waterers – whose contribution goes un-remarked!

Think about it?

Answer Box # 7

If we look again at the Corinthian passage, but this time go a bit further in the passage (1 Cor 3: 4-11), things which Paul notes about the evangelism process there?



learning

Paul writes that (he) Paul planted, that Apollos water, but God made it grow! He also comments that he laid a foundation and that someone else is now building on that foundation. However he says that the one who **really** laid the foundation was Jesus Christ. It isn't our wonderful strategies alone which result in the growth of the kingdom. Our plans and our strategies are important, but without God's involvement, everything we do may well be completely worthless!

Think about it?

Answer Box # 8

Take your Bibles and read Romans 12: 6-8, 1 Corinthians 12: 28 and Ephesians 4: 11-13.
What different roles, all needed by the church, are listed by Paul in these three sections of Scripture?

What does Paul say about the reason for the different roles?



bible study

Working together for a common task

There's a story told about a village in Taiwan. In this village, every household had a bucket – which was used for all sorts of different tasks. One day one of the houses caught fire. The alarm was raised and every resident of the village rushed out of their houses, with the buckets in hand. The villagers created a double line – with one line starting at the village water supply and ending at the burning house, and the other line starting at the burning house and ending at the village water supply. And the buckets started being passed from one hand to the next. There were several people at the water supply, and they filled the buckets, and passed them one by one along the line that began at the water supply until each bucket reached the fire – and the water in the bucket was thrown onto the fire. Then the empty buckets were passed – from one hand to the next up the line until they reached the water supply, where each one was filled with water again, and passed down, person to person until it reached the fire – and then back along the line the empty buckets were passed!. In this way, eventually, the fire was put out – and it didn't spread to any of the other houses.

Now there were several different reactions which the villagers could have had to this situation.

Some could have said – “my house isn't on fire, I'm not going to help.”

Others could have said – “I'll help, but I don't want to lose my bucket, so I'll keep hold of my bucket, I'll fill it with water at the water supply myself, and take it to the fire, and throw it on the fire myself.”

Yet others could have said – “I'll help, but I only want certain people – my particular friends to use my bucket.”

However, none of the villagers took this attitude. They all contributed what they had to the most efficient way of putting out the fire.

Once the fire was put out – who in the village was responsible for putting out the fire?

Think about it?



Answer Box #9

Select the answer you think is the correct one from the following list of choices:

- a. only those who were throwing the water onto the fire
- b. only those who were filling the bucket with water
- c. those who provided the largest buckets
- d. the ones filling the buckets with water, those passing the full buckets down the line and those throwing the water on the fire
- e. everyone who helped

Which of the responses did you select? The response which I think is the best one is (e) “everyone who helped.” If the people passing the empty buckets back to the water source had thought that their role wasn’t important – and had gone off home – it would have been so much more difficult to put the fire out – because there wouldn’t have been more buckets to fill! Everyone – whether they were putting water on the fire, whether they were filling the buckets with water, whether they were passing buckets full of water to where the fire was, and whether they were passing the empty buckets back to be re-filled – was responsible for putting out the fire. Every part – every task – was necessary for the completion of the task. And at the end of the day, when the villagers celebrated the quenching of the fire, they all celebrated together!

Tools and Task

In our story of the fire, everyone was focused on the task which they were working on together. The tools were important – the buckets, the hands, the water were all very important. But if someone had decided to focus or examine each of the buckets he was passing down the line, he would have held up the job significantly.

When it comes to our ministries and churches what we really focused on? Are we focused on the tools? On the Bible Study Materials? On our song-books? On our Sunday School materials? Or if we are involved in a para-church ministry, are we concerned about our radio programmes, or our translation projects, or our evangelistic meetings? These are all important – but they are tools to help us do the job we are called to do.

The task – the outcome of our work should be the building of the church and the glory of God. And that is what our primary concern should be. If our primary concern is to see the kingdom of God built, we will be less likely to be concerned with the tools – and we will be willing to see how the tools – or the gifts of many workers can be best utilized, rather than believing that it’s only the tools which we use that can be used for God’s purposes.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 10

Read the article “Why bother with strategy” which you will find in the readings section of this unit.

Explain why evangelistic strategies are important as we seek to win men and women with the gospel.



learning

This Course is focused on partnerships in ministry, so we need to apply what we are thinking about to the partnership setting.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 11

Having read through this Unit, explain why working together in partnership is likely to be more strategic than working independently.

As we bring this Unit to a close, if we want to be effective in our evangelism and church planting strategies:

First, we need to recognize that when we are doing evangelism and church planting we are in a process.

Second, we need to recognize and value the gifts which each church and ministry brings to the process

Third, we need to recognize and remember that what we are dependent on the Holy Spirit for whatever spiritual fruit we see.

And **finally** we must always remember that the goal of everything we do in ministry should be for the glory of God and the extending of His Kingdom.

Assignment

Final Assignment

Write an essay on the following "Why does an understanding of the evangelism process require the imperative of ministries working together in partnership?"



application

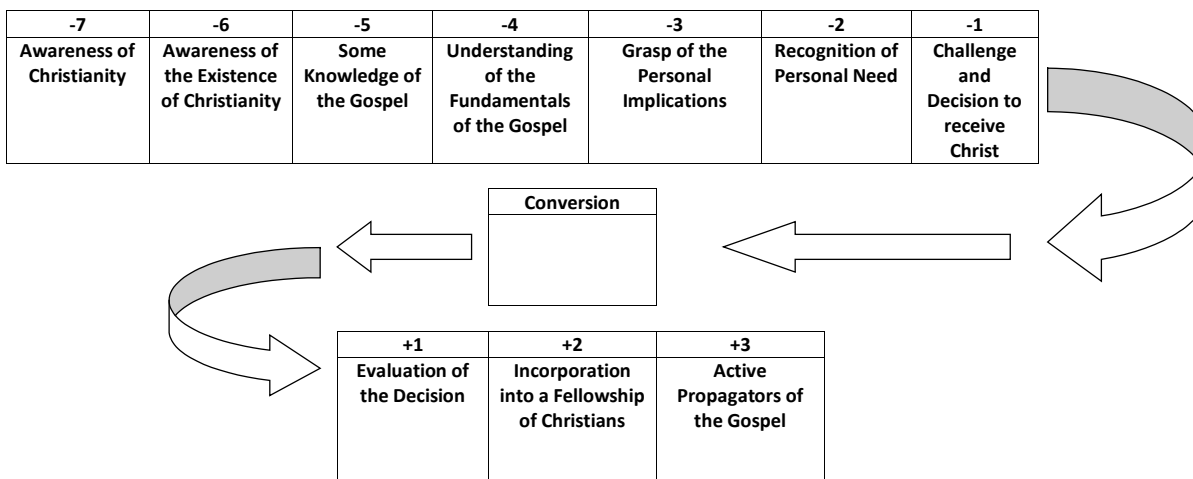
Readings



reading

Engel Scale

I.



Source: Perspectives on World Christian Movement

Peter, Paul and Engel - Evangelism as a process not an event

By Steven Hall – taken from the <gospelcom.net> webpage



Introduction

Jesus' last command to his disciples was to 'go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.' (Matt 28:19)

Only the 'make disciples' is imperative, 'go', 'baptising', 'teaching' are all descriptive. Making disciples is the only measure of success in evangelism and discipleship is measured by commitment to and participation in the local church.

Evangelism is defined: 'The nature of evangelisation is the communication of the Good News. The purpose of evangelisation is to give individuals a valid opportunity to accept Jesus Christ. The goal of evangelisation is the persuading of men and women to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and serve Him in the fellowship of His Church.' (Lausanne Congress on World Evangelisation, 1974).

Evangelism is a process not an event - the Engel scale

It is important to realise that people go through a process in coming to faith and must be approached differently depending on where they are. It has been estimated that the average person requires 4-5 significant encounters before becoming a disciple.

Successful evangelism relies on assessing where a person is and then helping them take the next step. The Engel scale shows 8 steps toward someone becoming a disciple and 3 steps afterwards and can be quite useful in conceptualising the evangelism process.

The Engel Scale

- 8 Awareness of a supreme being but no effective knowledge of gospel
- 7 Initial awareness of gospel
- 6 Awareness of the fundamentals of the gospel
- 5 Grasp of implications of the gospel
- 4 Positive attitude towards the gospel
- 3 Counting the cost
- 2 Decision to act
- 1 Repentance and faith in Christ
- Regeneration**
- +1 Post-decision evaluation
- +2 Incorporation into the body
- +3 A lifetime of growth in Christ - discipleship and service

When a person gets to -2 they may decide to not repent and believe in which case they go back to -5.

Consider the apostle Peter and his process up the scale during successive significant encounters with Jesus.

1. Peter was Jewish and had been brought up in the Jewish faith. He knew the history of the Jewish nation, the law and the prophets, all of which point (at least covertly) to Jesus. He, along with his fellows was expecting Messiah.
2. Chronologically, our first encounter with Peter is in John 1:36ff. John the Baptist points out Jesus as the Lamb of God to two of his disciples. One of them is Peter's brother, Andrew, who immediately went and found his brother and introduced him to Jesus (v42). At this point, Peter (Simon) had little or no effective knowledge of the gospel although, as a Jew, he believed in God. He was at -8 and this encounter gave him an initial awareness of the gospel in that he was introduced to the idea that Jesus might be the Messiah and the possibility of change (v42).
3. Later, in Luke 4:31-39 Jesus goes to the Synagogue in Capernaum where people are amazed by the authority of his teaching and his power over demons. The fact that he goes from the synagogue immediately to Peter's house indicates that Peter was probably present at that meeting in the Synagogue. At Peter's house, Jesus raises Peter's mother-in-law from a fever. Perhaps Peter, having had the idea that Jesus was the Messiah planted in him by Andrew and having seen Jesus at work in the Synagogue brought Jesus home because his mother-in-law was ill. In any case, these demonstrations of Jesus' authority and power, kindness and compassion underlined the growing perception in Peter as to who Jesus was.
4. On another occasion, in Luke 5:1-3 Jesus borrows Peter's boat to speak from and almost certainly spoke on the theme 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near' as that was the thrust of his message at this time (Matt 4:17). This exposition of the gospel (good news and expected action) moved Peter up to -6.
5. Immediately after this (Luke 5:4-10) Jesus revealed something of who he was to Peter through the gift of a word of knowledge (v4). This revelation of Jesus had a profound effect on Peter causing him to see his own sinfulness and separation from God (v8) and causing him to acknowledge Jesus as Lord. In other words, he understood the implications of the gospel and moved to -5 or -4.
6. Matthew amplifies this part of the story (Matt4:18-20, Luke 5:11). Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee and came upon Peter and Andrew. He instructed them to follow him which they immediately did moving Peter to -2 or -1. Peter's acknowledgement of his own sinfulness and Jesus' lordship together with his obedience constitutes complete repentance.
7. The final revelation of Jesus given to Peter by the Father (Matt 16:16 and John 6:68,69) leaves Peter at -1. The seed planted by Andrew had borne fruit.

Peter was 'born again' (Jn 3:5) when he received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and was also incorporated into the body of Christ (Acts 2:42) and into lifelong discipleship and service. A lot of the groundwork was done earlier in Jesus' call to apostleship (Luke 6:12-14) and commissioning of Peter (Jn 21:15ff) - a story full of resonances for Peter (the catch of fish in vv 6,7 and his threefold confession in front of the fire in vv15ff.)

It is also interesting to consider Paul's story against this model. It is tempting to think that Paul's Damascus Road experience took him from -8 to -1 in one go. It wasn't like this.

1. Paul was trained as a Jewish theologian and teacher. As such, he believed in God and had a very wide grasp of the teachings of the Old Testament which contains all the basics of the gospel, although Paul would not have understood this at the time. As a Pharisee, he also believed in the resurrection. Having been in Jerusalem during part of the rapid growth of the church he was almost certainly aware of some of the fundamentals of the gospel. (He may well have been present during Stephen's defence (Acts 7:1-53). When we first meet him in Acts 7, Paul is at -7 or -6.
2. We first meet Paul as the person looking after the clothes of the people stoning Stephen (Acts 7:58) and he witnessed Stephen's Christ-like death (Acts 7:56,59; 1 John 3:2). Paul gave approval to Stephen's murder (Acts 8:1) but cannot have failed to have been impressed by the manner of Stephen's death. In any case, it left him in no doubt about the implications of the gospel (-5) and he had received forgiveness from Stephen's lips.
3. However, his attitude to the gospel was far from positive! (Acts 8:3, 9:1) This is often the case with someone in whom God is working when they don't want it!
4. It was at this point that Jesus stepped in and confronted Paul by direct revelation on the Damascus Road. He stopped Paul in his tracks (literally) and forced him to take time to reflect. Ananias found him a very different person 3 days later; his attitude was completely different (-4).
5. In Acts 9:16 God reveals to Ananias that he is showing Paul both the job God had for him and what he would have to suffer as a result. Paul has to count the cost of following Jesus (-3).
6. Ananias' prayer and words to Saul help him through to new life (0)
7. Following this, Saul went and joined the disciples at Damascus and eventually in Jerusalem (+2).

An obvious point is that the most effective evangelistic in terms of making disciples will be with people who are already higher up the scale, people in whom God is already working.

It is interesting to note that when Paul, who was apostle to the *Gentiles* (Gal 1:16), started work in a new town he usually went first to the *Jewish* synagogue (eg Acts 13:5,14, 14:1, 17:2, etc) or to a place where Jews might meet to pray (Acts 16:13). I think he was looking for 'God fearers', gentiles who God was drawing to himself (Acts 10:1-2, 13:16, 26), gentiles who were higher up the scale than their pagan neighbours. Even though a particular evangelistic activity is aimed at a particular level, we should always be asking God to point out or lead us to people in whom he is working already (Jn 5:17,19), people who are higher up the scale.

Also, it should be noted that the Lausanne convention talks about a *valid* opportunity to accept Jesus. Sometimes we think we have given people an opportunity to accept Jesus by, for example, getting them to repeat the "sinner's prayer." If, however, they are at point well down the scale, this prayer may in fact only serve to move them up one step and will not constitute a profession of faith because there will be no repentance.

There is also great danger in getting people to "pray the prayer" when they are not ready. Someone who "accepts Christ" when they are really a long way down the scale won't experience real conversion - they have not really become a Christian, only moved one step nearer. In this position they are very likely to fall away. They are then very difficult to reach with the gospel because "they have tried it and it doesn't work." I think this is what Jesus was talking about in the parable of the sower when the seed fell on stony ground.

For such people we need to have patience and, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, 'remove the stones' so that the seed can properly sprout and come to fruition. If we harvest too early we spoil the crop!

The work of the Holy Spirit

It is vital to remember that it is only God through the Spirit who draws people to himself and only God who can bring people to new life, we can do neither (Jn6:44, Jn1:13). God, in his infinite mercy, allows us to be involved but we cannot persuade people into the kingdom. It is by God's direct revelation (Matt 16:6) and the work of the Spirit, maybe through us, that anything happens not by our argument (1 Cor 2:1-5).

The Spirit is in the world convicting people of sin, righteousness and coming judgement (Jn 16:8-10) and it is this convicting work that brings people up short and causes them to repent - turn from their former life and accept forgiveness and new life.

It is interesting to see how this works in some of the examples given in the Bible.

1. King David was brought to repentance of his sin against Uriah and with Bathsheba through a direct message through Nathan the prophet. The Holy Spirit revealed God's *knowledge* of David's sin through a parable and its application by Nathan. (2 Sam 12:1-7)
2. The prophet Isaiah had a vision of God's *glory* (Is 6:1-4) which convicted him of his sin (v5).
3. Peter was convicted through Jesus' display of God's knowledge about the fish (Lk 5:4)
4. Zaccheus was also convicted because of Jesus' knowledge of him - Jesus *called him by name* (Lk 19:5,8)
5. The prostitute who washed Jesus' feet with her tears and anointed him with perfume at the house of Simon the Pharisee was brought to repentance by Jesus' *acceptance, forgiveness and love*. (Lk 7:36-48)
6. The thief on the cross was convicted through Jesus' *unjust suffering* (Lk 23:41,42).
7. Paul was stopped in his tracks by the revelation of Jesus as the *lord he was persecuting*

It seems that conviction and repentance comes whenever God is revealed as who he is in some way; whenever a person really understands in his heart some aspect of the character of God and the existence of God impinges on the reality of their lives.

Interestingly, there is no example of someone being affected this way by a demonstration of God's power alone (in healing or a miracle) - but only if such a demonstration accompanies the preaching of the gospel.

A free gift

Finally, people have to come to realise that forgiveness and a new life (salvation) is a free gift (Eph 2:8) and this implies that people must humble themselves to come to God, giving up all attempts to earn anything from God. (Eph 2:9) There will be no-one in heaven who will be able to say, 'I did it my way'.

Personal Evangelism

Most of us get opportunities to witness to friends and neighbours but the number of not-yet-Christians we know diminishes rapidly as we settle into the church - we no longer have common interests and we spend more and more time with Christian friends. However, personal contact is extremely important as research shows that over 80% of people who become Christians do so through

personal contact not through events or crusades. Our witness as individuals is a powerful way for God to create interest in those with no knowledge of the gospel (-8). This means two things:

1. We need to make time and opportunity to get to know people outside the church
2. We need to make best use of the contacts of new Christians. (this should be particularly profitable since, hopefully, they will have noticed a change)

In his grace, God uses us to plant seeds in peoples' lives through our personal witness. We need to recognise that they then embark on a process which may take a long time. We (or someone else) may have planted a seed (like Andrew in John 1:41 or like Paul in 1 Cor 3:6) but the 'seed' needs to be watered (1 Cor 3:6) even though it is God that makes it grow - we are part of the process.

This process of 'watering' consists of

1. Praying for and actively looking for opportunities to show Jesus' compassion and kindness through an act of kindness (service) to the person
2. Praying for and actively looking for opportunities to show Jesus' care and presence through a word of testimony
3. Praying for and actively looking for opportunities to show Jesus' power through praying with the person
4. Praying for and actively looking for opportunities to share the gospel message

In addition we should be praying for the Holy Spirit to reveal Jesus to them and to convict them of sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:8-10). It is the revelation of Jesus that will bring repentance.

Each of these activities, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, serves to reveal something of the character of Jesus. In other words, God can use these encounters to reveal himself to people. Remember that it is revelation that leads to repentance.

At the right time God will call the person to follow him and they will choose to obey or reject the gospel.

Peter's story revisited

Looking at Peter's story again, you can see these same elements:

John 1:35-42 John exclaims, "Look! The Lamb of God" and Andrew goes to Peter and says, "We have found the Messiah" - a word of testimony

Luke 4:31-39 Jesus preaches in the synagogue "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near" (Matt 4:17) and demonstrates the kingdom by healing a man with an evil spirit. Jesus preached the "good news of the kingdom" (Matt 4:23) - preaching of the gospel Peter was there (they went straight from the synagogue to Peter's house) where Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law - a demonstration of power, an act of kindness

Luke 5:1-3 Jesus preached from Peter's boat. No doubt this was the same message of the good news of the kingdom - preaching of the gospel

Luke 5:4-10 Jesus revealed himself through the miraculous catch of fish - a revelation of Jesus. Peter is convicted of his sinfulness and repents - conviction by the Holy Spirit

Luke 5:10-11, Mark 1:16-17 Jesus calls Peter to follow him and Peter leaves everything to follow - obedience to the call of God



Why bother with strategy?

Taken from the gospelcom.net website

Some people might ask, "Why do we need evangelistic strategies at all? Surely we are just called on to preach the Gospel, plain and straight, and leave God to do the rest?" Even the words "communication strategies" may seem to imply worldly marketing methods rather than a dependence on the power of the Gospel through the Holy Spirit.

There are a number of answers to this very reasonable question:

- The word 'preach' does not just mean 'one-way verbal communication' - as in a sermon or evangelistic address. It has a much broader sense - 'to effectively communicate'. If the receivers have not understood the message, real communication has probably not occurred.
- The word 'communicate' also has a root meaning that helps us: that of 'communing' or interacting over 'common' ground.
- "You cannot teach people unless you have their attention.... by using illustrations, questions and even humor. Most people don't like to be preached at, but most people like to be talked to."
(*Firm Foundations*, Trevor McIlwain, New Tribes Mission)
- We can see in both OT and NT, many different strategies used by Jesus and God's servants to communicate effectively in various situations. We see OT prophets using visual aids, the Lord Jesus using short stories (often containing humor), while Paul spent two years in a daily dialogue discussion ministry, which must have had parallels with interactive studies such as Alpha courses.
- Study of church history and missiology demonstrates many strategies which God has used for effective communication. Some would not work today. Others only work in a particular culture.
- Strategies and 'methods' are not substitutes for proclaiming the full biblical Gospel using the wisdom and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, backed up by believing prayer. They do not replace or diminish our biblical understanding of the fallen nature of the human race, or the spiritual blindness imposed by the powers of darkness. They are, or should be, vehicles to carry the full biblical message across into people's hearts. Regeneration is a work of sovereign grace by the Holy Spirit.
- Cross-cultural missions have helped us to see the importance of research and classifying people into different ethnic and social groups - in order to assess if we are reaching them effectively or not. Too often, in any situation, we manage to reach the 'easy' groups - often those with some degree of Christian background - the 'once-churched'. Yet we fail to reach (and fail to notice that we are failing) the 'never-churched'.

- Missions have also helped us to see the importance of understanding the culture of a target group, and presenting the Gospel in the context of that culture, (for which the technical term is contextualization). Understanding the culture and mindset of those even in our own country is essential if we are to reach them.
- There is only one Gospel. It is unique, powerful, and (in the popular sense of that term) 'incredible' - for it can be understood by a young child with learning difficulties, yet be intellectually satisfying to the cleverest professor. No other philosophy or belief system can do that. However, our presentation of the Gospel should not be 'one size fits all'. Just as we would present the Gospel in different terms to children and students, so we must tailor our presentation to the needs and culture of every other group also. There are many creative ways of sharing the good news.
- The Internet gives us a unique way of targeting specific ethnic, social, age, and special-interest groups on a world-wide basis. The 'pull' nature of the Web as a medium is a God-given tool which has not been available to us until now. It can only be used fully when we create pages that interest each target group or touch felt needs, and then explain the Gospel to them in appropriate terms and jargon-free language that they can understand. This Bridge Strategy is at the heart of the Web Evangelism guide, and has biblical mandate.
- Pioneer communicator Wilbur Schramm showed us that people can only communicate effectively when there is an area of shared interest. It helps to see this using overlapping circles - another way is to look at the life of the chameleon. Since we are the ones trying to communicate, guess who has to make the first move and find the area of common ground? This is utterly biblical and 1 Cor 9:19-23 is but one expression of the Father heart of God calling us to reach out and identify with people where they are and find an area of common ground. It is of course expressed most vividly in the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus. We can biblically present the Gospel by taking people's felt needs as a starting point.
- We need to be like the men of Issachar, who understood the times they lived in. Battles are always fought with strategies. We are in THE battle.

Partnerships

Unit 4

Exploring a partnership



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Version 1.3

Unit 4 - Exploring a partnership

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Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this unit you will be able to.....

- Describe in outline the three stages of a partnership
- State the objectives of the Exploration Stage of a partnership
- Describe three different methods of exploring a partnership and identify success and failure factors for each one
- Explain why one-on-one individual meetings with people are a key to the successful exploration of a partnership
- Identify a potential partnership which could be realistically explored and launched and apply the principles of exploration to this potential partnership

Supplementary text: “Body Matters – a Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission” by Ernie Addicott, published by Interdev Partnership Associates 2005; Pages 63-70

Lecture Notes & Workbook

Introduction Unit 4

Over the past 15 years or so, a lot of experience about how to develop a partnership has been gained by a lot of people. Those of us who have been observers and practitioners in the partnership field have seen partnerships develop in several different ways. We want this course to be as practical as possible for you in your setting, and so we will outline a process of partnership development which has worked in many different situations and which will probably work in your context (with some adaptation to your particular situation), examine some alternative models of partnership development, and also provide you with a practical step-by-step guide to the process which has worked very effectively in many different settings in different parts of the world. We will also be asking you to think about a possible partnership for a ministry context which you could begin to start as you work through this course and continue the process after you have completed the course.

The Partnership Process – a 3 Stage Process

The partnership development process usually begins with someone who has a vision and a burden to see ministry done in co-operation – with churches, agencies and ministries working together. This might be a gospel outreach to a specific people-group, country, region or city.

For the purposes of working through the process, let's assume that a Christian worker called Paul Elijah has a vision to see the development of a partnership of churches and ministries focused on the Happy Valley region in Kabuli, and which would have a more effective impact on improving the lives and conditions of the people and help the people to be more responsive to the gospel outreach in the valley.

Paul Elijah begins as an advocate for partnership, and starts by finding out who is already working in Happy Valley. This is part of the RESEARCH process. Having found out who is working in the area, he then arranges to meet individually with the leaders of these churches and ministries – on a one-on-one basis. This continues the RESEARCH process, but also begins the process of building RELATIONSHIPS. This is what we called the **Exploration Stage**, which is the time that is spent exploring whether a partnership might be possible and what purpose it might serve.

At some stage, as he continues to research what Christian work is being done in Happy Valley, and build relationships with those who are key players, Paul Elijah needs to encourage the leaders of the various churches and ministries to think about meeting together. This meeting needs to be held at some time to discuss together how to best reach the people of Happy Valley and also to discuss the possibility of working more closely together – perhaps in some form of partnership. Paul then brings the various ministries together in a meeting, the purpose of which is to talk in general terms about the ministry to reach the people of Happy Valley, to discuss possible ways in which there could be some co-operation, to agree on some limited goals and to discuss the possibility of continuing to meet. This is what we called the **Formation Stage** of the Partnership (sometimes called the Launch Stage of the Partnership).

And then having launched (or formed) the partnership, the churches and ministries should be working together on joint projects, meeting together regularly, building relationships together and having a positive impact on the growth of the church in Happy Valley. This is what we call the **Operations Stage** of the Partnership.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 1

List the 3 stages of partnership development



I often think about the partnership development process as being rather like the building of a house. When you're building a house you start with the foundations – and building foundations is what one is doing when working on the Exploration Stage of the Partnership. A builder always needs to put in lots of time and effort into the laying of the foundations of a building, and we need to take time and effort as we explore the possibility of a partnership. In a building, if the foundation is faulty, no amount of subsequent repairs to the building will be really effective in putting the problem right; and it's the same with a Partnership. If sufficient time is not given to the Exploration Stage – if it is rushed or is done inadequately, the resulting Partnership will be flawed, and nothing you can do will put right the mistakes of the past. One of the great temptations for everybody who wants to build a Partnership is to rush into it. However it's vitally important that you don't rush the process of building the foundations of your partnership foundations! It's important to spend time building strong, firm, deep foundations – building relationships in those one-on-one meetings.

Having dug the foundations of your building the next stage is putting in the floor plan – deciding where the internal walls will be, and where you need plumbing and electricity supplies. Putting in the floor plan is the equivalent of the Formation Stage of the Partnership – because this is where the future shape of the partnership will be determined.

And finally, having dug the foundations and put in the floor plan, the builder can begin to put up the walls, put in the doors and the windows, put on the roof – and everything else which makes the house a habitable dwelling. And in the building of a house, this is the equivalent of the Operations Stage of the Partnership – when the partnership becomes fully-functioning and very satisfying to be a part of.

Many partnerships which have developed over the past 15 years have been birthed in this way. Some have been from large partnerships with many partners, with members from both small and large churches and ministries; other partnerships have consisted of

just a few churches and/or ministries. Some have sought to work together to reach out to a major people group in the world; others have been partnerships of churches and ministries working together to reach the people of a city; and yet others have focused on working together on a specific project.

It is important to remember that every partnership is different. This is because the characteristics of a Partnership are determined by a number of issues including –

- the people, the churches and the ministries involved as partners
- the people who the partnership is trying to reach
- the specific needs of the people and the region in which they are living
- the specific focus of the work together
- the resources which are available – including people, the expertise of the partners and the financial resources at the disposal of the partnership

This means that you can't follow the same steps and come out with identical Partnerships. But what you can do is to follow some CORE PRINCIPLES that have been identified. If you follow these core principles – you are more likely to enhance your success!

The Exploration Stage of the Partnership Process: beginning with Vision

One of the objectives of this course is to give you some practical help in developing a partnership which could have an impact on some part of ministry that you are involved in. We will take you step-by-step through the three stage process, and give you some practical tools to help you as you explore a partnership, as you launch it, and as you help it mature in the operations stage of the partnership.

Before we go any further in taking you through the steps, I want you to think about a ministry that you are involved in which might benefit from a partnership approach.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 2

List the possible partnerships you could develop which would help in some aspect of the ministry you are involved with:



learning

You may have listed just one or two possible partnerships – or you may have listed a dozen or more. It's not a good idea to try to develop several partnerships at the same time! Developing a partnership can be quite demanding. So it's important if you have a long list of possible partnerships to cut it down. So, I'd like you to review the list you've made, and eliminate all but one or two (or possibly three), and even if at this stage you still have two possible partnerships we will be further cutting it down to a single partnership by the end of this unit!

Think about it?



Answer Box # 3

List the partnership possibilities you're still considering:

At the beginning of Section 2, we explained that Paul Elijah had a vision to see the development of a partnership of churches and ministries focused on the Happy Valley region in Kabuli, and which would have a more effective impact on improving the lives and conditions of the people and help them to be more responsive to the gospel outreach in the valley. Paul's partnership efforts began with him having a vision.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 4

What is the vision that you have for how the partnership possibilities you have identified would make a difference to ministry and the response of the people to the gospel? For each partnership possibility you listed above (by now you should have a maximum of three possibilities), describe the vision you have for how this partnership would make a difference.

Now select one of these partnership possibilities – probably select the one which excites you the most – and one where you know there are at least three or four other churches or ministries or individuals who are also working to reach out to this area or people..



Answer Box # 5

Describe the people, area, region or country you want to reach:

Describe your vision for reaching them with the gospel in partnership with others

PLEASE NOTE: this is the “group” you will “work” with to develop a partnership as you work through these materials. You may just “work” with this developing partnership in theory – but I hope you will actually work on the development of this partnership in practice as well.

Having a vision for partnership and for the people to be reached is the first part of the Exploration Stage. And we call this stage “Exploration”, because that word exactly describes what is being done during this first stage of the partnership development process.

Ernie Addicott, in his book “Body Matters”, describes this stage as “when someone takes the initiative to find out if a partnership is feasible” (page 60). I tend to describe it in a slightly different way as “The period when time is spent exploring whether a partnership might be possible and what purpose it might serve.”

And we’ll look at the process in a moment.

A Tale of a Meeting to Launch a Partnership

Some people get an idea – and immediately they want to jump straight into it. However, if you want the idea to succeed, jumping in straight away isn’t always the best way for long-term sustainability. Some people get an idea for a partnership – and immediately arrange a meeting and invite lots of people they already know are involved in the same or a similar area. However, calling a meeting isn’t always the best thing to do!

Paul Elijah knows that there are five or six international ministries working in Kabuli that are providing development projects to improve the conditions of the people living in Happy Valley. These include Worldwide Evangelical Assistance and Relief (WEAR), New Horizons Mission and Better World Mission. He also knows that several of the churches in Kabuli City want to provide help to the same people. In his visits to Happy Valley, one of the things which he notices is that there is a lot of similar work being done by the ministries amongst certain communities, that other communities are completely neglected, that each of the ministries are seemingly unaware of the work of the others and that although they are all doing good work, none of the development projects are being integrated into the outreach of the churches trying to make an impact for the gospel in Happy Valley.

Paul thinks it would be good idea if the ministries could work more together and integrate the development projects with the work which the churches are doing. He has a vision for the churches and ministries to work together in partnership. He realises that a meeting will be necessary if his idea is going to work – so one Monday in June he sends an invitation to an hour-long lunch-time meeting for the following Monday to talk about Christian development work in Happy Valley to the international ministries involved and to the churches in Kabuli City.

No one from WEAR is able to attend, and not all the churches interested in outreach in Happy Valley turn up. Paul introduces the meeting by saying that he thinks it would be much better if everyone working in Happy Valley worked more closely together and what did the meeting propose to do to improve the situation. This was followed by a long silence! Eventually the person heading the Better World Mission's project in Happy Valley said that she was very happy with the work that they were doing and that she couldn't see how working with WEAR would make any difference. She also said she was surprised that New Horizons Mission was at the meeting because they weren't doing anything in Happy Valley. To which the New Horizons Mission project leader commented that they were frustrated by the fact that the Better World Missions team seemed totally unaware of anyone else working in the region and how their work was regularly hampered by the Better World people. One of the church ministers said that because they knew the people better, it would be more effective if the outside ministries gave their money to them, because they knew how to spend it more effectively.

The tension in the meeting increased and by the scheduled end time of the meeting the only outcome was a high degree of tension between everyone involved. Paul, who had planned to close the meeting in a time of prayer for the people of Happy Valley, abandoned the idea because of the bad feeling which had developed during the hour, and simply ended the meeting. As people left the meeting, the New Horizons Project Leader was heard to say "I knew that this partnership idea wouldn't work; nothing will get me to another meeting to talk about working with others in Happy Valley now."

This is a very sad tale of a failed partnership meeting.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 6

Try to identify some of the reasons why this meeting failed



Paul Elijah's motivation was good – but he just hadn't properly prepared. He hadn't been able to get all the right people there, he needed longer than a one hour meeting to have an effective discussion about working together in Happy Valley and he needed to take those attending the meeting through a process which would minimise the risks of failure and maximise the possibility of success. The problem now is that it is going to be very difficult to get the same players together again.

At some stage, it will be important for Paul to call a meeting – but there are things that need to be in place before he can bring people together in a meeting

Some Biblical Approaches to Exploration

Taking time before getting involved in any activity IS important. And there are many examples in Scripture of people who took time in preparation before getting started in a new aspect of their work or ministry.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 7

Make a list of examples in the Scriptures where people took time in exploration before starting the work:

My list includes:

- Nehemiah: before commencing the project to re-build the walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2) Nehemiah goes out at night to inspect the walls of Jerusalem
- Moses sent 12 men to explore the land of Canaan before the planned invasion (in Numbers 13)
- Joshua sent two spies into the Promised Land before the invasion (Joshua 2:1)
- Jesus spent 40 days in the Wilderness before he began his public ministry (Luke 4)
- Paul walked around the city before beginning his ministry in Athens (Acts 17: 16, 23)
- The parable which Jesus told – about a man planning to build a tower (Luke 14:28-30), and the first thing this man does is to sit down (takes time) and estimates the cost – so see that he has enough money to complete the task!

Foundational Approach to the Exploration Stage

Before we invite people to come to a meeting to talk about the possibility of a partnership it is vitally important that we spend time finding out whether there is sufficient interest among others to the possibility of working in partnership. So it is really important to take time to explore whether a partnership might be feasible before bringing people together to talk about the possibility of co-operation. And all this takes time. Most of the partnerships I and colleagues have been involved with have taken something like 18 months to two years during the Exploration Stage. However, many of those partnerships were quite complex to put together and involved potentially a large number of partners. And also nowadays more people in Christian ministries are more inclined towards partnering. Therefore it might not take you quite so long. However, do not rush the processes described in this unit.

A partnership does not start spontaneously. It needs a person – or a group of people – with a vision for two things:

- This person must have a vision for reaching an unreached people group with the Gospel – or a city or a region of a country. Paul Elijah has a vision to reach the people of Happy Valley with the Gospel. Paul has a burning desire that these people should hear the Gospel.
- This person must also have a vision for partnership – having a deep belief that the job will get done better and more effectively if ministries work together rather than working separately. Paul Elijah has a vision that if the various churches and ministries seeking to reach the people of Happy Valley talk and pray together – and actually begin to work together – that evangelism in Happy Valley will be far more effective.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 8

List the three imperatives which I have given here as being foundational to the exploration stage of a partnership



learning

I hope you listed the following three foundational imperatives:

- Take time in the process
- A Vision for the people to be reached
- A Vision for partnering – that the churches and ministries which are involved in outreach will work together – and that this is more effective than working independently

The Objectives of the Exploration Stage

We will be looking at several sections of the book “Body Matters” in this unit. The first section you need to read is page 63, which is headed “Exploration.”

Think about it?

Answer Box # 9

Although Ernie Addicott talks about the “twin objectives of the exploration phase” he actually mentions 3 objectives for this stage. What are they?



learning

That shouldn't have been too difficult! The three objectives begin with “R” and are

- Research
- Relationships
- Reconciliation

Think about it?

Answer Box # 10

For each of these objectives – describe the specific task which needs to be done:

Research:

Relationships:

Reconciliation:

You should have written something like this (if you haven't written something similar to what I suggest here you need to re-read the section in the text book again):

- **Research** – to find out what the needs of the situation are, what work is being done and who is doing it
- **Relationships** – to get to know the key people involved well enough to have a relationship of genuine trust with them
- **Reconciliation** – to find out if there are broken relationships between any of these main players in the field and build bridges between those with broken relationships, encourage understanding between them and with the help of the Holy Spirit to assist in the mediation of the conflict which has taken place

The importance of One-on-One Meetings

Viva Network is a partnership of ministries which are all working with street children around the world and other children who are in “at risk” situations. The partnership was founded by Patrick Macdonald about 12 years ago.

Before he met anyone, Patrick needed to make a list of people he needed to see – people who were already involved in a ministry to children at risk. And that's the first thing that Paul Elijah needs to do as he explores the possibility of a partnership to reach the people of Happy Valley. He needs to make a list of those churches, ministries and people who are already working in Happy Valley and arrange to meet with them.

And that's what you need to do. You need to make a list of the other churches, ministries and people who you know are already engaged in reaching the people that you have identified earlier in this unit as being possible partnerships you could develop. You may have broken relationships with some of these people; you may not want to work with some of them, but they need to be on your list! Earlier on you identified a possible partnership you could develop. Now I want you make a list of ALL the other churches, ministries and people that are also engaged in reaching out to the people or area you've identified. This will constitute the initial list of people you will need to meet with.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 11

List of churches, ministries and people who you need to meet with in exploring the partnership:



In the book “Body Matters”, Ernie Addicott describes Patrick’s approach as he explored whether there was a need for a network of ministries focused on children. Read Pages 64-65 of the text book headed “The Sore Feet Method.”

Think about it?

Answer Box # 12

Describe the approach which Patrick took in exploring the partnership:



Having reflected on the approach which Patrick took in exploring the partnership he developed, think about the partnership which Paul Elijah wants to explore for Happy Valley.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 13

List those things which Paul Elijah needs to know as he explores a possible partnership for Happy Valley:



Paul needs to know as much about the people in Happy Valley as he can find out. He may already know quite a lot about the people because of his work there. But he recognizes that there may be things about them that he doesn't know.

He also needs to know as much as he can about the churches and ministries which are working with the people in Happy Valley. He needs to know who is working among the people, what different types of ministry are being provided, what is having an impact, and what challenges the various churches and ministries are facing. He also needs to find out if there are any broken relationships between certain churches and/or ministries.

He also needs to know as much as he can about the churches and ministries who MAY be thinking about working with the people in Happy Valley. He needs to find out if there are other churches and ministries who have an interest in the Valley, what their plans might be, what their interests and experience is and when they might get involved.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 14

Take the partnership possibility you identified earlier in this unit. List what you need to know when you begin to explore this partnership:



If we come back to Paul Elijah and the possible development of a partnership to reach the people of Happy Valley, some of the work that needs to be done can be done by Paul in his office – using published works and maybe even the world-wide-web. But he can't do everything from his office! He actually needs to get out there and talk to people! Because that's where he's going to find a lot of the information he needs. As one of the main objectives of this stage of the partnership is the building of relationships, Paul can't build strong relationships in front of a computer!!!

Patrick Macdonald was out and about meeting contacts on a one-on-one basis. As he met with people he was, amongst other things:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • getting to know the people involved • building a relationship with them • finding out what they were doing in the ministry • identifying what was successful • finding out what they were finding was challenging | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying different resources • identifying different needs • identifying if there were broken relationships and helping them heal them |
|---|---|

Think about it?

Answer Box # 15

From the Readings, read 4.1 “Exploring a Partnership: Meetings One-on-One with Potential Partners.”

Thinking about the partnership you have identified as one you could develop,:

- a. state your objectives for your one-on-one meetings

- b. create a series of questions you could use as you meet with potential partners

- c. what information will you share with people as you meet with them one-on-one?

NOTE: this piece of work will be one of the assignments you will need to hand in at the end of this unit

Now read the Reading: 4.2 A Testimony of Preparing for a Partnership Exploration Meeting.



learning

Think about it?

Answer Box # 16

What happened here to encourage the broadcaster to come to the meeting to talk about partnership? In what ways did the one-on-one meeting and the follow up change his mind about the value of partnering?

This is a good example of being able to help encourage some partnering even before the launch meeting takes place. And in this example, someone who wasn't really interested in being involved in a meeting to talk about working together actually became an enthusiast for the partnership – because he saw a very real value of the partnership to him in his ministry.



learning

As you meet with people, there are two very important elements of follow-up to your individual meetings with people. As soon as possible after the meeting, write up your notes. If you don't write up your notes, the various meetings with different people will merge into one – and you will forget important issues, which you will wish you had a note about later on!

It's also important to thank each person you've met with – and to follow-up with any commitments you might have made. A telephone call, e-mail or a letter is all that is needed – thanking them for the time, and providing them with any information which you might have committed to finding out for them.

It would be too simplistic to say that at the end of every meeting you will have persuaded the person you've met with to be committed to coming to the meeting. It might take several meetings with some people before they are willing to come to a meeting to talk about ministry to the people/area – or even consider collaboration. And some people may never be willing to come and meet with others and explore the possibility of working together. Remember “you can't win 'em all”!

Alternative Ways of Exploring a Partnership

So far in this unit, we've focused on what has been called the “Sore Feet” method, because it is the method which has successfully been used in the exploration of many a partnership. However, we want to look at two other of exploring a partnership.

In the Text Book read pages 65-68 - The “Exploratory Meeting” Method

In this reading Ernie Addicott describes the way in which the partnership for the Bhojpuri people of North India began by bringing key players together in an “exploratory meeting.”

Think about it?

Answer Box # 17

Why was it not possible to visit each person individually before the meeting was called?

What was the purpose of the meeting?

What work was done by the facilitators before the meeting?

List the elements which were included in the meeting?

How did these elements lead towards achieving the purpose of the meeting?

What are the risks in using the exploratory meeting method to explore a partnership?

How do you think people who had not been invited to the meeting, but were interested in reaching out to the Bhojpuri people might feel about decisions made at the meeting? How did the organisers plan to minimize this risk?

What are the positive elements of holding an “exploratory meeting” to explore a partnership?



learning

Review pages 65-68 in your text book and check your responses to the questions above.

Now in your textbook read pages 68-70 - The “Greenhouse” Method

During the 1990s a number of partnerships focused on different people groups in Francophone West Africa developed. In 1998, the leaders of these partnerships had met together in Dakar, Senegal to share experiences and to learn from one another. One of the outcomes of this 1998 meeting was to hold a second meeting in 2000 to focus attention on those people-groups in West Africa which had not yet been reached with the gospel.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 18

How did the organisers use the Regional Consultation to challenge others about developing partnerships?

What must be in place before you can use the “Greenhouse” method?

What strategies did the organisers use to encourage people to think about developing partnerships for some of the remaining unreached people groups in West Africa?

In what ways was this strategy successful?

One of the great advantages of the “Greenhouse” method, which uses an already existing Regional Consultation to encourage others to think about partnership, is that there are already existing models readily available. And these models actually get people working in another area which doesn’t have a partnership to think “well, if they can work together in partnership and see great results, then why can’t we”! However, you need an already existing regional meeting – and you need effective working partnerships!

For ten years in the 1990s, I was very active in partnership development for people groups in Central Asia. In 1989, at a time when the former Soviet Union was beginning to crumble, a “consultation” was called of ministries which had been specifically trying to reach into the Islamic areas of the Soviet Union. Traditionally, these ministries had worked very secretly, taking bibles and Christian books into the area, and many of them struggled with sharing what they were doing. However, they did agree to meet again, and in fact there has been a Central Asian Regional Consultation every year since 1989 – although today it looks very different from how it looked in the early 1990s!

During the early 1990s, in addition to the collapse of the Soviet Union, two significant things happened within the context of the Central Asia Consultation (CAC). One was that each year there was greater openness and increasing trust developing between those who regularly attended the CAC. The other was that some of the ministries focused on some of the people groups were beginning to talk about how they could work together more closely and some emerging partnerships were beginning to develop. As a result, increasingly the issue of working together in partnership became a major discussion point at the meetings, and people working with some of the other people groups in the region began to explore, within the context of the Central Asia Consultation, the possibility of developing a partnership for those working amongst the other people groups, and in the middle years of the 1990s, we saw tentative steps towards the formation of partnerships for each of the people groups in the region.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 18

How did the Central Asia Consultation help in the development of partnerships in the region?



learning

You might have stated that there were models for others to look at and learn from. But I also hope you included the fact that there was increasing openness and trust between people attending the consultation. Relationships, openness and trust are the very foundational elements of the development of a partnership; and by meeting together, talking together, praying and worshipping together and by sharing struggles and successes, trust began to grow and strong relationships were the result.

Role of the Explorer during the Exploration Stage of a Partnership

As we draw this unit to a stage, it's important to review the key activities which you should be doing when you are exploring a partnership. There are eight bees! Here they are

1. Be a Relationship Builder
 - ⇒ by holding one-on-one meetings with ministries and churches and by building strong relationships with as many people as you can
2. Be a Listener
 - ⇒ when you meet with the people – be a listener – spend time listening to what “they” are saying – not trying to gain their support for your own agenda or vision
3. Be a Learner
 - ⇒ go to your meetings with an attitude of a learner – not as someone who has “all the answers”
4. Be a “Researcher”
 - ⇒ the Exploration Stage is the “research stage” of the partnership; you need to find out what the current situation is, who is working where, what they’re doing and what they’re planning and you need to go out and meet the key players.
5. Be good with documentation
 - ⇒ you need to be meticulous in follow-up and record keeping, something which can easily be ignored, but which is essential at this stage of the partnership's development.
6. Be a regular Communicator
 - ⇒ both face-to-face and in follow-up telephone calls, e-mails and faxes.
7. Be impartial and neutral
 - ⇒ you must be able to show that you are in the business of partnership NOT for yourself or for the benefit of your church or ministry, BUT for the good of the Kingdom
 - ⇒ you must be able to demonstrate that partnership will help the person you are talking with fulfill his or her ministry needs (i.e. that it will help the other person succeed); if there is any hint that you have your own private agenda – it will kill any hope of partnership.
 - ⇒ you must also be able to demonstrate your neutrality - it is vitally important that you don't take sides between different ministries or different churches
8. Be a Trust Builder
 - ⇒ you must keep to yourself things which other people tell you because this will build trust in you; if you “gossip” or real confidential things which other people have told you, what you will be doing is demonstrating that you are not a person to be trusted; and unless people have trust in you, you will not be able to build a partnership.

Conclusion

Once it is clear that a number of churches and/or ministries are willing to meet and discuss the possibility of co-operation, it then becomes possible to begin the process of planning a meeting to talk about ministry to the people group or area and then a meeting when the people involved can meet together and talk about the possibility of co-operating together.

You may not get to the point where each person you met with is willing to meet others, and it is important to note that you may experience resistance or hostility from some even at this stage. Not everybody is willing to work with others!

However, there comes a point when it is important to move from a series of one-on-one meetings and to meet together. Once you have a significant number of people who are willing to meet and talk about the possibility of working together, it is then important to begin to plan a meeting to do this.

And the focus of our next unit is on the meeting to launch the partnership.

But you can't hold that meeting until you've done your exploration. And finally list the 3 objectives which are key to the Exploration Stage of the Partnership:

R

R

R

Final Assignment



Final Assignment

NOTE: this Assignment is compulsory

1. *Write a description of the partnership which you think you could explore and launch as part of this course. Include a description of the people group or area you want to reach with the gospel as part of this partnership, your vision for reaching them with the gospel in partnership with others, and list all the churches, ministries and people you need to meet with in exploring the partnership.*
2. *As you think about the one-on-one meetings you need to arrange to explore the partnership you would like to develop, state your objectives for your one-on-one meetings, create a series of questions you could use as you meet with potential partners and state the information you would share with people as you meet with them.*
3. *In this unit we've looked at three different ways of exploring a partnership. Describe each method and state the advantages and disadvantages of each one. Identify which method you recommend in the exploration of the partnership which you think you could explore and explain why you will use this method rather than either of the other two methods.*

Readings



4.1 Exploring a Partnership: Meetings One-on-One with Potential Partners

An article by John Rogers

One of the most important elements of the Exploration Stage is to meet individually with others who are focused on the same people group, country or city. You are doing this as part of your research, to identify any broken relationships but also and very importantly to build relationships and to begin the process of encouraging the leaders of the other churches and ministries to think seriously about a partnership approach to the ministry.

What you are doing in these one-on-one, face-to-face meetings is getting to get to know each of the other people who are working in the same area of ministry, to build relationships with them and to learn about their vision, plans, successes, challenges and any specific needs they have. You are also trying to find out what they think about other churches, ministries and people, and whether see any need to collaborate with others. Finally you are sowing the seeds for potential collaboration with other ministries and churches by raising the question about meeting with others to talk about possible cooperation and working together.

It is very important that as you prepare for these meetings that you think very carefully about your approach, and that you seek to build relationships as well as discover information about the work which is going on. There is a very delicate balance here between discovering information and prying, so you do need to be careful.

Some possible questions which you can ask and which will help to identify the information you are seeking to develop includes:

- How did you get involved in this work / ministry?
- What were you doing before
- Would you mind telling me about the work your ministry / church is doing?
- Which parts of it are you specifically involved in?
- What have found is working well?
- What's a big challenge for you?
- Are there things you would like to be doing but which you're not able to do (because of staff / resources / some other reason?)
- Are you cooperating with any other church / ministry in the area?
- Who else do you know that is working in this area?
- Do you know anything about the work they are doing?
- What do you think is the biggest hindrance to the gospel in this area?
- Is there anything which you think would help the gospel progress in this area?
- Is your wife/husband involved with you in the ministry? Do you have children? (and similar "relational" questions)
- Is there anything I can pray about for you?

- If a group of people were interested in meeting together to talk about ministry in this area, would you be interested in knowing about the meeting – and would you be willing to come to the meeting yourself?

Remember not only to ask questions but to share information about yourself, your ministry and your dreams. It can also be helpful to share some non-confidential information about an aspect of the ministry which might encourage the person you are meeting with to think seriously about partnering.

It is also helpful to pray with the person you are meeting with before you leave – and remember to pick up the issues that he shared for prayer!

4.2 A Testimony of preparing for a Partnership Exploration Meeting

The following testimony is from Ernie Addicott talking about a personal experience of meeting with someone he wanted to interest in a possible partnership.

Some years ago, I was involved in the exploration stage of a partnership for a people group in West Africa. I travelled to a small town, 2 hours north of the capital to try to persuade a well known Christian radio presenter to come to the Partnership meeting. This person was engaged in regular weekly broadcasts in the language of the people group and produced cassettes of all his programmes which were widely distributed.

I had a very good meeting with the broadcaster, but couldn't persuade him to become involved in the Partnership. He didn't feel it was necessary to join in; everyone already knew all about him, his broadcasts were well known, his cassettes were readily accessible and he was really too busy. He didn't feel the Partnership had anything to offer him.

I returned to the capital where I had another meeting arranged – this time with a pastor from a the Lutheran Evangelical Church. The Lutheran Evangelical Church is a member of the World Council of Churches and as such is the only government recognised Church in country. Because of their status they had been given two hours of free air time on the local radio each week, however they only had the capacity to use one hour, broadcasting for half an hour in the local language and the other half an hour in French. The pastor said he wished there was some way that the other hour of broadcasting could be used. As this pastor was talking to me, I thought of my earlier visit to the broadcaster who didn't think he needed any help from anyone else. So, I wrote a note to the broadcaster who was based north of the capital thanking him for taking time to meet with me and in that note I also told him of the Lutheran Pastor's problem.

With my visit to the country over, I returned back home to find a message waiting for me from the broadcaster asking how he could contact the Lutheran Pastor – he felt he could use that extra hour of broadcasting time!

The two men were put in touch with each other and the broadcaster's programmes ended up on the national radio making use of the one hour free air time which was available.

Later, the broadcaster attended the partnership meeting and became an enthusiastic member of the partnership.

Partnerships

Unit 5

Launching a Partnership 1



Development Associates International

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Version 1.3

Unit 5 - Launching a Partnership 1

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Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this unit you will be able to.....

- Identify what needs to be done to effectively plan a meeting to launch a partnership
- State the key components of an effective meeting to launch a partnership
- Justify the need for the length of time which is needed to hold a meeting which will result in the successful launching of a partnership
- Describe the meeting process which will lead to a successful launch of an effective partnership

Supplementary text: “Body Matters – a Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission” by Ernie Addicott, published by Interdev Partnership Associates 2005; pages 70-76

Lecture Notes & Workbook

Introduction Unit 5

I am certain that everyone who is taking this course has lots of experience in organizing meetings! And probably most of us think that we don't need any more training or input on how to organize and run a meeting! However, this unit is all about running meetings – and I hope that you will find something fresh in it – and that as a result the partnership meetings which you are involved in running will be really effective.



Think about it?

Answer Box # 1

Let's start with first principles. You know you need to bring a group of people together to discuss an important topic – or maybe it's a regular meeting – which might be weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually. So, when you need to call people together for a meeting, what's the first decision you tend to make?

And now write down the second decision...

I suspect that either the first or second thing that most of us do is to decide the timing of the meeting. We decide when the meeting will be held – and what time it will start. And we usually have some idea in our mind how long the meeting will last.

In the boxes above, I wonder if you wrote down as your response to either the first or second decision “time of meeting” or something similar.

Once we've got the time decided, often the next thing we decide is who should attend the meeting – and then we invite them.

And probably the last thing we work on in our planning for the meeting is the Agenda – and the details of how we want to use the meeting time.

What might be some of the weaknesses in leaving our thinking about the content of the meeting so late in the process?

Think about it?

Answer Box # 2

Leaving the content of the meeting late in the process of meeting planning has the following weaknesses:



learning

The main reason why I think that leaving decisions about the content of the meeting so late in the process of meeting planning has weaknesses is because there may be a mis-match between the time you have allocated for the meeting and the time that is needed to adequately address the issues to be discussed.

Sometimes it transpires that the things you need to discuss and make decisions on can be done quite quickly – and you have lots of time left over at the end of the meeting.

However, in my experience, that's a fairly rare occurrence.

What is much more likely to happen is that you end up with too much to talk about and not enough time to discuss issues adequately. A Board that I am a member of has traditionally met four times a year for meetings that last about 3 hours each. Twenty years ago, the ministry was small, but in recent years it has grown and the Board now needs to discuss and make decisions on a number of quite complex issues. But until recently, this Board continued to try to limit its meetings to 3 hour meetings 4 times a year – and the fact that insufficient time could be given to discuss important issues frustrated a number of Board members.

I believe that we need to turn our planning of meetings on its head! And that when we are planning meetings:

the **first** thing we should do is to decide on what we need to include in the meeting

then we should decide how long we need to allocate to each item to be discussed

then we can decide how long the meeting needs to last

then we can decide when the meeting should start and when it should end

I also believe that when we plan meetings in this way, those attending the meetings will have a much better experience – and as long as the chair has facilitation skills – people will be more positive (and therefore less negative) about the meeting experience.

The key event in the launching of a partnership is a meeting. As we discuss how to put the partnership meeting together, we will be taking some quality time to explore what the content of the meeting should be – but before we can get to discussing the content of the meeting, there are some other key issues which we need to explore and which are critical to the success of a meeting which is held to launch a partnership

Key Issues in Planning a Partnership Meeting

In your Readings for this unit, read 5.1 Key Issues in Planning a Partnership Meeting

Think about it?

Answer Box # 3

Take each of the headings in this article and for each one, explain how following the advice under each heading will aid the development of the partnership and how ignoring the advice can cause damage to the emerging partnership.



learning

Back to Content of the Meeting

Now having explored some of the key issues about planning the meeting, we need to get back to the issue of the content of the meeting, which will then lead us into issues such as the length of the meeting and the start time.

There is a meeting process which you can follow when you bring people together to talk about working together – to talk seriously about working in partnership, which will minimize the risks and maximize the possibilities of success. And although every partnership, and every partnership meeting will be different, if you follow the process – you will enhance your possibility of holding a meeting which will lead to the formation of an effective partnership.

Reviewing a failed partnership meeting

Review the “Tale of a Meeting to Launch a Partnership” in **Unit 4, Pages 12 and 13**.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 4

What were some of the mistakes which Paul Elijah made?



First, let's turn the clock back – and see what Paul Elijah could have done differently, so that the outcome would have led to the formation of a partnership to reach out to the people living in Happy Valley.

Answer Box # 5

Thinking back to our previous unit – what mistakes did Paul make in calling the meeting?



I hope that (amongst other things) you noted that

- He didn't give people very much time (giving people only a week's notice usually isn't enough)
- There were key players missing – having the meeting when WEAR wasn't able to be there was leaving a key player out of the process. There were also important churches missing too.

Think about it?**Answer Box # 6**

Thinking back to our first section in this unit – what other mistakes did Paul make in the meeting itself?

I hope that you noted that

- He hadn't allowed sufficient time for the meeting to achieve its objectives
- Was there anything else you noted?

The Partnership Formation Meeting – getting the objectives right

As we commented earlier, Paul Elijah's motives in calling the meeting were good. But I wonder if he really had thought though

- why he was calling the meeting
- the objectives for the meeting
- communicating the objectives of the meeting to those he was inviting

When anyone is thinking about trying to develop a partnership it is very important that they develop what I call an "Objective Statement" – by this I mean the objective they have in starting the partnership process.

For example an "Objective Statement" for the person attempting to bring together ministries and churches working together on a Jesus Film Project in Kabuli into a partnership could be "making the Jesus Film available in the Kabuli language will be more effective if we can bring together the ministries with resources and experience, so that the film is made available, is promoted, distributed and there is an effective follow-up, so that viewers are encouraged to make a response to the message of the film and can be integrated into a local church."

Think about it?

Answer Box # 7

Looking back at the beginning of Section 2, try to develop an “Objective Statement” for Paul Elijah as he tries to bring together those ministries and churches working to reach out to the people in Happy Valley. It might be best to start by listing some words and phrases which you think Paul might want to include in his final statement:

**learning**

I think that if Paul had developed an “Objective Statement” he would have included the following ideas

- bringing ministries and churches together
- making good use of resources
- seeing that conditions improved for everyone in Happy Valley
- linking the development efforts of the ministries with the outreach activities of the churches
- making a difference to the gospel witness in Happy Valley

Review your list of ideas for Paul’s “Objective Statement” with the list I have developed – and mark those in my list which you included.

What did I include which you missed out?

What did you include which was different from my list?

I think that Paul’s final statement could well be *“Bringing together ministries and churches working to improve the conditions of the people living in Happy Valley to make the best use of the resources available, reduce duplication of effort, ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are met and to link all efforts with the work of the churches so that the gospel witness in Happy Valley can be enhanced.”*

Another way this could be presented is:

Bringing together ministries and churches working to improve the conditions of the people living in Happy Valley to

- *make the best use of the resources available*
- *reduce duplication of effort*

- *ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are met*
- *to link all efforts with the work of the churches*
- *so that the gospel witness in Happy Valley can be enhanced*

Now, Paul has a very clear idea of what he wants to do – and why. Before he brings the appropriate players together to discuss how together they can do this – he needs to communicate this objective for the meeting to the other ministries and churches.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 8

Thinking back to our last Unit – how does he do this?



learning

What did you state in your response?

You should have included

- Meet with leaders of the ministries and churches
- Communicate the vision of working together to reach the people of Happy Valley
- Encourage their participation in a meeting to talk about the vision
- Identify possible dates/times when a meeting might be possible for everyone who needs to be involved

Once Paul has held these one-on-one meetings and has found a date that is agreeable to everyone, he can send out invitations. Paul might have written something like this:

Dear Stephen

It was really good to meet you and talk about what we might do to make our ministries more effective as we reach out to the people of Happy Valley. I have had the opportunity of talking to several other ministries and churches which are working in various ways to improve the conditions of the people in Happy Valley and see how our work can be linked together and how our various development projects might also enhance the gospel witness in Happy Valley. There is a lot of enthusiasm for us to get together, so I have arranged for us to meet together on [redacted] at [redacted]. I know this is in several weeks time, but we needed to find a time when everyone could come to this meeting.

If you know of anyone who might also be interested in joining us for this meeting, please let me know.

I hope you will be able to come.....

Paul

Think about it?

Answer Box # 9

I have deliberately blanked out the date, time and place for the meeting, but other than that, what do you notice about Paul's letter?



Things I note about Paul's letter are:

- Friendly
- He refers to the meeting they had had together and what they had talked about
- He mentions that others have a similar concern
- He notes what the purpose (or objective) of the meeting is to be
- He asks Stephen to let him know of others who might be interested in coming to the meeting

The point about mentioning the objective or purpose of the meeting is that everyone needs to be very clear about why the meeting is being held. Paul's meeting is to talk about working together to see how development ministry and the churches can work together, how to improve the conditions for the people in Happy Valley and how to enhance the gospel witness in the area.

The Meeting to talk about Ministry in Happy Valley

Now we're on the eve of the meeting that Paul has called to talk about Christian ministry in Happy Valley. However, a couple of important things to note.

So far Paul has talked about working together to reach out to the people of Happy Valley – but he's never referred to it as a meeting to begin a partnership for Happy Valley. It's important to note that this meeting **might** result in a partnership – but until those participating in the meeting agree to work in partnership you don't have a partnership!

Secondly, Paul has managed to create a lot of interest in people coming together to talk about ministry in Happy Valley. In all, he has gathered together representatives from

- 4 different ministries working on development projects in the Valley
- 2 other ministries wanting to see how they can contribute to the development of the valley
- 3 ministries which are working on evangelism strategies to reach out to people in the Valley
- 8 churches from Kabuli city which are involved in various projects in Happy Valley
- 2 small churches in Happy Valley

Some of the ministries and churches have sent just a single representative, but others have sent a couple of people. In all, Paul has a group of 28 people for his meeting.

That's quite a group that Paul has managed to bring together. He's taken his time – but he's succeeded in getting together everyone who is working in or has an interest in reaching out to the people of Happy Valley. However, his success does bring some challenges! – as we will see!

The Partnership Formation Meeting – starting on the right footing

Paul gets to the venue where the meeting is going to be held early. He wants to do everything he can to enhance the success of the meeting – so he wants to be sure that everyone is absolutely right from the very start.

As he enters the room, his heart falls! The room is very nice – but they've arranged the chairs in 5 rows of 9 chairs in each row. Paul wants to encourage open relationships, discussion and for everyone to contribute in the meeting.

Think about it?**learning****Answer Box # 10**

What's wrong with the way the room is set up?

When I am arranging the environment for a partnership meeting, I always try to avoid having people sitting in rows. There are two problems that Paul needs to sort out. One is the fact that he has 45 chairs for 28 people (if he keeps them in rows, most people will avoid sitting in the front row), so he needs to take away some of the chairs. Secondly, rows tend to suggest that someone is going to address a meeting and inhibit open discussion. So, Paul's first task is to remove some of the chairs and also re-arrange the room. I would suggest to him that he arranges the chairs in a semi-circle – which will encourage discussion and contributions from everyone.

So having re-arranged the chairs into a semi-circle, and done some of the other things to prepare for the meeting, Paul is ready to welcome people as they begin to arrive.

As the time comes for the scheduled start of the meeting, Paul encourages everyone to take a seat – and then he begins the meeting.

He starts by welcoming everyone, and thanks everyone for coming and for giving up their valuable time. Then he introduces himself and reminds everyone why the meeting has been called – to talk together about the work which is focused on Happy Valley. He also talks about the passion he has of seeing the various ministries and churches working together to really build the work of the gospel in Happy Valley.

Paul then introduces the first item on the Agenda – which is a devotional time.

Think about it?**learning****Answer Box # 11**

Why does Paul begin the meeting with a devotional time?

Who might he ask to lead the devotions?

What passages might be helpful to focus on at the beginning of the meeting?

Getting the meeting started on the right footing is essential. This is a group of Christians meeting together to talk about ministry in Happy Valley. So, starting with a devotional time emphasises the spiritual nature of the meeting, it also emphasises the unity which already exists within the group. And although there may be some differences in theological emphases, there is likely to be a lot which these representatives from different ministries and churches do have in common.

Therefore it is important that the theme for this devotional session isn't anything controversial. It's probably best to avoid issues around the second coming or speaking in tongues and to choose a theme which emphasises the body of Christ working together. Paul needs to be careful about who he asks to lead this time in the meeting. He could do it himself – but it is important to spread the jobs around, so that even the meeting itself demonstrates a partnership approach. Paul needs to ask someone who isn't a controversial figure to lead this important element in the meeting – who will be guided to focus on an appropriate theme for the meeting and who is respected by those attending the meeting. It's not always easy to find the right person!

The Partnership Formation Meeting – the importance of introductions

Having enjoyed a time of devotions together, it's now time for Paul to focus on a couple of introductions.

The first introduction is to introduce the reasons for the meeting. Although Paul mentioned the reasons for the meeting in his letter of invitation and again at the very beginning of the meeting, as he moves the group to focus on the reason why they are together, he now needs to remind everyone present why they are meeting together.

There are a number of things which Paul needs to mention at this stage about why they are meeting together. They are meeting to:

- Talk about and share information about ministry in Happy Valley
- Get to know one another
- Get to know what each different ministry is doing in Happy Valley
- Talk about the possibility of working more closely together
- Identify some practical things that can be done together to enhance the ministry in Happy Valley

Think about it?

Answer Box # 12

Can you suggest reasons why Paul needs to re-state the purpose of the meeting?



learning

What was your response to the question?

My suggestions are that some people lead busy lives and may have forgotten the real reason for the meeting; others may be representatives of their ministry or church and may not have had a very effective briefing as to the reasons for the meeting. At the very beginning Paul needs to make sure that everyone attending the meeting has a common understanding of the purpose of meeting together. If he doesn't different people will have different ideas as to the reason for the meeting – and that will eventually lead to confusion and potential frustration.

Once everyone is clear as to the purpose of the meeting, now it's time to get everyone involved! Paul does this by getting everyone to briefly introduce themselves. This is not a time for extensive introductions and reports on what is happening in Happy Valley – there'll be time for that later in the meeting.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 13

Why are these introductions so important?



learning

The obvious response is so that everyone knows who else is at the meeting. But I believe there is a far more significant purpose. Paul wants everyone to contribute to the discussions – and although some people don't need any encouragement to have their say in a meeting, others are much more reluctant to stand up and make a contribution to the discussion. However, people like this are much more willing to make a contribution once they've already spoken in the meeting, so we want to create an environment in which everyone will happily contribute to the discussion later in the meeting.

Paul's biggest challenge at this point is going to be people talking too long about themselves! Therefore he needs to guide the introductions. When I'm leading a meeting like this, I usually encourage people to limit themselves to

- their names
- their ministry
- and their specific role in that ministry

Sometimes it can be extremely helpful to ask them to share what they would like to see come out as an outcome of the meeting – and if possible to note these expectations on a flip-chart or a chalk-board.

I also tell them that there will be time later in the meeting for them to talk in more detail about what their ministry is doing in Happy Valley. I've usually had the luxury of a flip-chart and I tend to write up the specifics of what information we want – and that tends to encourage people to keep on track.

As he plans the meeting, Paul needs to be thinking about how long each item will take.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 1.1 How long do you think he should allow for each person to introduce themselves?

Think about it?

Answer Box # 1.2 And with 28 people attending the meeting – how long in total is this segment likely to take?

Realistically, we're probably looking at about 30 seconds per person here, so Paul needs to allow at least 14 minutes for the 28 people present to introduce themselves.

The Partnership Formation Meeting – focusing on the focus of the potential partnership

The temptation now will be to start to talk about what all the ministries and churches represented might actually do together in order to make a difference to the people of Happy Valley. However, as in the building of a house – there are foundations which need to be put in place before you can actually get the group talking about practical activity.

So, the next stage in the process of the meeting is to set the scene – to give an overview of the area and to begin to try to identify the specific needs of the people there.

Paul does this by asking one of the church leaders to talk about the social, economic and spiritual situation of the people in Happy Valley. This church leader takes about 20 minutes to give an overview of the situation as he sees it in Happy Valley. Then Paul asks the other pastor from Happy Valley to comment from his perspective – and then opens the session up for questions and discussion.

Next Paul wants to encourage the group to actually think about the people in Happy Valley – and to try to put themselves into the shoes of the people who live there. And he raises a question for the group to discuss. He asks “What do you think are the main concerns and needs of the people of Happy Valley?”

It is important to get as much input as possible – and Paul divides the main group into a number of smaller groups – and asks each group to discuss the question, to list the main concerns and needs of the people of Happy Valley – and to be prepared to share their lists in the larger group.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 16

Paul asks the group to do this activity in smaller groups. What are the advantages of doing an activity like this in smaller groups rather in one larger group?



learning

Some of the advantages you may have listed could have included:

- gets everyone involved in the discussion
- people who might not participate much in the big group have an opportunity to share their ideas
- prevents one or two people dominating the group
- brings out a wide variety of ideas
- it's good to have a variety of different types of activities in the meeting
- everyone feels they have a contribution to make to the discussion

It is very important that when you give a group an activity such as this, that there is time for them to report back to the full group. If you have access to flip chart paper, you might like to give each group a sheet of flip chart paper to list their suggestions; if you don't have any flip chart paper, you will want to capture the ideas suggested – so it is helpful to write down what is shared on a chalk-board.

An activity like this can be very dynamic and can result in a lot of energy in the group. This helps individuals within the group to feel very positive about what they are doing, because they are actively involved in the process. It can also break down some of the

barriers which may be present. And furthermore it can very powerfully demonstrate the degree of unity which already exists within the group.

The Partnership Formation Meeting – reviewing current activity

Although everything which has happened so far is important, Paul is now coming to what is one of the most important parts of the meeting. This is the time when everyone has an opportunity to talk about the ministry which they are involved in (or planning to do) in Happy Valley. So that there is some consistency in the format of the reports, Paul has asked each ministry to focus their reports around a number of questions:

- What work are you doing in Happy Valley?
- How did you first get involved in the Happy Valley?
- What do you think are some of the successes of the work you are doing?
- What are some of the difficulties you are experiencing in the work?
- What are you planning /hoping to do in the next 12 months?

This is a section of the meeting that Paul doesn't want to rush – but he also knows that some people – given an opportunity to talk about what they're doing could continue talking for at least an hour! So he asks everyone to limit their reports to 10 minutes!

He also plans to break up the reports by having a short time of prayer for each ministry at the end of each report – a time to give thanks for the work and impact of the ministry and to pray for the on-going work of that ministry. So, Paul needs to make sure there's enough time in the programme for prayer for each ministry as well – so in his timings he puts in 5 minutes per ministry.

You may remember that some ministries and churches sent more than one representative to the meeting. However, Paul only allows one report per ministry or church. Remember, we have 19 ministries and churches represented at the meeting. We have 10 minutes for each report and 5 minutes for prayer for each ministry.

Think about it?

Answer Box #
17

So, how long does Paul need to allow in the agenda for this activity?



learning

Think about it?**Answer Box # 18**

As you can see, this part of the meeting takes a lot of time. However, we cannot emphasise enough the importance of allowing enough time in the meeting for people to talk about their work. Can you suggest some reasons why this is an important component of the meeting?

**learning**

Some of the reasons you may have given include:

- It's getting everyone involved
- We're encouraging people to talk about the things they know about
- Everyone feels that they have been "heard" and they have had an opportunity to present the good work their ministry is doing
- We're building a picture of the total ministry going on in the area
- Some people discover that things are happening in the area that they didn't know anything about
- Other ministries/churches begin to appreciate and value the work of others
- Areas of duplication or ministry may begin to emerge
- People may begin to see common problems which could be addressed
- Praying for one another helps to build community

Read the following account of a reporting time at a meeting to discuss working together to reach out to the Sentena People ** of Africa:

There were 12 different ministries at the meeting – the first time some of the people leading the ministries had ever been in the same room together. When the meeting reached the point where the ministries were being asked to report on the different activities they were doing to reach the Sentena People there was a great deal of excitement in the room in the anticipation of having an overview of the ministry to the people.

The first person began to report, and as he did so, he brought out from his pocket a Christian tract, which he said his ministry had translated into the Sentena language.

A little later, another person, as he was reporting on their work talked about a tract which his ministry had spent a long time – and a lot of resources – translating and printing. It transpired that this was the same tract.

The next person also talked about a tract which they were distributing – it was yet another version of the same tract.

Another ministry also reported that they had translated the same tract.

And a fifth ministry reported that they had just completed the translation of the very same tract.

[name of the people group has been changed for security reasons]

Think about it?

Answer Box # 19

How does this example illustrate the value of a reporting time in a meeting to talk about working together?

The person facilitating the meeting could have saved time by saying that, as he talked to the different ministries before the meeting, he had discovered that five ministries had translated the same tract into the Sentena language. Why might this strategy have not been effective?



learning

The Partnership Formation Meeting – building consensus step-by-step

We now come to that point in the meeting where all the work which has been done so far will actually begin to bear dividends! Without the reports, discussions and group work which have happened so far in the meeting, it's unlikely that you will be able to build consensus together on what can be done together to make the ministry more effective in an area.

For Paul, the discussions that have so far happened in the meeting will be crucial as a foundation to coming to agreement about what might be done to develop ministry in Happy Valley.

From the reports, from the discussions, it will almost certainly have emerged that there are lots of needs, and lots of things which could be done in order to develop the work in Happy Valley. However, for a new partnership which has no experience of working on projects together, it is important that the group limits themselves to between two and four projects which they can do together – so that they acquire some experience in working together – and so that they enhance their likelihood of success. Something which would be much more difficult if they tried to tackle everything that could be done!

So, for Happy Valley, Paul needs to help the group identify between two to four things they can work on together. And he uses a process which has succeeded time and time again in helping a large group build consensus.

Building Consensus Step by Step:**Step 1. *The first step is to frame a question to be given to the group.***

There are a couple of possible questions which Paul could use for his meeting. One would be:

What are the most significant obstacles in reaching the people of Happy Valley with the gospel?

Another would be:

If there were things which we could work on together, what are some of the practical things we could begin to do in the next 12 months which would have the greatest impact in reaching the people of Happy Valley with the gospel?

He decides to use the second of these questions.

Step 2. *The second step is to get people thinking about the question individually*

Paul asks everyone to think about the question by themselves and to list on a piece of paper what they think would have the greatest impact on reaching the people of Happy Valley. He gives them about 5 minutes to do this

Step 3. *The third step is to get people sharing their ideas*

Paul now moves the group into small groups of 4-5 people in each group. With 28 people in the meeting, Paul probably has 6 groups. He asks everyone in their groups to share the ideas everyone has had – and then try to agree together on the 5 most significant things which would have the greatest impact on reaching the people of Happy Valley with the gospel. He tells the groups that they will have 20 minutes for this task, and then each of the groups will present their 5 suggestions. He gives each group 5 pieces of writing paper (A4 or letter size – depending on the normal size of writing paper in the country where the meeting is being held) and a Flip Chart Pen and asks each group to write each of their top suggestions on a separate piece of paper – in as large letters as possible. He gives each group a different colour Flip Chart Pen.

Step 4. *The fourth step is to share the suggestions in the large group*

Paul brings the group back together and asks each group to bring their 5 ideas to the front – to read them out and to tape each of the five pieces of paper onto a blank wall or board (don't use sellotape which will pull the paint off when you try to remove it, or blue-tak [or whatever the local equivalent of blue-tak is] because that will leave a greasy residue which is difficult to get rid of, instead use masking tape which doesn't destroy paint-work or wall-paper)

Step 5. *The fifth step is to clarify the ideas*

Now go back over each of the suggestions and ask the group that submitted the idea for any clarification and for other groups to ask any questions. At this point people in the group will begin looking for identical ideas – or ones which are very similar. It may be possible to linking two or three of the suggestions together. However it's important not to make any forced linkages – make sure the linkages are close enough – and that the groups which made the original suggestion agree with the linking

Step 6. *The sixth step is to allow additional ideas to be added*

As a result of the open discussions someone may think of another obstacle which should be added – and there may be important idea which had to be eliminated when each group was forced to limit the suggestions they gave to the whole group. It is important to allow additional ideas to be contributed to the list which has emerged at this stage. So Paul asks if anyone wants to add any additional ideas – and adds them to the group of suggestions on which are taped to the wall.

Step 7. *The seventh step is to tell the group why the list of ideas needs pruning*

With the linking of some of the ideas, the group probably still has a list of something like 20 different suggestions which would have the greatest impact on reaching the people of Happy Valley with the gospel. The point of listing the suggestions is for the group to identify those ideas which they will work on and try to develop together. A list of 20 suggestions is far too long a list for the group to tackle together initially, so Paul tells the group that if they try to tackle each of those listed they might end up doing nothing at all – quite simply because they will be trying to do too much. So as an initial exercise together, he encourages them to try to agree to between two to four ideas that they might work on over the next 12 months and try to make progress on.

Step 8. *The eighth step is to take a break!*

It's important to take a break here. Paul has helped the group develop a list of 20 or so suggestions. The task now is to try to identify the two to four ideas which are the most pressing and for the group to be intentional in doing something about. They now need to prioritise the list they've made together. Most groups need a time of reflection before they move to the prioritisation process. A break at this stage helps them to do that. It's also important to take some time to pray and ask for God's guiding as the group works at prioritising the task.

Step 9. *The ninth step is to work through a process which will help the group to agree on the top priorities*

Each of the 20 suggestions which the group has agreed on is very good. Everyone of them is worthy of action by the group.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 20

Why is it a mistake for the group to try to work together to on taking action on each of the 20 ideas for action?

**learning**

I hope you made the point that for the group to try to work on everyone of these would actually mean that they weren't able to focus enough energy on any one of them, and the result might be that nothing actually gets done.

Paul also needs to discourage the group from trying to combine each of the suggestions into three or four separate groupings.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 21

Go to Reading 5b “Making decisions in the Trinolindo Partnership”

1. What did the members of the Trinolindo Partnership insist on doing when they had listed the 18 issues which needed addressing?

2. What was the result of this decision?

Getting back to the meeting to talk about working together to reach the people of Happy Valley.

The group have identified 20 suggestions that they can work on together to reach the people of Happy Valley with the gospel. These ideas are listed on the next page:

| | |
|--|---|
| A. Better training for church leaders | K. Jesus Film distribution in the Valley |
| B. Hold a series of monthly evangelistic meetings | L. Develop a data-base of Christian work in Happy Valley |
| C. Production & distribution of gospel tracts | M. Skills training for the men |
| D. Set up an inter-church weekly Children’s Club | N. Provide copies of the Gospel of John to every household in Happy Valley |
| E. Set up a network of medical clinics in Happy Valley | O. Set up an “Advice Bureau” to help the people with practical problems they face |
| F. Home-making skills for the women | P. Sports activities for the youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| G. Build a Christian Community Centre in the centre of the valley to be used for various Christian activities | Q. Establish an annual Christian-based family holiday-camp for disadvantaged families from the Valley |
| H. Create a Prayer Network for Happy Valley | R. Establish a series of evangelistic home Bible Study groups across the Valley |
| I. Launch a Christian radio station for Happy Valley | S. Help the people of Happy Valley set up small businesses |
| J. Literacy training | T. Set up an internet café in Happy Valley |

The task now is for the group to try to agree which of these have the highest priority.

And this is the process that Paul uses:

He gives each of the ministries at the meeting 3 votes, and tells them that they must decide which of the three items they will give their votes to. Where there are two or three representatives of a ministry – it's the ministry which has the votes to distribute, and the members of that ministry must decide what they will give the votes to.

Paul then goes through the list of ideas and takes the votes for each one. Using a Flip Chart Marker he writes the number of votes for each idea on its page. And then he reviews the results the group.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| A. Better training for church leaders | 8 | K. Jesus Film distribution in the Valley | 0 |
| B. Hold a series of monthly evangelistic meetings | 2 | L. Develop a data-base of Christian work in Happy Valley | 0 |
| C. Production & distribution of gospel tracts | 7 | M. Skills training for the men | 1 |
| D. Set up an inter-church weekly Children's Club | 2 | N. Provide copies of the Gospel of John to every household in Happy Valley | 8 |
| E. Set up a network of medical clinics in Happy Valley | 7 | O. Set up an "Advice Bureau" to help the people with practical problems they face | 2 |
| F. Home-making skills for the women | 2 | P. Sports activities for the youth | 6 |
| G. Build a Christian Community Centre in the centre of the valley to be used for various Christian activities | 7 | Q. Establish an annual Christian-based family holiday-camp for disadvantaged families from the Valley | 1 |

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| H. Create a Prayer Network for Happy Valley | 0 | R. Establish a series of evangelistic home Bible Study groups across the Valley | 0 |
| I. Launch a Christian radio station for Happy Valley | 2 | S. Help the people of Happy Valley set up small businesses | 1 |
| J. Literacy training | 0 | T. Set up an internet café in Happy Valley | 1 |

Think about it?



Answer Box # 22

What do you notice about the way the votes have been cast?

Some of the suggestions have no votes at all, others have just one or two votes, one has six votes, three have seven votes and two have eight votes. There is a clear division between suggestions with few votes, and those with six, seven or eight.

Paul suggests that they should remove those suggestions with the lowest votes. The group agrees, and he moves the papers with those suggestions on to another part of the wall.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 23

Why doesn't Paul simply discard the suggestions with no votes or those with just one or two votes?

All of the suggestions will have been good ideas. By discarding any of the papers at this stage, you are effectively making the suggestion that these suggestions are worthless. These are suggestions which people have made, and although they don't make the top priority, it is still important that we recognize their value – and the value of the people who made them.

We are now left with six suggestions. These are:

- Better training for church leaders
- Production & distribution of gospel tracts
- Set up a network of medical clinics in Happy Valley
- Build a Christian Community Centre in the centre of the valley to be used for various Christian activities
- Provide copies of the Gospel of John to every household in Happy Valley
- Sports activities for the youth

This is still too many for the group to work on together, and so there needs to be a further round of voting.

Again Paul gives each ministry three votes. Paul tells the group that if they wish they can use their votes by giving 2 votes to one suggestion and 1 vote to another; or they can distribute their votes across three suggestions. Paul then takes the votes, and on the six remaining papers, writes the votes on the papers in a different colour Flip Chart Marker, so as to distinguish between the first and second round of votes. He then reviews the results with the group.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|----|---|---|----|
| A. Better training for church leaders | 8 | 12 | K. Jesus Film distribution in the Valley | 0 | - |
| B. Hold a series of monthly evangelistic meetings | 2 | - | L. Develop a data-base of Christian work in Happy Valley | 0 | - |
| C. Production & distribution of gospel tracts | 7 | 7 | M. Skills training for the men | 1 | - |
| D. Set up an inter-church weekly Children's Club | 2 | - | N. Provide copies of the Gospel of John to every household in Happy Valley | 8 | 10 |
| E. Set up a network of medical clinics in Happy Valley | 7 | 10 | O. Set up an "Advice Bureau" to help the people with practical problems they face | 2 | - |
| F. Home-making skills for the women | 2 | - | P. Sports activities for the youth | 6 | 11 |
| G. Build a Christian Community Centre in the centre of the valley to be used for various Christian activities | 7 | 7 | Q. Establish an annual Christian-based family holiday-camp for disadvantaged families from the Valley | 1 | - |
| H. Create a Prayer Network for Happy Valley | 0 | - | R. Establish a series of evangelistic home Bible Study groups across the Valley | 0 | - |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| I. Launch a Christian radio station for Happy Valley | 2 | - | S. Help the people of Happy Valley set up small businesses | 1 | - |
| J. Literacy training | 0 | - | T. Set up an internet café in Happy Valley | 1 | - |

Think about it?



Answer Box # 24

What do you notice about the way the votes have been cast?

What is interesting is that

- items C Production & distribution of gospel tracts and G Build a Christian Community Centre in the centre of the valley to be used for various Christian activities still have the same number of votes as in the first round
- the other items have all increased significantly
- item P Sports activities for the youth has more than doubled in the number of votes
- items A, E, N and P are still very close in the number of votes cast

However, especially for the first time a group is trying to work together in partnership on projects, even four projects are too many, so Paul needs to take the group through a further round a prioritising.

With agreement from the group, he removes items C and G from the list by moving them to the part of the wall where the other items which didn't make it into the second round were "parked." This leaves four suggestions for the group to work together on. These are:

- Better training for church leaders
- Set up a network of medical clinics in Happy Valley
- Provide copies of the Gospel of John to every household in Happy Valley
- Sports activities for the youth

And now he gives them another three votes each, and again allows them to give two votes to one idea and one vote to a second. He uses yet another colour to record the votes, and the result is as follows:

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|----|----|---|---|----|----|
| A. Better training for church leaders | 8 | 12 | 18 | K. Jesus Film distribution in the Valley | 0 | - | - |
| B. Hold a series of monthly evangelistic meetings | 2 | - | - | L. Develop a data-base of Christian work in Happy Valley | 0 | - | - |
| C. Production & distribution of gospel tracts | 7 | 7 | - | M. Skills training for the men | 1 | - | - |
| D. Set up an inter-church weekly Children's Club | 2 | - | - | N. Provide copies of the Gospel of John to every household in Happy Valley | 8 | 10 | 8 |
| E. Set up a network of medical clinics in Happy Valley | 7 | 10 | 15 | O. Set up an "Advice Bureau" to help the people with practical problems they face | 2 | - | - |
| F. Home-making skills for the women | 2 | - | - | P. Sports activities for the youth | 6 | 11 | 16 |
| G. Build a Christian Community Centre in the centre of the valley to be used for various Christian activities | 7 | 7 | - | Q. Establish an annual Christian-based family holiday-camp for disadvantaged families from the Valley | 1 | - | - |
| H. Create a Prayer Network for Happy Valley | 0 | - | - | R. Establish a series of evangelistic home Bible Study groups across the Valley | 0 | - | - |
| I. Launch a Christian radio station for Happy Valley | 2 | - | - | S. Help the people of Happy Valley set up small businesses | 1 | - | - |
| J. Literacy training | 0 | - | - | T. Set up an internet café in Happy Valley | 1 | - | - |

As Paul reviews the result of this process, he moves item N "Provide copies of the Gospel of John to every household in Happy Valley" to the group of items which did not get through the previous rounds. He also points out that together the group has reduced the list of twenty possible things they could do together to a more manageable list of 3 priorities. He asks whether the group agree that these are the three top priorities. Fortunately the group agrees – because they've worked through the process together and have an "ownership" of the items they have agreed together by consensus as the top priorities.

The final list of priorities is as follows:

- Better training for church leaders
- Set up a network of medical clinics in Happy Valley
- Sports activities for the youth

Because of the process Paul has used, everyone in the group will have voted for at least one of these three suggestions that have made it through the process.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 25

I hope you noticed that Paul didn't ever allow anyone to give all their votes to a single suggestion. What might be the result of allowing participants to give all of their votes to a single suggestion?



Ideas you might have suggested include:

- Results in polarisation – and a focus on a single issue rather than on several issues
- Three or four ministries by giving all their votes to a single suggestion can force their choice into the top three or four, even though it doesn't have wide support from the group

Reviewing the Prioritisation by Consensus Process

At this stage in the meeting, it is very important to review the process you have taken the group through. It is helpful to remind the group that

- They've shared information about what work is being done in Happy Valley
- They've shared some of the problems they're facing
- They've identified what might be some significant priorities
- They've agreed on the top three priorities which they might work together on

At this stage, Paul might also refer to the suggestions which did not make it to the top three. He needs to state that these ideas are all still important, it's just that in the prioritization process that other suggestions were thought to be even more important to focus on at the moment. Some of the suggestions the group might return to at another time, perhaps some of them might be taken up by certain members of the group and some progress might be made on them over the coming months. If anyone asks Paul if they can do some work on item C (production and distribution of gospel tracts), I would advise him to encourage them to do so. As much productive ministry to reach the people of Happy Valley as possible is needed – so it's important not to discourage anyone who is keen to get to work!

Let's think about the process we have just worked through. We started with 20 suggestions and we ended up with 3. This process is a particularly helpful way of developing agreement or consensus with a large group of people, and it has worked successfully

many times in partnership meetings in Africa, the Middle East, India and South-East Asia. But it's not something you can get straight into at the beginning of the meeting. People need to take time to build relationships with each other; they need to learn to trust one another and they need to do some ground-work before they can agree on the specific things they will work on together. Taking the group through this process means that they "feel" they can move on to the next stage and begin to do some very practical things together.

Section 13: Starting to work on the priorities identified

There's something very important that the group must do before they pack up and go home. It's all very well to have identified the main priorities which need to be worked on together. But if you leave it there, nothing will actually get done. You'll have had a very interesting meeting, you will have decided on three priorities which the group believes is critical to advance ministry in Happy Valley and which can best be done if they are working together, but unless you give the group time to work on some initial steps and to identify who will give some leadership to taking the work on this project forward, you will have achieved nothing – and quite rightly people will say – "we've tried partnership, but it didn't work."

It is therefore critical that you ensure there is time in your programme for the attendees to divide up into smaller "working groups" to explore how they can take forward each of the projects they've identified as the priorities for action. You will need a minimum of two hours for this – and it would be better if you could give this important part of the meeting three hours.

The whole issue of "Working Groups" and how to make teams in partnerships "work" is so important, that we have a whole separate module devoted to this issue. You will find more about this in Unit 8.

Paul knows that for the Partnership for Happy Valley to be effective, he needs to give the groups plenty of time to begin to work together on each of the three "partnership projects."

He suggests that the group divides into three groups, with each group looking at how they might take each of the three identified priorities forward. He allows each person to self-select which group they will each join.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 26

Why does Paul allow people to self-select which group they will join?

What are some of the potential difficulties which self-selection could lead to?



learning

Paul allows people to self-select because he wants each person to be as fully committed to the group they join as possible. If he assigns people to groups, he may have some people in a group who have little or no interest or experience in that type of ministry and they are likely to feel that they can contribute little to the discussions.

However, with self-selection, Paul may end up with groups of very differing sizes. One groups may just have two or three people, while another group might have 15! However, don't worry too much about groups of different sizes – because the smaller groups will probably find other committed people to join them.

Drawing the Meeting to a Close

sYou're about to begin the last lap!

The groups have met – and now Paul brings the groups back together for a series of important steps as he draws the meeting to a close.

The Closing Steps:

1. *Reports from the Working Groups: you can't just leave the Working Groups "hanging." It's important to take some time for each of the Working Groups to report on what they are planning to do, what they intend to be their first steps, who will convene further meetings of the group and when the group next plans to meet. This could be a time when others can give input into who else might be able to help with each of the Working Groups.*
2. *The group of people who came together to talk about ministry in Happy Valley have made a lot of progress. The question which needs to be raised is whether they want to meet together again. Can you suggest some of the benefits of the group meeting together again?*

Think about it?



Answer Box # 27

List some benefits of the group meeting together again

Some of the reasons why I think it is helpful for such a group to meet together again (and to meet regularly) include:

Continuing to build the relationships which have developed
Reviewing progress in ministry to Happy Valley
Follow-up the work of the Working Groups
Discuss what else can be done to reach Happy Valley together
Pray together
Encourage one another

1. If they agree that they do want to meet together again, there needs to be discussion and agreement on when they will meet again – and where that meeting will be. It's important not to meet too soon! There needs to be time for the Working Groups which are focused on the three projects to achieve some success – because being able to report success in these projects will build further momentum for working together on further projects. Many partnership groups meet once a year – but the frequency of meetings will be determined on local conditions, and for a partnership which is focused on a local area and where all the partners are based within easy proximity of each other, it might be more appropriate to meet every three or six months. It is very important to get a decision about when and where the group will meet again – because if those decisions aren't made while you are together, it will be very difficult to get agreement and a date once you're apart!
2. There needs to be some discussion about whether or not the group wants to have someone serve as an on-going facilitator of the group. Having such a person serve the group is very important, because there are important activities which need to be carried on if the group is to have success.



Think about it?

Answer Box # 28

What do you suggest might be some of the things which might need to be done by someone?

In my list of things which someone will need to do is included:

Help to set-up the next meeting
 Keep communication going within the group
 Be a contact for people who may want to join the group

Most groups that work together in this way, call the person who helps to co-ordinate them, the “Facilitator.”

- Then there needs to be some discussion on who this person might be. And there are a number of issues which need to be addressed in this discussion. These include whether or not it should be Paul. Of course, Paul might not be willing – or able to continue in the role. You also need to think about if Paul isn’t able to continue, who else could undertake the role. The one thing which it is very important NOT to do is to ask for a volunteer (or volunteers).

Think about it?

Answer Box # 3

What might be a problem if you ask for a volunteer?



learning

You might get someone who isn’t appropriate for the role volunteering – and when someone volunteers it’s often difficult to get anyone else to volunteer – and you might end up with the wrong person in the role. It’s much more effective if Paul knows that he’s not going to be able to continue and if he tries to identify someone who could continue – and talks to him/her during the meeting and asks if he/she would be willing to continue the work he’s done if the group plan to continue meeting. However, it’s always best if the person who begins the process is able to continue giving leadership to it for at least the first two to three years of its life.

- There also needs to be some discussion about what you’re going to call the group. So far in this module we have deliberately avoided calling the group a “partnership” – because until the group decides that they’ve got things they can work on together – they’re not really a partnership. However, having successfully agreed on three projects that they will work on, the group is now “partnering together” to reach the people of Happy Valley. So, they can quite legitimately call themselves a “partnership.” However, it’s important for the group to agree that they want to be a partnership. It can be helpful for the person who is facilitating the group to say that other groups in other parts of the world who have met together to talk about working together have called themselves a “partnership.” It is also helpful if some reasons are given as to why it is helpful to call this group the

“Happy Valley Partnership”: it gives the group a name, it explains what they are doing, it helps other people understand what they are doing, and it gives them a link to the wider partnering movement throughout the world.

5. There now needs to be some discussion about an on-going Advisory Group. There are advantages in having a small group of people who can work alongside Paul and advise him, and who he can discuss issues with – before taking them to the wider partnership. But this isn't a group that Paul should put together. You need to get input from the whole group on this one. And it needs to be people who are respected by the members of the new partnership, and who are willing to get involved. It shouldn't be people who want to control the partnership – or to have the position but who are unwilling to get “their hands dirty”!
6. Next is the thorny issue of documentation! It's important to discuss with the new partnership members whether they want a written summary of the meeting and its conclusions to be circulated. Some partnerships want the meeting documented, others don't want anything in writing because of difficult security issues in the region they are working in. In some partnerships some members are more sensitive to potential security issues than others, and it is important to get the consensus of the group on this. If there are some who have security issues, it's probably better to be on the cautious side! A similar question with documentation is whether they want to have a list of those who attended and their addresses – and you may find that some people don't want their details on any address list – again because of security problems they may have.
7. If there are important security issues in the area where you are planning to work together, you may want to agree on some security guidelines. There's probably not the time to work together on developing any guidelines on security, but what can be helpful is to brainstorm some of the issues which the partnership would like included in a set of Security Guidelines and then ask someone in the group to draft a document which can be circulated around the partner members.
8. You may remember that at the very beginning of the meeting, when we were talking about the introductions, I suggested that you might ask people to share what they hoped the outcomes of the meeting would be – and I suggested that these should be noted. If you did that, now is the time to review those outcomes – the expectations of the meeting which people expressed when they first came together. Go through the list, and ask them if their expectations have been met. Especially if the meeting has gone well, it is good for everyone to articulate and hear that all the expectations have been fulfilled – and perhaps some of them have been more than fulfilled!

Conclude with Celebration!

The main business is done. But you're not finished yet. You want to end on a high note – and bring everyone back to the Lord. So, as you conclude the meeting, have a time of worship, prayer and thanksgiving together. And it's also worth considering having communion together as a closing act of worship – because communion has a wonderful ability to bind people together. Although the

group may come from very different churches and theological positions, most will value closing such an important coming together with the very act of worship which defines our unity – the coming together around the Lord’s Table, to remember his death on the cross and to celebrate what that means for us. Some of the most meaningful spiritual times for me have been as we have drawn a partnership meeting to an end around the Lord’s Table. There is something very powerful about men and women from different denominational backgrounds and cultures sharing communion together – and praying for one another. It’s awesome!

Above all, give time to thank God for bringing the group together, for his help in building unity and pray for his continuing help in maintaining the unity of the spirit.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 30

Go through the material in this module and complete the following tasks:

- create the Agenda which Paul Elijah would need to use at the meeting
- against each Agenda item give the length of time which would be needed for that item
- based on the information you have created, what is the total length of time which Paul needs for the meeting?
- list what additional activities there should be in the meeting and against each of these additional activities note the length of time each of these activities should be given
- based on your results for 3d and 3e, how long do you think that Paul needs for the meeting?
- write a paragraph explaining why the meeting needs to take this length of time
- write a paragraph explaining what might go wrong if the meeting isn’t allocated this length of time



learning

As a support to this Unit now read pages 70–76 of “Body Matters” by Ernie Addicott before attempting the Assignments

Assignment

Final Assignment

1. Describe why it is important to take care over the preparation and planning for a partnership launch meeting
2. One of the ministries attending the meeting to discuss potential partnering efforts in Happy Valley has asked for a justification why Paul Elijah is asking for more than a three hour meeting. Write a statement that you would use if you were Paul to justify giving sufficient time for the meeting.
3. In the example of the Sentena meeting with 5 translations of the same tract – describe how you would have handled the rest of the meeting to help them solve the problem which had been highlighted.
4. A colleague who was unable to attend the meeting about working together to reach Happy Valley is still in another part of the country has asked you to write him a letter describing the meeting, how people from other ministries and churches reacted to the meeting and how you felt Paul Elijah handled the process.



application

Readings



reading

5.1 Key Issues in Planning a Partnership Meeting

by John Rogers

Planning a partnership meeting is quite different from planning other types of meeting. For a partnership meeting there should always be a specific outcome in mind – which is that people will be willing to work together in partnership. Therefore, everything, both in the meeting itself and in the planning of the meeting, should lead toward the achieving of that outcome.

Getting things wrong in the planning stage, can seriously impact the future health of the partnership, and there are a number of key issues, which need to be addressed, as a meeting to launch a possible partnership is planned. Many of these issues are also very relevant once the partnership is formed and further meetings are planned.

1. Who should be invited

You should invite everyone who you visited during the exploration stage of the partnership; invite them, even if they weren't very enthusiastic when you met with them because it is always better to give them the opportunity to come or to stay away. If you don't invite them, they can always accuse you of excluding them from the meeting! Even after you have held your one-on-one meetings, you may learn of other people who have an interest in the emerging partnership – so include them in your invitation list. It is important to be inclusive rather than exclusive. And as you review the list of people, churches and ministries the key question to ask is “am I leaving anyone out?”

2. Who should send out the invitations

In some cultures, the person who signs the invitations is critical to whether people attend the meeting or not. It is important that the invitation to the meeting is signed by someone who is known and has credibility in a wide range of circles. Sometimes it might be appropriate for leaders of several different churches, or ministries or communities to sign the letter of invitation; this is particularly important where there may be sensitivities between different denominations or different ministries. In some situations, certain people will not come if they perceive that the leader of a different group is convening the meeting, therefore it is important to ensure that the meeting is perceived as being convened by a broad spectrum of churches or ministries. Once the first meeting has been held, it is perfectly in order for the person who is chosen as facilitator to convene the meeting and invite people, but the calling of the first meeting is fraught with sensitivities

3. Chairing and Leadership issues

The type of leadership which is important for a successful partnership meeting is facilitative leadership, which encourages everyone to participate. If you want a successful partnership meeting you want to avoid the directive leadership which some people prefer. It is helpful if the person facilitating the meeting can be perceived as being neutral – or if he/she is known to be linked to a specific church or ministry – for him/her to declare neutrality – and for someone else to represent the church or ministry interests at the meeting. The same person cannot represent the interests of the partnership and of a specific church or ministry at the same time. One very powerful approach to the chairing/leadership issue at a partnership meeting is for a small group of people to take turns at facilitating the meeting, although you probably don't want this group to be more than 3 people.

4. Dates

People who are attending the meeting need to have sufficient time to get the meeting dates into their diaries/schedules, so in some cultures, you need to make sure you give people sufficient notice of the meeting dates. It is also worth checking dates of other local and national events which might have an impact on attendance at the meeting, and in some settings you might want to avoid a specific season of the year – perhaps because it will be too hot, or the rainy season might make travel difficult for some of the possible delegates.

5. Meeting Venue

Many people think that the place where a meeting is held is fairly unimportant, but you actually communicate a great deal by where you plan to hold a meeting to talk about partnering. Ideally you want to have a neutral place to meet, but if there are strong reasons for meeting at a place which might not be perceived as being neutral, you need to be intentional about explaining why you are meeting there (perhaps because the church has allowed you to use their meeting facilities for free!). It is important that the meeting place is easily accessible to everyone who will be coming; it also needs to be appropriate to your needs. There's not much point in holding it in a venue which might be cheap, but which doesn't have enough room for everyone you expect to come. It is also important not only to have a room which is large enough for everyone to attend the meeting, but also to have break-out rooms for smaller-group meetings too. If your meeting will be longer than a single day, you need to ensure that there are overnight facilities and a place where people can eat.

6. Expenses

Holding a meeting has a price-tag on it! There are expenses which will have to be paid and so it is important to think through how you will cover the costs. Often people pay their own expenses – both for travel and for any on-site meeting costs. However, there may be some people who you want to have at the meeting, but who cannot afford to even cover their own costs, and it is important to think through how you might help them. Some partnerships have charged delegates a “Registration Fee” which covers the costs of the meeting, and also adds a small additional amount to help pay for those who need some financial help to attend the meeting.

7. Prayer Covering

You will want to ensure that you include prayer in the meeting schedule, but it can be extremely helpful to arrange ask people to pray in the days and weeks before the meeting and for people who are not attending the meeting to pray for those who will be. Some emerging partnerships (and formed ones as well) have asked everyone coming to the meeting to mobilize three or four people who will pray for the meeting for up to a week before the meeting begins – and to continue to pray during the meeting itself. Some partnerships have arranged for 24 hour prayer cover throughout the meeting period.

8. Establishing an Advisory Committee

It can be extremely helpful if you can communicate that the idea of working together isn't the idea of a single person. One way of achieving this is by establishing an Advisory Committee. It can be helpful to get 5 or 6 people to commit to serving as an Advisory Committee for the meeting. The role of the Advisory Committee is to help you prepare for the meeting and also to provide help and support while the meeting is in progress. There is a lot of work to be done in preparing for the meeting – venue to locate and book, invitations to send out, communication from those who are coming to reserve places etc etc, so if you can get some other people to help assist with all the work that needs to be done before the meeting, it is a very real help. While the meeting is taking place, this group can also serve informally as a group for feedback and advice. If you are the person facilitating the meeting you will be extremely busy during the meeting, as you will have many different issues to attend to, so the Advisory Group helps to spread the load. Delegates can also talk to them about how they feel they meeting is progressing, so they serve as your “eyes and ears”, listening to what is being said “in the hallways” and in the breaks, and feeding reactions bac to you. When there is an Advisory Committee it is important that they meet together from time to time over the course of the meeting. At

Regional Consultation that I helped facilitate for a number of years, and which met over a period of 5 days, the Advisory Committee always met together for lunch, where they talked over what was happening in the meeting and also looked forward to what would be happening over the next 24 hours or more and made appropriate preparations. Other Advisory Committees have met together at the end of the day. It is important that early in the meeting the Advisory Committee is introduced and their role is made clear. If this is the first meeting which is being held to launch a partnership, it should be made clear that this is a temporary, informal group which is designed to help the meeting be as effective as possible and towards the end of the meeting you should establish an on-going Advisory Committee. In some contexts, this group is called the “Steering Committee.” Finally, it is important that this group is seen to reflect the membership of the whole partnership and it is not a group of the facilitator’s cronies! However, you want to avoid it being a group of representatives of each partner member (too big and unwieldy) or representatives of the largest / most powerful / wealthiest partners (which limits the availability of representatives from smaller partners to serve).

9. Prepare for the Problems

Every partnership that I’ve ever known has had its problems, and sometime these emerge during a partnership meeting. So before the meeting, try to identify as many of the potential problems that you might be faced with as you can and think though how you will deal with each one. It is better to be prepared than to be caught “wrong footed”!

Finally, always remember that you, as Facilitator, are there to serve the meeting and the potential partnership and you are not there to serve the needs of your own ministry or church. You need to be able to demonstrate your neutrality and if there is any sense from any of the delegates that you are trying to influence the decisions being made, trust in you as facilitator of the meeting and of the future partnership will be seriously damaged.

5.2 Making decisions in the Trinolindo Partnership



Several years ago, as I was helping a partnership which was focused on the Trinolindo people to make decisions about which of the many priorities which were facing them as they were seeking to reach out to a people group where there were only a handful of Christians. We had gone through the same process which Paul has helped the groups working to reach Happy Valley has just done. At this point in the process, we had 18 different things which we needed to prioritise. However the group were very unhappy about making decisions, because they felt that everyone of the things listed were important. Against my advice, they insisted on combining their list of ideas to reach out to this people group until they ended up with each of the 18 ideas in one of three different headings. These three were “Relief and Development”, “Evangelism” and “Media.” Quite diverse ideas were included under each of these headings – for example under “Relief and Development” were included developing rural medical clinics, a water purification project, teaching subsistence farmers new methods of agriculture; and “Media” included development of creative radio programmes, Scripture translation and a translation of the Jesus Film. The partnership members divided into three “Working Groups to talk about and agree what they were going to do about addressing the issues included in each of the three major headings. The Working Groups met together for a

couple of hours, and then reported back to the full partnership their plans for addressing the issues they had been talking about, and shortly afterwards the meeting broke up.

One year later, the partnership came together once again in their annual “partnership meeting.” One of the first items on the meeting agenda was to report back on what actions and activity had taken place over the previous 12 months.

The Relief and Development Working Group reported first – and said that they had developed many plans, but they had not achieved anything.

Next up was the Evangelism Working Group; they said that they had talked about many ideas, but although they had started several of them, they had found that they were trying to do too much, and none of the projects had been completed.

Finally, the Media Group said that they hadn’t made any progress either!

In discussing why no progress had been made in the previous 12 months everyone agreed that the tasks they had given themselves had been too big; that they were trying to do too much; that they hadn’t been able to focus on anything specific. They agreed that if they had focused on three or four very specific projects, they would have completed them – or have made good progress towards completing them. They agreed that combining the specific ideas together had been a mistake and that they should have spent time prioritising what they should do, rather than try to do everything.

Later in the meeting, they agreed three very specific projects which they would focus on for the next twelve months.

At the meeting the following year, they were able to report success on each of the projects and also agreed what new projects they were going to work on.

A couple of years later, this partnership was able to work on a major Scripture Translation project together and which took several years for completion. Their success in this major project was only possible because they had previously had success in smaller-scale projects.

[note the name of this partnership has been changed because of security reasons]

Partnerships

Unit 6

Launching a Partnership 2 - Reflections and Review



Development Associates International

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Version 1.3

Unit 6 - Launching a Partnership - Reflection and Review

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Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this unit you will be able to.....

- Develop a detailed Agenda/Programme for a specific meeting to discuss the possibility of developing a partnership, with timings for each element in the programme
- Justify why a three-to-four day meeting is needed to achieve the objectives for the launch meeting of a partnership
- State a number of logistical issues which will need to be solved in the planning of a meeting to launch a partnership and describe how they will solve each of these issues
- State that a meeting to launch a partnership has certain costs, describe what these costs are and identify ways of meeting these costs. Describe an appropriate contextual approach to meeting these costs

Supplementary text: “Body Matters – a Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission” by Ernie Addicott, published by Interdev Partnership Associates 2005; pages 33-42.

Note: The Assignments at the end of Units 1, 4 and 6 are to be completed submitted to the professor after completing each assignment. In addition you should submit your response to the Assignments following any TWO of Units 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10

Lecture Notes & Workbook

Introduction Unit 6

Getting the Launch Meeting absolutely right is so critical, that we're going to spend some time in this unit reviewing what we did in Unit 6, comparing your responses in the end of Unit Assignment and discussing some of the key elements which need to be considered in any partnership meeting, and which were not addressed in our last unit.

In your end of Unit 5 Assignment you were asked to go through the material in the module and undertake the following tasks:

- (a) create the Agenda which Paul Elijah would need to use at the meeting*
- (b) against each Agenda item give the length of time which would be needed for that item*
- (c) based on the information you have created, what is the total length of time which Paul needs for the meeting?*
- (d) list what additional activities there should be in the meeting and against each of these additional activities note the length of time each of these activities should be given*
- (e) based on your results for 3d and 3e, how long do you think that Paul needs for the meeting?*
- (f) write a paragraph explaining why the meeting needs to take this length of time*
- (g) write a paragraph explaining what might go wrong if the meeting isn't allocated this length of time*

I would like you to take out a copy of the Agenda and timing which you produced for your Assignment – and compare it with the Agenda for that meeting which I have developed:

An Agenda for a Launch Meeting of a Partnership

Before we develop the Agenda, let's remind ourselves that this is an Agenda for a specific meeting – a meeting which is bringing together a group of ministries and churches which all have an interest in reaching the region of Happy Valley in Kabuli with the gospel, and that Paul Elijah is a man with a vision for bringing the group together.

He has developed an "Objective Statement" for the meeting – which in our last unit we agreed was:

Bringing together ministries and churches working to improve the conditions of the people living in Happy Valley to

- make the best use of the resources available*
- reduce duplication of effort*
- ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are met*
- to link all efforts with the work of the churches*
- so that the gospel witness in Happy Valley can be enhanced*

We should also remind ourselves that Paul has managed to get representatives from 19 different ministries and churches which are working in or have an interest in reaching out to the people of Happy Valley, and with some ministries and churches sending more than one representative, there are 28 people at the meeting plus Paul.

So now, finally, to the Agenda:

| | Agenda Item | Time |
|----|--|---|
| 1. | Welcome: Paul welcomes everyone Paul introduces himself Briefly reminds the group why the meeting has been called Shares something of his passion for unity | 10 mins |
| 2. | Devotions: Talk on a Bible Passage followed by brief time of prayer | 30 mins |
| 3. | Introductions: Paul explains why the meeting has been called in greater depth Brief introductions of everyone present (30 secs per person) Allow for some "slippage" time for those who take more than 30 secs | 5 mins 14 mins 6 mins |
| 4. | Introduction to the Social, Economic & Spiritual Situation of the people in Happy Valley Overview by a church leader Response by a second church leader Discussion & Questions | 20 mins 10 mins 15 mins |
| 5. | Discussion of the concerns and needs of the people of Happy Valley Small Group Discussion Feedback from Small Groups & further discussion | 30 mins 30 mins |
| 6. | Reports from Churches & Ministries Report on activity from each ministry, followed by prayer for that ministry 19 reports @ 10 minutes each Prayer for 19 ministries @ 5 minutes each | 190 mins 95 mins |
| 7. | Process to Identify Joint Projects Introduction to the Process Individual thinking Sharing ideas in small groups Small groups report back to plenary Clarification of ideas Allow additional ideas to be added & explanation of next steps Take a Break Take some time to pray Process to agree the top priorities | 5 mins 5 mins 20 mins 15 mins 10 mins 10 mins 30 mins 10 mins 90 mins |

| | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 8. | Review Process to Identify Joint Projects Review process Explanation of next steps and time to get into groups | 15 mins |
| 9. | Groups work on initial plans to turn the ideas into reality Meeting in Groups Reports from Groups | 180 mins 30 mins |
| 10. | Administration & Future Planning Issues Discussion on the possibility of a further meeting Discussion on date(s) & venue of next meeting Discussion on who should serve as Facilitator of the group Discussion on a name for the group Discussion and agreement on an Advisory Group Discussion on documentation & security Review of expectations from the beginning of the meeting | 10 mins 10 mins 15 mins 5 mins 15 mins 10 mins 10 mins |
| | Celebration & Communion Worship Communion Prayer | 30 mins |

Now comes the challenging time of adding up all those minutes!

Think about it?

Answer Box # 1

*How many minutes do I recommend that Paul Elijah needs for the **content** of his meeting? Having added up the number of minutes listed, I make it that Paul needs 980 minutes for his meeting. That's 16 hours and 20 minutes!*



Reviewing the Agenda

It's important to reflect on the Agenda you prepared – and the one I have just suggested to you.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 2

What did you include in your Agenda which I didn't include in mine?

What did I include in my Agenda which you didn't include in yours?

Having compared the two Agendas what (if anything) would you want to add to your Agenda?

Is there anything in my Agenda which you think is unnecessary?



learning

We also need to think about the issues raised by the length of the meeting.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 3

Did you estimate a longer meeting – or a shorter meeting?

Which parts of the meeting did you estimate as shorter than my estimate?

Are there any parts of the meeting which you would want to re-evaluate in terms of time? What are they?



learning

Issues raised by a meeting of several hours

If you accept my estimate that this meeting is going to need 16 hours and 20 minutes of content what are some of the issues which a meeting of this length of time raises?

Think about it?



Answer Box # 4

List the issues a meeting with content of 16 hours 20 minutes raises here:

For a start, few people will be able to cope with a meeting which starts at 6.00 am and continues until 10.20 pm without a break and without eating and drinking! A meeting of this nature is very demanding – for both the person facilitating the meeting – and for those taking part.

For a start, we need to schedule:

1. at least one over-night stay
2. meals
3. breaks
4. more time for worship, prayer and study together of God's Word

Let's look at these in reverse order!

4. More time for worship, prayer and study together of God's Word. In the meeting schedule we discussed in the last unit, I included the absolute minimum of worship and prayer. The very life-blood of a group which is meeting to talk about working together in unity to reach out with the gospel is worship of God and prayer. Satan doesn't want to see God's people working together and he will do all he can to prevent us from working together to advance the Gospel. We therefore need to call on the spiritual forces which we do have at our disposal in order to help us preserve our unity and our direction of purpose. It is therefore vital that we schedule times when we can worship together, and pray together, and study God's Word together. The need for a focus on worship, prayer and Bible Study & Exposition is addressed in Chapter 4 of Body Matters" by Ernie Addicott, The chapter is titled "Bedrock for Body-Building" and can be found on pages 33-42. Please read this chapter and respond to the following questions:



Answer Box # 5

Why is Bible Study often not the top priority it should be?

Why is the “traditional” approach of inviting an accomplished speaker to expound the Word of God not always the most effective solution?

What are some of the recommendations which Ernie Addicott makes which could be effective in your context?

What are some of the challenges which worship in a partnership meeting context presents?

How can these challenges be minimized and help build unity?

Ernie Addicott makes a number of recommendations about prayer in a partnership meeting. List the recommendations he makes and describe how you could use each one in your context.

3. Breaks. People have limited concentration levels! With a meeting of this type and the intensity and concentration levels needed, it is important to take regular breaks. There are other values in having regular breaks in a meeting which is designed to help

people towards working in partnership. This is because the breaks provide ideal times for relationship building – and working together in partnership requires trusting relationships. You can build into the meeting programme elements which will help relationships to develop – such as praying together and reporting on ministry activity. However, these times need to be enhanced by the informal relationship building which takes place outside the formal meeting times, when people can drink tea or coffee together and when they relax together. In fact, breaks in the programme actually help the process towards partnering. And a lot of the informal discussions which helps the partnership develop actually happens in these informal break times. In partnership meetings which I have been to, I often hear people making plans to meet and discuss an issue during the break – and it's something I've done too! Because of the importance of breaks in the partnering process it is important to make sure there are sufficient breaks in the programme – and that these are not rushed.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 6

If you were to be planning a meeting – how long would you normally schedule the breaks in the meeting?



learning

I wonder if you stated 15 minutes – or maybe just 10 minutes! However, a break of this length will often only give people enough time to get a cup of tea or coffee and get to the rest-room! It doesn't give sufficient time for any of the informal meetings or just the time to get alongside another person and chat to them – which is a key element in developing relationships.

You need to be thinking in terms of scheduling 30 minutes breaks in a meeting to discuss the possibility of developing a partnership! And if the session immediately before the break runs over-time, don't try to catch-up on your schedule by cutting the time of the break. The break is far too important a component in the overall meeting to cut! In some of the partnering meetings I've attended, the most significant things which have come out of the meeting have been those things that were discussed and agreed during the break-times!

2. Meals. It goes without saying, that in a meeting where you have content of more than 16 hours, you need to schedule time for meals – and make sure meals are catered for! Like breaks in the schedule, meals are a good time for relationship building. However, if you are planning the meeting, you need to think through the logistics of how you will handle meal times.

In the following scenarios, you will see two different ways of handling the meal situation. Following each, list the advantages and disadvantages of the way meals were handled:

Think about it?

Answer Box # 7

Meal Scenario 1:

In the locality where the partnership meeting was being held, there were a number of eating places, so the organisers decided that they wouldn't arrange for meals to be provided at the meeting, but they would provide information about the different eating places where people attending the meeting could go any buy their meals:

Advantages:

Disadvantages:



learning

Think about it?

Answer Box # 8

Meal Scenario 2:

Although there were plenty of eating places in the locality where the meeting was being held, the organisers decided to arrange for meals to be catered for at the meeting-site.

Advantages:

Disadvantages:



learning

Let's review your responses:

The advantages of Meal Scenario 1 include

- easier to arrange for the organisers
- gives choice to the meeting participants

The disadvantages of Meal Scenario 1 include

- people leave the meeting site
- some people may be delayed in getting back – difficult to keep the meeting time on track
- some people may be distracted and try to do too much in the meal break by going to the market too
- if going off site, most people will go with people they know – limits the opportunity for the development of new relationships
- some people may find they don't have anyone to go with – so it can increase any feelings of discomfort and isolation
- some people may not have enough money to pay for their meals

The advantages of Meal Scenario 2 include

- keeps all the meeting participants together – you don't lose people
- easier to keep timings on track
- encourages the development of relationships
- more likely to cater for the needs of the person who may feel isolated

The disadvantages of Meal Scenario 2 include

- the meeting organisers need to make catering plans/arrangements
- it will increase the cost of the meeting

I certainly think that the advantages of keeping people together – and encouraging them to eat meals together is something which actually encourages the sense of unity – and enhances the possibility of a future working together. Overall, the advantages of keeping the group together outweighs those of encouraging the group to go off-site in search of their own food!

1. And finally the issue about scheduling at least one over-night stay. For a meeting where we have content of over 16 hours, it's quite clear that we need to have at least one over-night stay. And now we've added additional worship and prayer times, breaks and meal times to our 16 hours or more of content – so we may actually be looking at two over-night stays for the partnership which Paul Elijah wants to develop in Happy Valley. In fact many partnerships which have developed around the world began with meetings which were scheduled to last over three to four days. And as these partnerships have grown and matured, so they have continued to hold meetings over several days!

A timed Agenda/Programme for a Partnership Meeting

Having discussed some of the key logistical issues which need to be included in the meeting for a partnership for Happy Valley which Paul Elijah is holding, we now need to look at how we might schedule the entire meeting – and where we might schedule meals, breaks and additional worship and prayer times.

One solution would be start with an evening meal together, follow this with an evening “Introductory” session and then continue into the next day. If Paul takes this approach, the agenda for his meeting could look like this (note that additional elements are shown in ITALICS):

| Start time | | Agenda Item | Time |
|-------------------|-----|--|-------------------------------|
| DAY 1 | | | |
| 6.30 pm | | <i>Dinner together</i> | |
| 8.00 pm | 1. | Welcome: Paul welcomes everyone Paul introduces himself Briefly reminds the group why the meeting has been called Shares something of his passion for unity | 10 mins |
| 8.10 pm | 2. | Devotions: <i>Worship together</i> Talk on a Bible Passage, followed by brief time of prayer | 15 mins 30 mins |
| 8.55 pm | 3a. | Introductions: Paul explains why the meeting has been called in greater depth Brief introductions of everyone present (30 secs per person) Allow for some “slippage” time for those who take more than 30 secs | 5 mins 14 mins 6 mins |
| 9.20 pm | 3b. | <i>Prayer in small groups</i> | 10 mins |
| 9.30 pm | | End of Day | |
| | | | |
| DAY 2 | | | |
| 7.45 am | | <i>Breakfast</i> | |
| 8.30 am | | Worship & Prayer <i>which could include a Bible Study</i> | 60 mins |
| 9.30 am | 4. | Introduction to the Social, Economic & Spiritual Situation of the people in Happy Valley Overview by a church leader Response by a second church leader Discussion & Questions | 20 mins 10 mins 15 mins |
| 10.15 am | 5a. | Discussion of the concerns and needs of the people of | |

| | | | |
|----------|-----|---|-----------------------------|
| | | Happy Valley Small Group Discussion | 30 mins |
| 10.45 am | | Tea/Coffee Break | 30 mins |
| 11.15 am | 5b. | Discussion of the concerns and needs of the people of Happy Valley Feedback from Small Groups & further discussion | 30 mins |
| 11.45 am | | Prayer <i>for the people of Happy Valley</i> | 30 mins |
| 12.15 pm | | Break for Lunch | |
| 2.00 pm | 6a. | Reports from Churches & Ministries Report on activity from each ministry, followed by prayer for that ministry (10 minutes for report followed by 5 minutes for prayer). Note 19 presentations are needed 6 Presentations @ 10 minutes each & prayer for 6 ministries @ 5 minutes each | 90 mins |
| 3.30 pm | | Break | 30 mins |
| 4.00 pm | 6b. | Reports from Churches & Ministries 6 Presentations @ 10 minutes each & prayer for 6 ministries @ 5 minutes each | 90 mins |
| 5.30 pm | | Break for Evening Meal | 120 mins |
| 7.30 pm | 6b. | Reports from Churches & Ministries 7 Presentations @ 10 minutes each & prayer for 6 ministries @ 5 minutes each | 105 mins |
| 9.15 pm | | Closing Devotional & Prayer time | 15 mins |
| 9.30 pm | | End of Day | |
| | | | |
| | | DAY 3 | |
| 7.45 am | | Breakfast | |
| 8.30 am | | Worship & Prayer <i>which could include a Bible Study</i> | 60 mins |
| 9.30 am | 7. | Process to Identify Joint Projects Introduction to the Process Individual thinking Sharing ideas in small groups | 5 mins 5 mins 20 mins |

| | | | |
|----------|-----|--|--|
| | | Small groups report back to plenary Clarification of ideas Allow additional ideas to be added & explanation of next steps Take some time to pray | 15 mins 10 mins 10 mins 10 mins |
| 10.45 | 7b. | Process to Identify Joint Projects Take a Break | 45 mins |
| 11.30 am | 7c. | Process to Identify Joint Projects Process to agree the top priorities | 90 mins |
| 1.00 pm | | Break for Lunch | |
| 2.30 pm | 8. | Review Process to Identify Joint Projects Review process Explanation of next steps and time to get into groups | 15 mins |
| 2.45 pm | 9a. | Groups work on initial plans to turn the ideas into reality Meeting in Groups | 90 mins |
| 4.15 pm | | Break | 30 mins |
| 4.45 pm | 9b. | Groups work on initial plans to turn the ideas into reality Meeting in Groups (continued) Reports from Groups | 90 mins 30 mins |
| 6.15 pm | | Break for Evening Meal | |
| 7.30 pm | 9c. | Groups work on initial plans to turn the ideas into reality Reports from Groups | 30 mins |
| 8.00 pm | 10. | Administration & Future Planning Issues Discussion on the possibility of a further meeting Discussion on date(s) & venue of next meeting Discussion on who should serve as Facilitator of the group Discussion on a name for the group Discussion and agreement on an Advisory Group Discussion on documentation & security Review of expectations from the beginning of the meeting | 10 mins 10 mins 15 mins 5 mins 15 mins 10 mins 10 mins |
| 9.15 pm | | Closing Devotional & Prayer time | 15 mins |
| 9.30 pm | | End of Day | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | DAY 4 | |

| | | | |
|----------|--|--|---------|
| 7.45 am | | Breakfast | |
| 8.30 am | | Review Progress, Next Steps and Outcomes of the Meeting | 30 mins |
| 9.00 am | | Celebration & Communion Worship Communion Prayer | 60 mins |
| 10.30 am | | Close of Meeting | |

An alternative timed Agenda/Programme for a Partnership Meeting

The schedule which we have just worked through for Paul Elijah’s meeting for Happy Valley began in the evening. This allows people – especially if they have to travel to the meeting to get to the meeting location during the day – and with the meeting ending mid-morning allows them to travel home after the close of the meeting as well.

An alternative would be for Paul to schedule the meeting to start with lunch on the first day.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 9

EXERCISE:

Schedule the meeting Paul Elijah hopes to hold to discuss working together to reach the people of Happy Valley, this time with a lunch-time start-time, include where you would hold breaks, meals and devotional/prayer times, and include the start-time of each segment of the meeting. You should include this exercise as one of the Assignments which are due at the end of this Unit.

Flexibility in a Partnership Meeting

It is important to remember that the meeting to explore and launch a partnership for Happy Valley which Paul Elijah has been working on had 19 churches and ministries present at the meeting. The number of churches and ministries present will depend on the number of churches and ministries which are currently working, or planning to work in the area where you want to develop a partnership. In some situations there are just a few ministries and churches. In others, there are a large number of ministries and churches.

If there are just a small number of ministries, then you will not need so long in your programme for either introductions or for the ministry reports (although you may decide that if you have fewer ministries/churches present you may want to give them longer time to report).

If there are a large number of ministries, then you will need longer in your programme for both introductions and for ministry reports. However, don't cut down on the time you allow for reports from each ministry/church. A ten minute report is just about the minimum you can usefully give. Above all, do not follow the example set by one partnership, where the organisers of the meeting said that because of the number of ministries who needed to report, and because of the limited amount of time they had, each ministry could have a maximum of 1 minute to report on their activities among the people group! This did not give anyone sufficient time to give a meaningful report, so a lot of valuable information which would have painted a much clearer picture of ministry in the region was never shared, and it created a high degree of frustration, as ministry after ministry felt the constraints of having to try to report on their activities, which eventually led to a highly explosive conflict situation between the ministries attending the meeting and the facilitators.

So, make sure you plan the timing of the ministry reports so there is sufficient time in the programme for each one to report adequately on both their current work and their future plans.

Much of this unit, and the previous one as well, has focused on the importance of effective planning of the meeting that will discuss the possibility of a partnership. Effective and detailed planning is important, but ensure you build in sufficient flexibility to cope with the unexpected! Some of the unexpected issues which might come up include

- the urgent need to discuss a particular issue connected with the region or the ministry you are focused on
- a conflict which develops between the representatives of two or more churches or ministries attending the meeting
- a major disaster or challenge which affects the area you are focused and which comes up unexpectedly while you are meeting together. For example, if a natural disaster, such as a flood or an earthquake happened in the area you are focused on reaching; or if there is a political issue which suddenly comes up (such as the death or assassination or major illness of a key political figure in the region), you can hardly ignore the fact during your meeting – you have to acknowledge it – and deal with the issues appropriately in your meeting.

The cost of holding a Partnership Meeting

Finally, in this Unit, we need to note that there are costs associated with holding a meeting to discuss the possibility of a partnership to reach out to the people. There are costs in time for the person facilitating the meeting (considerable – both before and during the meeting) and also for all those attending the meeting. If we follow the schedules outlined in this unit, we are talking about

people taking three or four days to meet together. That is a considerable investment of time – which needs to be recognized by those organising the meeting – and for them to ensure that the meeting is well organised and has a programme and will follow a process which will deliver the outcomes which are sought.

However, there is also a significant financial cost as well.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 10

List the financial costs which need to be covered in such a meeting as we've been exploring in this unit



Financial costs which I've identified include:

- cost of meeting accommodation (which includes meeting room(s) and accommodation)
- cost of meals
- cost of tea/coffee for breaks
- cost of travel for all meeting participants
- cost of equipment needed for the meeting (such as flip-chart paper, flip-chart pens and other consumables)

and these are all in addition to the costs of setting up the meeting in the first place!

And where there are costs involved, those expenses need to be paid for in some way. So, for the developing partnership to reach Happy Valley, Paul needs to find a way to cover the cost of the meeting.

Review these accounts of how different organizers of partnership meetings dealt with the issue of covering the costs of the meetings they held and use the information provided in these extracts to complete Assignment:

When it came to decisions about how we would pay for the meeting, we decided on a very simple way – which was that everybody paid for their own accommodation and their travel to the meeting, and we added up all the other expenses, and divided them amongst those at the meeting and charged them each an equal proportion.

We decided we would charge a "Registration Fee" to everyone who came to the meeting, which would cover the expenses we knew we would have to pay. However, we were concerned, because we knew that some key people, who would have a lot to offer to the discussions, simply would not be able to afford the fee. We were very fortunate, in that one of the large churches in the country were convinced of the importance of working together and offered (in confidence) to subsidize the Registration Fee of anyone who would otherwise be prevented from coming to the meeting. So, we were able to invite everyone, and in the letter of invitation said that the normal registration fee would be \$xx, but we had received a special gift so that if there was anyone who wanted to come but couldn't afford the Registration Fee to get in touch with us to see if we could help them with the costs.

We knew that most of the ministries could more than afford to pay their share of the expenses of holding the meeting, but that a number of the smaller churches would find it much more difficult. So, we set two different Registration Fees - both of which we said were the "minimum" to be paid. We charged the ministries a higher fee than we charged the churches, and the extra income we received from the ministries covered what we were under-charging the churches. Some of the larger churches actually paid the fee charged to ministries, and some of the ministries paid much more than we asked them to pay. In fact most churches and ministries actually paid more than the minimum fee we were asking for. This meant that we were able to help some people with their travelling expenses too!

We knew it would be difficult for a number of people to come to the meeting because we were asking them to stay overnight. So we applied to a Grant-Making Foundation in another country that we knew was sympathetic to a partnership approach to reaching this particular area. They gave us sufficient funds so that we could cover the accommodation and meal costs, and we were also able to help some participants with their travel costs too. We also took an offering at the end of the meeting, and this will be used to help pay for the next meeting.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 11

In your context which of the four approaches might work for the partnership you might work on developing?

Is there an alternative approach which might also work in your context?



learning

Final Assignment



Final Assignment

NOTE: this Assignment is compulsory

1. *Submit your timed working of the meeting to discuss partnering for Happy Valley with a lunch-time start-time which you were asked to do in Section 6 of this Unit*
2. *In Unit 4, you were asked to identify a potential partnership which you could explore.*
 - a. *Create a detailed working agenda for the meeting which you will hold to discuss with churches and ministries to explore the possibility of such a partnership. You should include the number of churches/ministries and people you expect to attend (although this will only be an estimate at this stage), where you expect to schedule meals and breaks, the length of time you are allocating to each item on the agenda (including breaks and meals), your start time for the meeting and for each element in the meeting, and the scheduled end time of the meeting.*
 - b. *Describe what you will do to encourage the attendance at this meeting leaders of churches and ministries you would like to see participate in a future partnership, including the drafting of any documentation you might use.*
3. *Describe the importance of meal-times and break-times in a partnering meeting*
4. *List the logistical issues which you will need to solve for the meeting and describe how you will solve each of these logistical issues*
5. *What issues are involved in covering the costs of a meeting to discuss the possibility of a partnership? In your specific context, what costs will you need to cover to pay for a meeting to discuss the partnership you will work on developing and how will you plan to cover them?*

Partnerships

Unit 7

The Operations Stage of a Partnership



Development Associates International

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Interdev Partnership Associates and John Rogers 2005

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Version 1.3

Unit 7 - The Operations Stage of a Partnership

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Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this unit you will be able to.....

- Describe key areas of work which a facilitator of a partnership needs to focus on between partnership meetings in order to maintain a healthy partnership
- Explain why some partnerships have appointed facilitation teams and describe how such a team can be effective
- Develop a programme for a second partnership meeting and subsequent partnerships meetings and describe the approach which needs to be taken at these meetings
- Describe the difference between form and function in a partnership and explain why partnerships need to focus on function as opposed to form
- Describe why a flexible approach to partnership meetings are essential

Supplementary text: "Body Matters – a Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission" by Ernie Addicott, published by Interdev Partnership Associates 2005; Pages 76-87

Lecture Notes & Workbook

Introduction Unit 7

You should remember that we often talk about partnerships going through 3 stages:

1. The Exploration Stage
2. The Formation (or Launch) Stage
3. The Operations Stage

In this Unit, we are moving on to consider this third stage of a partnership – and a stage that we hope will be productive and one where the partnership actually achieves results!

Indeed, that is the whole purpose of investing considerable energy and resources into the exploring and launching stages. If you don't want to see, or if you don't expect to see fruit for your labours there's no point in doing all the work which leads up to this stage.

If we go back to thinking about the partnership which Paul Elijah was working on to reach out to the people of Happy Valley, we know that Paul has done his exploration and has held his launch meeting. The partnership has been launched, and Paul, who has been confirmed as the on-going facilitator of the partnership is now nursing the infant partnership through the early stages of the Operations Stage.

Ernie Addicott in his book "Body Matters" talks about the Operations Stage as "*when the partnership functions effectively, grows to maturity, reproduces itself and eventually changes form and even dies altogether as its purpose is fulfilled*" (page 60).

I often talk about this stage in the life of a partnership as "*the stage when the partnership has been formed, and where the partners are working together, implementing joint projects and strategies and developing the partnership to its fullest potential.*"

Think about it?

Answer Box # 1

What similarities do you see in these two statements?

What does one of these statements include which the other does not?



learning

The similarities include:

“Working together, implementing joint projects and strategies” actually unpacks Ernie’s statement about “the partnership functions effectively”

“developing the partnership to its fullest potential” is another way of saying “grows to maturity”

Ernie’s statement goes further than mine, in that he talks about the partnership “reproduces itself” (which can be a part of my “develops the partnership to its fullest potential” – because sometimes the development of other partnerships out of the original one actually does develop it to its fullest potential.” He also talks about the partnership “dying altogether as its purpose is fulfilled”

Although some partnerships do come to the end of their natural life, I prefer not to talk about the end of the partnership in the early stages of the Operations Stage – when the partnership has just been brought to birth – when partners are full of enthusiasm for what the partnership can achieve. To talk about the death of the partnership at this stage is somewhat like pouring cold water on a brilliant new idea! We should probably articulate here that some partnerships die – not because its purpose is fulfilled, but because the process of the operations stage is not managed effectively, and the partnership eventually dies because its purpose is NOT fulfilled. And this is why this unit is so important. We need to ensure that the new partnership is nourished, nurtured and encouraged. And this is what this unit should help you do!

Pre-Conditions for the Operations Stage of the Partnership

Having launched the partnership, there are several pre-conditions that need to be in place before you can effectively move into the operations stage of the partnership. These are

- Agreement on an initial group of priorities for joint action together with the commitment to take the first steps
- An agreement to meet together again together with a specific place and date for the meeting
- The appointment of someone to serve as an on-going “Facilitator” for the partnership

However, although these are key elements in moving an embryonic partnership into a life of its own, the launch meeting should have achieved a number of additional benefits which will help the partnership to mature. These include

- The development of relationships and trust among the partner members
- A growing trust in the partnering process
- A wider understanding of the totality of ministry in the area
- A sense of ownership in the process of working together

What needs to be done in the post-launch meeting period

The members of the Happy Valley Partnership have celebrated the successful launch of their partnership; they’ve agreed on three joint projects which they will work on together, they’ve agreed on when and where to meet again, and they’ve asked Paul Elijah to facilitate the on-going work of the partnership – and Paul’s agreed.

There's a temptation that they could sit back, relax and wait until the next meeting. Certainly, if they do that, not much will have been achieved by the next time they meet together. And certainly if Paul Elijah does this – there's a very real danger that when the group meets together again, there will be high frustration by the lack of progress, people will be disenchanted by the fact that little or nothing has been achieved and the early enthusiasm turns to cynicism and the partnership begins to wither, and will eventually come to a premature end.

At this stage in the life of the partnership, it's the facilitator who really acts like a nurse-maid to the partnership – nourishing and nurturing the partnership into vitality.

So, what are some of the things which Paul Elijah should be doing as he nourishes and nurtures the Happy Valley Partnership in the aftermath of its launch meeting?

Think about it?

Answer Box # 2

Make a list of things which you would suggest Paul Elijah should be doing in the weeks and months following the launch meeting of the Happy Valley Partnership:



learning

Don't under-estimate the emotional energy which Paul Elijah will have expended in the lead-up to the meeting and during the meeting itself. For the person taking the lead in facilitating the launch (and subsequent) meetings of the partnership, it means long and exhausting days during the partnership meeting itself, with early mornings and late nights. Especially if it's the first time you've led a meeting like this, it's likely that you will find giving leadership to the process is emotionally, physically and even spiritually draining. So, at risk of being somewhat controversial, I think it's important for Paul to take at least a bit of a break! If God "rested" on the seventh day after creating the heavens and the earth, at least Paul Elijah needs to take a rest after bringing a partnership to birth!

But it's not going to be a long rest, because there's much to be done!

So, having rested – it's back to work – and a number of important things that need to be done!

The first thing which the facilitator of the partnership needs to do is to write a report of the launch meeting.

A report needs to be written as a record of the meeting for the future. This is something that needs to be done as soon after the meeting as possible – otherwise important elements of the meeting might get lost in your memory! It's important to write a report, even if the meeting agreed not to circulate a report. You need to have recorded somewhere at least a minimum of information from the meeting! I often find it helpful to write a fairly full report for my own use, but to send out more of a summary report to those who attended the meeting.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 3

Make a list of things the full version of the report on the launch meeting should include:



learning

My list of things the report on the meeting should include is as follows:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Copy of the original meeting schedule/agenda, with notes attached of any changes to the schedule</i> ➤ <i>Details of the venue, together with the names and contact details of key staff at the venue, costs and notes on the meeting room/s, meal and break arrangements and accommodation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>A list of churches/ministries which sent participants to the meeting</i> ➤ <i>A contact list of those who attended the meeting, with addresses, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses and which church/ministry they represented</i> |
|---|--|

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>A list of those who led any of the main sessions (such as worship, prayer, bible study, provided background information)</i> ➤ <i>Notes on the ministry reports</i> ➤ <i>List of priorities suggested</i> ➤ <i>The two or three priorities which were agreed by consensus</i> ➤ <i>What working groups were formed, members of each working group, leadership of each working group, action steps agreed by each working group and when the next meeting of the working group will be held</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Date and place of next meeting</i> ➤ <i>Any significant events in the meeting</i> ➤ <i>Any significant conversations you had at the meeting</i> ➤ <i>Any actions you are required to take as a result of the meeting</i> ➤ <i>An evaluation of the meeting – what was good and what was weak; what worked well and what didn't work well</i> ➤ <i>Financial Report</i> |
|---|--|

Review the list you made with my list.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 4

What did I include on my which you didn't include on your list?

Having reviewed the list I've made, is there anything which you still wouldn't include in a report on the meeting? Justify your exclusion of this item.



learning

If you are also writing a report to circulate to the new partnership members, you don't need such detailed information. But what are the key pieces of information they will need and you will need to include in your report?

Think about it?**Answer Box # 5**

List those elements you would include in a report for circulation



My list would include:

- An overview of the process of the meeting
- The priorities for action which were agreed by consensus
- Which Working Groups were formed and an outline of the first steps agreed by each Working Group together with the name and contact details of the person who is taking each Working Group forwarded
- Date and venue of next partnership meeting
- Name and contact details of the person who has been agreed will facilitate the on-going process of the partnership
- A list of any other actions which were agreed, together with a note of the name of the person who was going to follow-up this action
- A list of names and contact details of those who attended the meeting

You may have asked someone else to write up the “official” report. If that was the case, you need to follow-up with them – and try to encourage them to get it out as soon as possible. I would also advise that you to ask to see this report in draft before it circulated – because there may be sensitive issues which would be best not copied to everyone who attended the launch meeting!

You also need to get the report circulated as soon as possible after the meeting. There is nothing worse than getting a report of a meeting six months after the meeting has been held! If you can get the report out within two weeks of the meeting that will be very helpful; at the very latest try to get the report completed and distributed within four weeks of the end of the meeting.

The second thing which the facilitator of the partnership needs to do is to give high priority to communication and relationship building

The facilitator needs to be communicating with and developing relationships with three groups of people.

- The first group is the people who were at the meeting
- The second group is the people the facilitator met with during the exploration stage of the partnership, but who didn't come to the launch meeting
- The third group is the people who didn't even know about the meeting until after it had taken place!

For the first group of people – those who were at the meeting, there will be follow-up to be done. Amongst other things, the facilitator will need to send out the notes from the meeting, and it can be very helpful for the facilitator to send out a regular update of information about progress in the partnership. For example, it might be helpful to send information about the progress of the working groups, or about developments in the ministry in the area. The more communication there is, the more the partners will feel that they are part of something beyond just their own ministry or church, so the facilitator needs to develop strategies to keep these people “on board” with the partnership and maintaining regular communication will help in this process.

The second group of people the facilitator needs to communicate and build relationships with are those who he/she met with before the meeting took place, but who, for some reason, did not attend the meeting.

You may be saying that as they didn't come to the meeting, it indicates their lack of interest, so therefore why waste time continuing to communicate with them! So, what is the point of trying to continue to relate to them?

Now, there are probably two groups of people who didn't make it to the meeting. One group is those who would have liked to have come – but had conflicting demands on their time. What is the facilitator doing in trying to continue to build relationships with people in this group?



Answer Box # 6

Write your suggestions here:

My suggestion is that the facilitator needs to try to keep them interested in the partnership – so he/she needs to go and visit them and report on what happened – or ask someone else to go and visit and report back to them. The objective here is to encourage them to come to the next meeting of the newly developed partnership.

The second group consists of those who were not interested in the idea of partnership at all. What is the point of continuing to try to build a relationship with people in this group?

Think about it ?

Answer Box # 7

Write your suggestions here:



If the facilitator visited these people in the first place, he/she must have felt that they were likely to have something to contribute to a possible partnership. It's therefore important to continue to try to spark an interest in what has been happening. So, it's important to try to bring them into the partnership – and the best way of doing this is to continue to communicate with them – to let them know what happened at the meeting; to let them know about the outcomes from the meeting; and to encourage them to come to the next meeting.

And the third group of people are those who the facilitator didn't even know about when the meeting was called! At the meeting – or subsequent to it – he/she may learn of others who are either involved, or want to be involved, in ministry to the same area or group of people. It is important to get them involved as soon as possible and it's important for the facilitator to begin to build relationships with them.

As you build relationships remember there are three types of communication

Level 1 – is e-mail

Level 2 – is the telephone

Level 3 – is face-to-face

Today, in certain parts of the world, e-mail is used extensively. However, it does have important limitations.

Think about it?**learning****Answer Box # 8**

What are some of the limitations of e-mail?

Some ideas of the limitations of e-mail:

- So much in communication is conveyed in the body-language – and you can't see the person you are communicating with when you send e-mail!
- You don't know if the person at the other end has received your communication!
- Incorrect interpretations can be made by the receiver
- A hasty response can be lacking in thought and may cause considerable offence
- You don't build a relationship through e-mail (or at least not normally!)

However, e-mail is good for communicating information and it's cheap! But don't just rely on e-mail in your communications with partners and potential partners. Using the telephone is more expensive – but there are times when it is important to actually talk to a person, and sometimes the cost (in broken relationship) in not talking to a person far outweighs the cost of the call. And there are times when a face-to-face visit is absolutely necessary! Certainly if someone lives close to you – then go and visit them and drink tea or coffee with them – or perhaps have a meal together!

The third thing which the facilitator of the partnership needs to do is to give support and encouragement to the leaders of the Working Groups.

The facilitator should try to avoid getting too deeply involved in any of the Working Groups. If he/she does, he/she is likely to be expected to do most of the work of the Working Groups. That's not the purpose – the purpose of Working Groups is to get as many members of the partnership actively involved in something.

However, the Facilitator does have a role to play in the Working Groups – mainly in support of the Leaders of the Working Groups.

Think about it ?**Answer Box #9**

Suggest ways in which the Partnership Facilitator can support the leaders of the Working Groups

Some of the ways that I think the Partnership Facilitator can support the leaders of Working Groups include:

- Encouraging them – the demands of the day-to-day urgent issues which Working Group leaders are facing in the normal ministry can often distract them from keeping on-top of the Working Group, the Facilitator's encouragement can help to keep them focused on what they need to be doing for the Working Group
- Prompting them, if necessary, to call a meeting of the Working Group
- Asking them what you can do to support and help them in their role
- The facilitator also needs to ensure he/she gets reports on the progress of the Working Group – in order to keep the other members of the Partnership informed of the progress which is being made by these groups.

If the Partnership Facilitator is regularly communicating with the Working Group Leaders – asking them how the work of the Group is progressing – it can actually encourage the process of the partnership through the Working Groups to be going on throughout the year – and this will be more effective in getting satisfying and effective outcomes from the Working Groups. However, it is important that the Partnership Facilitator doesn't end up becoming an irritant to the Working Group Leaders by being too demanding. It's important to keep the balance!

The fourth thing which the facilitator of the partnership needs to do is to identify resources for the on-going needs of the partnership

Working together in partnership has financial costs! And it is important at this stage to recognize this fact. Holding the initial meeting has cost some people. And the on-going work of the partnership will need resources.



Think about it ?

Answer Box # 10

List partnership activities which you think will need financial resources:

My list includes:

- Communication costs for the Facilitator – if he/she’s going to be e-mailing and making telephone calls there is a cost involved
- Travel for the Facilitator on behalf of the partnership
- Preparations for the next Partnership Meeting – the Facilitator may need to visit the venue; he/she may need to pay a deposit on the venue to secure the booking
- The cost of the next Partnership Meeting
- Possibly helping to cover the cost of some partners coming to the next meeting
- Expenses concerned with the projects which the partnership is working on

Think about it?

Answer Box # 11

Review your list and mine.
What anticipated expenses did you have which I didn’t include?

What did I include which you didn’t?

The things we've been discussing here are all issues which actually need to be paid for. In a partnership it is also important to recognize that the most valuable resources are those which don't have a price tag attached to them – they are the time and skills of the people who are contributing to the work of the partnership.

The Facilitator will get drawn into the task of trying to find resources because he/she is very much at the center of the partnership and has an overview of the work and the needs. And he/she is the person who is likely to need to pay for many of the items we've listed.

However, when it comes to the work being done by one of the Working Groups, it will probably be better for members of that Working Group to seek the necessary funding. In fact, most times, costs of the activities of the Working Groups is mostly covered by members of the Working Groups themselves – because they see the work they are doing in the partnership as being an extension of their ministry anyway.

Some Working Groups in some partnerships have taken on major projects, and because of the size of the projects have actually gone to funding bodies to seek funds for the project. In such a situation, it is important for the Facilitator to know what funds are being requested and from whom.

The fifth thing which the facilitator of the partnership needs to do is to work at developing a facilitation team

The Happy Valley Partnership has asked Paul Elijah to serve as their partnership facilitator. The Happy Valley Partnership has a single Facilitator. Some partnerships have developed a two or three person team to continue with the facilitation process, either from the very beginning or have developed a team approach for the on-going facilitation of the partnership at a later stage in its maturity.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 12

Refer to the Readings for Unit 7 and answer the following questions:

What are the advantages of a team approach to the facilitation of a Partnership?

What are the strategies which will help a Facilitation Team be most effective?



learning

One partnership focused on a people group in Central Asia had a Facilitation Team of three, with members based in Sweden, UK and the USA (who subsequently re-located to one of the Central Asian Republics). This Team communicated by e-mail regularly, spoke to each other on the telephone at least monthly and also was intentional about meeting together every six months to discuss the on-going needs and progress of the partnership and to plan for the next partnership meeting.

Another partnership focused on reaching an immigrant people in a European country had a Facilitation Team of three, with members based in three different cities of that country. This Team rarely communicated with each other between meetings, and on the rare occasions when they did communicate they only used e-mail; they never met face-to-face between partnership meetings.

Think about it?

Answer Box #
43

Which Facilitation Team had the bigger challenge?

Which Facilitation Team do you think was the more effective?



Quite clearly the Facilitation Team for the Central Asian people group had the greater challenge: based in three different countries there were significant costs involved in telephone calls and in getting to the face-to-face meetings; once one of Team Members relocated to the region, communications were even more challenging! It should have been much easier for the Team appointed to facilitate the partnership for the immigrant people in a European country: they were all based in the same country, so telephone communication would have been much easier – as would have been traveling to meet face-to-face with each other.

Despite the challenges, the Facilitation Team for the Central Asian people group was much more effective than the one for the immigrant people of a European country. The Central Asian Facilitation Team was much better prepared for the partnership meetings, and their regular communications, discussions and face-to-face meetings developed strong relationships within the team which had a positive impact on the conduct and process of the partnership meetings and the partnership as a whole. The fact that the other Facilitation Team never communicated and never met meant that they were not effectively prepared for their partnership meetings and were also generally uninformed about the progress of the various working groups in the partnership.

The sixth thing which the facilitator of the partnership needs to do is to plan and prepare for the next meeting of the partnership

In the same way that the initial meeting took time and effort in the planning stage – so each and every subsequent meeting will take time and effort, and it's the facilitator who usually has to take on this responsibility – although he/she may be able to ask someone else to do this.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 14

What does the Facilitator (or the person he/she delegates the task to) need to do in preparation for the next meeting of the partnership? List the tasks:

Here's my list of what the Facilitator needs to do in preparation for the next meeting of the partnership:

- Find and book a venue for the meeting
- Develop the programme/agenda for the meeting
- Identify and invite people to lead specific elements in the programme (devotions, workshop, any input sessions)
- Send out invitations to the meeting
- Take bookings
- Liaise with the venue on details of the programme and on accommodation

Issues for the Second and Subsequent Meetings of the Partnership: New People

Having looked at what the Facilitator needs to be doing between the first and subsequent meeting of the partnership, we now come to look at the detail of the Second Meeting of the Partnership. And issues we discuss here will apply to subsequent meetings as well.

Let's think about Paul Elijah and his second meeting of the Happy Valley Partnership. He's done his planning well, he's communicated with all those who attended the first meeting, and he's discovered some churches and some ministries who now want to get involved in ministry in Happy Valley.

As he reviews the list of people who are planning to attend the meeting he discovers:

25 different churches and ministries are planning to attend

Of these 6 churches/ministries did not attend the first meeting

All the churches/ministries which attended the first meeting are planning to attend the second meeting

3 of the churches/ministries are sending different people to the second meeting

43 people are planning to attend the meeting

Some of the churches/ministries are sending additional people to this second meeting

Think about it?

Answer Box # 15

What specific challenges does the make up of attendees at the second partnership meeting present for Pau



learning

I hope you noted that

1. there are going to be new churches and ministries which were not present at the first meeting
2. there are gong to be new people representing churches and ministries who were not at the first meeting

It is important to note that there will always be new people at your Partnership Meetings and they may not be up to the same speed as the people who attended the first meeting and who have been working together during the year. As the Partnership Facilitator you need to remember and recognise this special feature of every Partnership Meeting. One of your priorities must be to enable these new partners understand the partnership, how it operates and how they can best contribute to the on-going development and growth of the partnership. They may also feel quite isolated. All those who are already members of the partnership know each other, and have developed relationships with one another. To come into a group where there are already strong relationships can be quite intimidating

for some people, and it is important for the Facilitator to help the new people get integrated into the group as soon as possible. If they don't feel comfortable, if they feel they are not able to break into the group, you may lose them and the church or ministry they represent to the partnership

Because people's responsibilities change, you will sometimes find that new people are asked to represent a partner who has been a member of the partnership from the very foundation of the partnership. It is important to recognise the special challenges which this presents, as it is quite possible that the new representative does not fully understand the role his/her church/ministry has played in the past – and indeed may need convincing of the value of the partnership to the work of the church/ministry. And, similar to representatives from new ministries, new representatives from old partners need to break into the web of relationships which already exist.

We have noted that the number of churches/ministries who want to come to the Partnership Meeting for Happy Valley has increased by 6 and the number of people who are attending the meeting has increased by 14. This rapid increase in the number of partners has been fairly consistent over many partnerships. One partnership that I was very involved with during its first five years of existence began with 9 members and within 4 years had increased to 35 partners. Another partnership increased from about 14 members to more than 50 partners over a four year period. This creates particular challenges when it comes to introductions and ministry reports, if the partnership with 50 members continued to set aside 10 minutes for reports that would mean a total of 500 minutes (that is more than 8½ hours) and adding the 5 minutes of prayer for each ministry would mean adding another 4 hours or more. The final section in this Unit gives some practical advice to handle this issue in mature partnerships.

Issues for the Second and Subsequent Meetings of the Partnership: The Programme

As Paul Elijah comes to develop the programme for the second meeting of the partnership, he will need to include a number of elements which were included in the first meeting of the Happy Valley – and he will need to include some new elements in the programme.

Let's begin to think about those regular elements which should be included. What are some of the building block of partnership which are likely to be needed in each meeting of the partnership?

Think about it?

Answer Box # 16

What elements from the first meeting should be included in the second meeting?



The building blocks of partnership include prayer and worship, relationship building, information about what each church and ministry is doing and identifying ministry which can be tackled jointly. Therefore it is important to ensure that the following elements are included:

- Prayer, worship, the study of God's word and communion
- Relational times – meals together, tea and coffee breaks, praying together
- Introductions – this is particularly important for the new partners who are attending for the first time
- Reports of the work of the individual partners in the partnership
- Identifying what new things the partnership can work on together – and this needs to be done by consensus in a similar format to the process which was used in the first meeting.

It's also important to include time for

- Working groups to meet
- Discussion on the background to the partnership – such issues as the situation among the people you are seeking to reach and the state of the church in the area.
- Partnership Logistics – such as date and place of the next meeting, partnership facilitation

And now, what about new elements, which weren't included in that first meeting?

Think about it?



learning

Answer Box # 17

What new elements should be included in the second meeting of the partnership?

The Happy Valley Partnership has had Working Groups meeting since the first meeting. It is important for there to be time in the Partnership Meeting for these Working Groups to report on progress to the full partnership meeting. The Working Groups are where much of the work of the partnership actually takes place, and these are an important component of a partnership

Re-Read the Reading from Unit 5 – Making Decisions in the Trinolindo Partnership.

Note that in each of their subsequent meetings they included reports from the Working Groups from the previous meeting.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 18

What else do you notice the partnership was doing in this process?



I hope you noted that they evaluated what had happened as far as the working groups were concerned. They recognised that something had gone wrong – and they learnt from the mistakes of the past.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 19

What do you also notice happened in the Trinolindo Partnership?



You should note that following a few years of focusing on small-scale projects – they were subsequently able to work together on a major project – a translation of the Scriptures into the language. This was a major project which they tackled together – which was only possible because they had had success together on tackling smaller-scale projects.

The Continuing Role of the Partnership Facilitator

Earlier in this unit we looked at the work of the Partnership Facilitator between the initial meeting and the second meeting.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 20

List the activities which the Partnership Facilitator needs to be working on between the first and second meetings



learning

These activities are important, not only between the first and second partnership meeting, but throughout the life of the partnership. And there are other things which the partnership facilitator needs to be doing to ensure the good health of the partnership. These include the following issues:

Mediating Conflict: The Facilitator needs to be aware of developing problems between partner members and trying to ensure any problems are sorted out before they result in full-scale conflict. Where conflict has developed, the Facilitator need to serve as a mediator or “peace-maker” or find someone who can help who can help resolve the conflict.

Documentation: It is important that the Facilitator pays particular attention to documentation – making sure that notes of meetings are kept and circulated to partner members, and keeping files of key information and development about the region, area of people group being served by the Partnership.

Developing a Purpose Statement for your Partnership: You may remember from Unit 5 that we suggested that Paul Elijah should develop an “Objective Statement” for the Launch Meeting – a Statement which he could share with those who decided to come to the meeting. This statement will probably serve the partnership well for two or three years, but at some stage, it will probably be important for the partnership to develop a “Purpose Statement” of its own – to describe its purpose and

to ensure it keeps focused and also that it doesn't divert from its purpose. You can find a process which will help you develop a purpose statement for a partnership in your readings for this unit.

Evaluating the Partnership: The Facilitator should also be evaluating the progress the Partnership is making, identifying where there are problems and difficulties or special challenges, and looking at ways to solve these. Further material on evaluating a partnership is included in a unit 10.

Sharing the Success of the Partnership: The Facilitator needs to ensure that partner members understand the degree of success that is being achieved by the Partnership. Not all members of the Partnership will be involved in all the different activities of the Partnership, and some partnership members may not be aware of the effectiveness of the Partnership in some areas. It is important to share these successes – because as the Partnership experiences success in what it is doing together, that will provide the motivation for further commitment to the process of partnership.

Read the following comments from partner members, writing about the partnership they have been members of:

“I am certain that one outcome of our partnership is that people have been able to stay longer in the field; because they now know what other people are doing, they no longer feel as if they are working ‘on their own’, and the fact that they know there are fellow-labourers gives them encouragement to keep on – even though as times it’s really tough.”

“We had more than enough work to do following-up contacts in our town, that we didn’t have time to follow-up on contacts we were given in a neighbouring town. However, because of the Partnership, we knew who to pass these contacts to. There is now a church in that neighbouring town which would not be there but for the existence of this Partnership.”

“In this Muslim country (where there’s been a very effective partnership for a number of years), we’ve seen an increasing number of young men become serious seekers- many of whom have followed through to faith. When we asked them what it was that attracted them to Christianity, they replied that what really impressed them was that it was obvious that the Christians they had come to know, clearly knew each other and loved each other. The Christians they were referring to were all working with very different ministries, but they were working in partnership and ensuring that their different ministries complemented each other; they also made sure they spoke well of one another.”

“In 1995 the church amongst this people group numbered 2000; now in 1996 it numbers 3000. We believe this growth is a direct result of the Partnership.” (This partnership was launched in 1994; the church has continued to grow in this country, although not at the same rate as in its early years!)

“Several agencies will be working together to sponsor a ‘Guest House’ in the capital city of the country.”

“Most of what we’ve (i.e. our ministry/church) has done this past year couldn’t have been done without the help we received because of last years Partnership Meeting.”

Think about it?

Answer Box # 21

Why are comments like these important?

Why does the facilitator need to share them with other members of the partnership?

**learning**

These – and similar comments are critically important, because they demonstrate that the partnership is being effective – that the partnership is having a positive impact on ministry in the area.

It's not only the Facilitator who needs to hear these comments. All the partner members need to be aware of them as well – because these comments should encourage them, should confirm that the partnership is having positive outcomes and is demonstrating that working in partnership IS worth it!

There is one danger that the Partnership Facilitator needs to be aware of. Very often the Partnership Meetings become so high-profile, that it can seem that the annual (or however often the meeting is actually held) meeting of the partnership is all there is. A healthy partnership will have a lot of activity between meetings – including meetings of Working Groups and actual ministry together to the people. In fact at least one partnership began to call their meetings a “Review and Planning Meeting” – so that it was clear that what they were doing in the meeting was reviewing past work and planning for the future

Focus on Function not on Form

A piece of advice: try to avoid spending time trying to come up with a Statement of Faith for the Partnership. Someone may bring it up and suggest that the partnership needs one. But avoid it! You could spend many hours talking about a Statement of Faith – and it is an issue that has the potential to divide rather than unite. The problem is that you can spend so long discussing a Statement of Faith that you end up doing nothing of any value. However, the issue of a Statement of Faith is an important one. However, rather than create one of their own, many partnerships have adopted an already existing Statement of Faith. A number of Partnerships have used the

Lausanne Covenant, others have used the WEA (World Evangelical Alliance) Statement of Faith. Both of these have wide acceptance among evangelicals.

A Partnership (especially in the early stages of its development) should minimize its focus on the “form” of the partnership – by which I mean the way it is organized and should maximize its focus on its “function” – by which I mean what it is trying to achieve.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 22

Read the extract on Form and Function from “Body Matters” by Ernie Addicott – Reading 7.3
How does the incident described here demonstrate a focus on the “form” of the partnership?

How does this incident impact the process of the partnership meeting?

What might be done to minimize the risk of a similar incident impacting a partnership meeting which you might develop?

As you develop your partnership – always try to remember that an effective partnership should focus on its function – that is what the partnership does, and it should be less concerned with its form – that is how the partnership is structured. Form is important, but form should follow the function. The following table illustrates the difference between Form and Function:

| Form and Function Compared | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Function</i> | <i>Form</i> |
| What we <u>do</u> | How we do it |
| Doing the right thing | Doing things right |
| Focus on outcome | Focus on method |
| Seeks effectiveness | Seeks efficiency |

Although the focus should be on function in the early years of the partnership, as the partnership matures and is working on more partnership projects together, there may come a time when some attention does need to be given to how the partnership is

structured. Issues about the structuring of a partnership are more likely to be successfully resolved once there are strong relationships and trust between the partner members – and this (as we've already discussed) is something which only comes with time.

When you don't know what to do next!

And now, a final comment about any partnership consultation or meeting. Most people who have facilitated effective partnership meetings would testify that they almost always get to a point in the meeting where they didn't know what to do. Sometimes the discussion gets circular; sometimes you hit a road-block, sometimes you just don't know how to move ahead. So what do you do? There are two things which are helpful whenever you meet this problem. Firstly, have a time of prayer and then take a break. It's amazing how often when you get back together how quickly things will move on. Sometimes it's because everyone has been able to have a time of reflection and they see how to make progress; sometimes either the facilitator or someone else in the group can come alongside someone who has perhaps been the cause of the problem and encourage them to let things go so the process can continue and move on.

Handling Ministry Report Sessions when large numbers are present

Earlier in this unit, we discussed the challenge of increasing numbers of partners at partnership meetings and referred to the particular challenges when it comes to introductions and ministry reports when large numbers of partners are present at a partnership meeting.

I do think it is still important to include both these elements in the meetings. And there are ways of doing them creatively, so the time can be reduced. However, it is important to give quality time for verbal reports during the first two to three partnership meetings, because you need to give opportunities for people to talk about what they are doing – and others to hear what other ministries and churches are actually doing.

Some partnerships have used the following technique for Ministry Reports, so that lengthy time is not taken up with this issue, but the information is still shared.

Each ministry was given a Handout similar to the one which follows. They were asked to fill it in before the Ministry Reports and asked to base their report on what they had prepared. They were asked to be specific in what they stated in the document, and rather than stating "we need people, prayer and money" to state (for example "we need a nurse for our hospital." At the Ministry Reports session each ministry was given a maximum of 3 minutes to give an overview of their ministry. At the end of the session, all the reports were collected and then copied so that everyone at the Partnership Meeting had a copy of each Ministry Report.

XXX PARTNERSHIP MEETING [Month / Year] MINISTRY REPORTS

1. Name of Church/Ministry:
2. Name of Person presenting the Report:
3. Names of other people representing the Church/Ministry:
4. Location (place of work/ministry):
5. *Main* area of ministry (be specific):
6. Number of workers:
7. Resources you have available:
8. The needs you have:
9. The opportunities you can see:

NB there will be a maximum time limit of 3 minutes per church/ministry

Other partnerships have asked ministries to come with reports already prepared and this too can be a very helpful way of handling the problem of ministry reports when you have a large number of ministries present.

Final Assignment



application

Final Assignment

1. *Create two templates which you could use for reports at your own partnership meeting: one should be for a detailed report for your own use, the other should be a summary report for circulation.*
2. *Discuss the advantages of a team approach to the facilitation of a partnership. Describe how you would ensure such an approach would maintain its effectiveness.*
3. *Assuming the partnership you plan to develop does get launched and is developing, create a draft programme (with timings) for the second partnership meeting. Explain in what ways this draft programme may need to be adapted at the time the partnership actually meets for the second time.*
4. *The work which the partnership facilitator does is essential to the health of the partnership. Describe the role of the Partnership Facilitator and how he/she creates a healthy environment in which the partnership can flourish.*

READINGS



reading

The Partnership Facilitation Team

An Article by John Rogers

Some Partnerships around the world have made the decision to appoint a small team to coordinate the work of the partnership. Such a team of people are usually called the “Facilitation Team.”

The main reasons why a team approach to the facilitation role of the partnership includes the following:

- The task of facilitating a partnership is very demanding and requires many different giftings and skills
- Having a team to facilitate the partnership means that different people bring different gifts, skills and experience to the role
- If one member of the facilitation team needs to withdraw from the role, there are others who can continue supporting the partnership
- A facilitation team working together actually models partnership

It is extremely helpful to have a team of people to work on the development of the partnership, but having a Facilitation Team rather than a single Facilitator will only work effectively if certain things are in place to ensure effectiveness. These include:

- Time for the facilitation team to meet together at the end of the partnership meeting – even if only for an hour or so
- The team needs to schedule times to meet together – even if they are scattered across the world!
- When the facilitation team does meet together, it is very important that they don't go straight into business, but that they make time to re-connect with one another. This could be a meal together, it certainly means a time of sharing personal, ministry and partnership updates
- It is important for the facilitation team to build strong relationships with one another
- It is important for the facilitation team to commit to praying regularly for one another
- The facilitation team should schedule at least a full day together on the day before the next partnership meeting is due to meet.
- When e-mailing to each other on partnership business – it is important that everyone copies everyone else on the facilitation team
- It can be very tempting to communicate with one another only by e-mail; it is important that members of the facilitation team talk to one another – and that means telephone calls
- An occasional conference call can be extremely helpful – perhaps monthly – or two-monthly. It is possible to use web-based communications packages which are freeware and where calls are free too (see www.skype.com)
- It is important that each member of the facilitation team be aware of his/her specific roles and responsibilities on the team and for the partnership

There are two things which it is important to note that a facilitation team does not do. There are:

- A Facilitation Team does not impose decisions on the Partnership. Their role is to serve the partnership and help the partnership make decisions
- A Facilitation Team does not serve the interests of the agencies or churches from which they are drawn, nor do they serve on the facilitation team as “representatives” of their church or agency. In the same way that a single facilitator needs to demonstrate neutrality and impartiality, so each member of a facilitation team needs to demonstrate the same degree of neutrality and impartiality

Vision Statements and Purpose Statements for Partnerships

An article by John Rogers



Although many partnerships from the beginning have a general view of their vision and their purpose, it is often not particularly specific and tends to be more of a general understanding of what the partnership is trying to achieve in the long term and do in the short

term. It is very rare for partnerships to have clearly articulated Vision Statements and Purpose (or Mission) Statements when they are first formed

However, as a partnership develops through the maturity process, it becomes essential for the partners to articulate a clearly stated Vision Statement and a clearly stated Purpose (or Mission) Statement for the partnership.

A Vision Statement is different to a Purpose Statement. A Vision Statement describes what we want to see in the future. It describes what we are looking for; what the outcome of what we are doing should look like; it describes the future situation. A Purpose Statement (sometimes called a “Mission Statement”) describes the PURPOSE of the Partnership. It describes WHY we exist. It defines what we are here to do (and if we have a good Mission Statement, by implication it will define what we’re not here to do as well!). A good Purpose Statement describes the task we are to be focused on.

A great example of a Vision Statement is what God gave to Abram in Genesis 12:2-3:

*I will make you into a great nation and will bless you;
I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse;
And all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.*

A good Vision Statement should be inspiring, it should excite **passion**, and it should be memorable. If it’s going to be memorable, it needs to be short and it’s best to limit a Vision Statement to a maximum of 30 words.

Most Partnerships begin with a Vision – even if it’s just something like – “we want to see the church planted among the Tolemanian people.” It usually takes a vision of how things might be different before many people are willing to come to a partnership meeting anyway. But there comes a point in the life of the partnership when that general impression of what the vision is, needs to be turned into an agreed statement which is accepted and “owned” by the partnership. It is very important that a Vision Statement is not created by the facilitator and presented to the partnership, nor should it be created by a small group and presented to the partnership. It is a process that needs to be done by the partnership as a whole.

The following is a process which I have used on a number of occasions to help a partnership create a Vision Statement. As an example, I am using the development of a Vision Statement for the “Tolemanian Partnership” – an imaginary partnership which I have used in teaching about partnerships on a number of occasions.

Ask the question: “What will the church in Tolemania in 2020 look like?”

Give people time to think about the question and to write down their thoughts.

Go around the room and get each person to share what they think the church in Tolemania in 2020 will look like.

Capture their thoughts on the Flip Chart – especially noting key and recurring themes.

Comment that your understanding of the Tolemanian Partnership is that it exists to see a strong church established in Tolemanian.

Ask the question – “how can we take these thoughts and develop a Vision Statement for the Toelmanian Partnership from them?” Allow that question and the words on the Flip Chart to soak in over several hours, while you do other things!

Come back to the question of a Vision Statement and ask “ what do we think are the key thoughts which should be in our Vision Statement for the Tolemanian Partnership?”

Capture those thoughts again on the Flip Chart. Then suggest a small group (or Task Force) be asked to develop a draft Vision Statement for the Tolemanian Partnership based on the discussions so far and bring it back to the Partnership Meeting.

The Task Force meets and produces a draft Vision Statement. Perhaps the Task Force for the Tolemanian Partnership might come up with “Our Vision is to see a strong, mature, nationally led church working as a body to influence life and society in Tolemania.” [Note: it is helpful if you can write this on a Pre-Prepared Flip Chart]

Having produced a draft Vision Statement, the Task Force needs to ask themselves the question “Does this Vision Statement inspire me?” If it doesn’t they’d better go back and do some more work on it!

When they’ve finished the work on an initial draft of the Vision Statement, the Task Force then needs to bring the draft Vision Statement back to the Partnership Meeting. It is important to get input from the Partnership Meeting and finalize the wording together. Again it is helpful to ask the “Does this Vision Statement inspire?” again.

Suggest that the Statement which is agreed is regarded as a “draft” Vision Statement for the following 12 months. Then revisit it at the next Partnership Meeting and confirm it or make changes to it.

Having agreed a Vision Statement for the Partnership, and allowed time for it to soak into the consciousness of the Partnership, we now come to the second of the foundational statements which are needed for a maturing partnership especially for one which is taking planning seriously. This is a Purpose Statement (sometimes described as a “Mission Statement”). Earlier in this paper, we stated that a Purpose Statement describes the PURPOSE of the Partnership; it describes WHY the partnership exists; it defines what the partnership is to do (and what it isn’t to do), the focus of a Purpose Statement is to describe the TASK of the Partnership.

As with Vision Statement, not many partnerships develop a Purpose Statement at the first meeting of the Partnership. In fact for the first two or three years a partnership may be able to get away without a Purpose Statement, but as an Operating Partnership develops into maturity, the need for a Purpose Statement for the Partnership becomes more pressing.

Sometimes we can get very verbose when we’re developing Vision and Purpose Statements – and we write pages to describe our purpose or our vision. But the best Purpose Statements (and Vision Statements) have a limited number of words – and the fewer the better!

The two key questions which a good Purpose Statement should answer are

What is the task we are to do?

How will we do it?

As well as answering the How and What questions, there are three other questions you need to ask about a Purpose Statement. These are the 3 “Cs” of Purpose Statements!

Is it clear? (can everybody understand what the task is?)

Is it compelling? (will it draw people?)

Is it common enough for people of diverse views to come together on?

Here’s a Purpose Statement: “Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.” The task for the disciples was to become fishers of men; how they would become fishers of men would be by following Jesus. It was a clear and compelling call which brought together a very diverse group of 12 men who were together for a purpose – to be disciplined by Jesus. And it’s just 10 words!!!

Note the difference between a Vision Statement and a Purpose Statement. A Vision Statement is Prophetic. It isn't what we are doing, it is what we see on the horizon – it is something we are sailing towards. Moses “saw” the Promised Land. He was the visionary; he was the one who gave the Israelites the vision. A Purpose Statement describes the activity. It describes what is to be done. It takes the vision and turns it into actuality. Whereas Moses gave the vision, Joshua was the one who gave leadership to the purpose of the Israelites – in actually taking the Promised Land!

There are a number of reasons why a partnership needs a Purpose Statement as it matures. It helps the partnership clearly identify what it should be doing –and what it shouldn't be doing, it helps to give focus and provides parameters, it defines a common purpose for the partnership and actually helps potential partners decide whether they want to board the ship and it may help existing partners decide whether or not they want to stay on board!

Several years ago, I was a guest at the annual partnership meeting of a partnership which had been in existence for several years. One member of the partnership was proposing that they get involved in a completely different area of work, and there were fairly strong discussions about whether or not what was being proposed was something which the partnership should be involved in. I was asked to comment – and I suggested that before they make a decision on this issue, it might be helpful if as a partnership they took some time to define their purpose – and to develop a Purpose Statement for the partnership – which they could use in the future to help them decide such issues. The facilitator of the meeting said that they had taken some time a few years before to develop a Purpose Statement for the Partnership. I was delighted that they had seen this as an important element in the maturing of the partnership and asked to see a copy of it. Unfortunately, no one at the meeting either had a copy of the Statement or could remember what the Statement actually said! Later in the meeting a copy of the Statement was produced and it actually helped them make a decision on the issue which had confronted them earlier in the meeting.

As in developing a Vision Statement, there is a helpful process which you can follow when developing a Purpose Statement. The following is the process I tend to follow when helping a group develop a Purpose Statement:

1. *I talk to the group about Purpose Statements, and explain what they are designed for and give them examples of good Purpose Statements.*
2. *Ask each person to write a suggested Purpose Statement for partnership in 30 words or less and give them between 10 and 15 minutes for this task. I often ask people to underline any words which are particularly important.*
3. *When individual statements have been completed, I divide everyone up into groups of 4-6 people. I instruct them in their groups to share what each person has written, and then to develop a Purpose Statement for the Partnership which everyone in the group can agree with and which should be no more than 30 words. I usually give them an hour to complete the task.*
4. *As each group completes its statement, I ask them to write it up on a piece of flip-chart paper. It can often be helpful to ask each person in the group to rate their **personal satisfaction with their result**. This can be done by using the following technique: give each person in the group a small piece of paper and ask each person to write a number between 0 and 100 on the piece of paper you've given them to reflect their **personal** satisfaction with the result of their **group's** combined Purpose Statement and tell them not to show this number to anyone other you, and when they've*

each rated their personal satisfaction with their result collect their responses and calculate the average. If the average rate is less than 75%, or if anyone rates the result as less than 65%, I tell the group that the level of satisfaction in the group is not high enough to take their statement to the next stage, and suggest they work some more on it. Each time they turn in a statement, I rate the group's level of satisfaction, and only when there is a high enough group rating for each of the groups, will I move on to the next stage in the process.

5. *I then ask each group to share the Purpose Statements they have developed, and report on the final satisfaction rate given by the group.*
6. *I then lead a discussion on what the larger group likes about each of the statements – and also what they don't like about each statement.*
7. *I then ask each group to nominate one member to represent them in the next stage of the process.*
8. *These representatives form another group. They take the various statements and their task is to come up with a composite statement – again no longer than 30 words. As they complete the task, I check on their personal satisfaction rating, and only when the average rate is 75% and each individual rate is more than 65% will I take the result to the full partnership.*
9. *The group of representatives now share their composite statement with the full partnership.*
10. *I then encourage general discussion, which might result in some changes being made to the statement. I will then take a satisfaction rating – and if there is general satisfaction with the statement, suggest that the partnership uses the statement as developed as a draft Purpose Statement until the next meeting. If there isn't general satisfaction, I encourage the group to go back and continue their work, until there is general satisfaction. If one person seems to be unhappy with the statement, I will have a private talk with him/her to ascertain why he/she is unhappy with the result – and either feed that into the group or discuss the issue with the individual. I may suggest the statement is accepted – even if this person continues to be unhappy with the result – because sometime some people are never happy with what others have produced!*
11. *At the next partnership meeting – I encourage the group to review the statement, to discuss it, make any further changes and then adopt it as the partnership's Purpose Statement.*

A final thought about both Vision and Purpose Statements. When facilitators are sending out information about a partnership meeting, always include in the paper-work copies of both the Vision Statement and the Purpose Statement (if the partnership has them) and also provide further copies for each member attending the partnership meeting. These Statements are core documents of the partnership, they provide direction and focus to the work of the partnership and you may need to remind partner members what the vision and purpose of the partnership is as decisions are made on future work and ministry.

Form and Function in Partnerships

From “*Body Matters - A Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission*” by Ernie Addicott, (published by Interdev Partnership Associates, ISBN 81-7525-581-1); pages 96-98



There seemed to be a real enthusiasm to form a partnership. Over fifty key leaders including a number of influential denominational heads had agreed to attend the formation meeting. In deference to local custom in this part of Asia, the most senior man had been invited to chair the meeting – always a bit risky if you don’t know him well, but in this case unavoidable without giving huge offence to the denomination concerned.

His opening remarks were positive enough, quoting a sound Scriptural basis for working together to extend the Kingdom of God and illustrating the importance of it with a very amusing story. Then he departed from the script...

“Before we address this most important agenda,” he began, “we need to agree who will be the officers of this new partnership that we are about to form. We need a Treasurer, a Secretary and a Management Committee and I believe someone also told me that we need to appoint a *Facilitator*. So please give me your nominations for these important positions.”

“Sir,” came a question from the floor, “some churches here have many representatives while some of the larger churches only have a few. It would not be fair to have everyone cast a vote. How many votes should each church have?”

There followed a long and involved discussion. There was no escaping it. The ‘important positions’ must be fairly elected. By the time we got down to the *real* business of the day, it was almost lunchtime and everyone was so steamed up about electing officials for the partnership that there was little emotional energy left to get passionate about the purpose for which it was being formed.

One of the biggest pitfalls in partnership development is putting *Structure* before *Strategy*; *Form* before *Function*. Structure and Form give security. We feel that we know where we are if we’ve established the rules of the game. Sadly, everyone has a different idea of what the rules should be, so this can become an emotionally draining and time consuming experience. Also, until we know what we want the partnership to *do* (ie the *Function*) we don’t really know what form it should take or what structure it should have. Function must *always* come before Form, and Strategy before Structure.

Especially in the early days of a partnership, when the partners don’t know each other very well and trust is still a bit fragile, it is vital to keep the focus on the needs that the partnership is seeking to meet, the things that the partners can do together to make a difference. There is positive, creative synergy in that kind of discussion. The issues are common problems to be solved rather than debates to be won. Indeed, there are no winners or losers; we’re side-by-side striving to overcome the common problems we’ve identified.

When we know what the partnership should do, we are in a better position to know what level of structure is necessary. Often it can be very simple; consensus decisions enabled by a facilitator and each partner managing his or her own part in the joint action. There may be a need for a steering committee of some kind, but you don’t know the skills its members need until you’ve decided what it is they’re going to be steering. The aim should be to keep structure to the minimum necessary for the effective implementation of the partnership’s plans.

Partnerships

Unit 8

Developing Effective Groups and Teams in a Partnership



Development Associates International

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Version 1.3

Unit 8 - Developing Effective Groups and Teams in a Partnership

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Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this unit you will be able to.....

- list characteristics of effective and ineffective teams
- define different groups and teams which are likely to be found in partnerships
- explain why it is important to value the differences which people bring to team situations
- describe the characteristics of each of the eight team roles as defined by Meredith Belbin
- describe the MacMillan approach to healthy team development and be able to demonstrate how to assist a team work through the stages to high performance

Note: The Assignments at the end of Units 1, 4 and 6 are to be completed submitted to the professor after completing each assignment. In addition you should submit your response to the Assignments following any TWO of Units 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10

Lecture Notes & Workbook

Introduction Unit 8

None of us live in isolation in this world, and whether we like it or not, we are all part of several groups and teams. As I think about the groups and teams that I'm part of, I'm a member of groups and teams in my work, in my church and in other parts of my life as well. At work, I'm a member of the Senior Staff Team in UK, of the Senior Management Team of our international organisation, of the Finance Committee and of the Development Committee. At church, I'm a member of the Church Council, of the Vision Implementation Action Team, of the Missions Action Team and of our House Group. Beyond both work and church, I'm also on the Board of a couple of Mission Organisations – so am a member of those teams as well. I've also been a member of a number of partnership facilitation teams and of partnership steering committees as well as a member of dozens of training teams.

Turning to the membership of teams which you are likely to be experiencing (or have experienced), I imagine that you are likely to be a member of teams in your work and church situations, and you may be a member of other teams as well – perhaps a sports team, a music team.

Think of the teams you are currently a member of (or perhaps the leader of) and also the teams which you were once part of – and list them in the box below:

Think about it?

Answer Box # 1

1. List the teams you are currently a member of
2. List the teams you were once a member of



learning

I am sure that you have found that being part of some teams has been a great experience and being a member of other teams has been extremely frustrating. Some teams work well and other teams just don't seem to "gel" – they don't work at all.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 2

Think of a team which you enjoyed being a part (either member or leader) of and which seemed to work well. List the characteristics which made this a positive experience:

Now, think of a team which you disliked being a part (either member or leader) of and which just didn't seem to work well at all. List the characteristics which made this a negative experience:

Let's think a bit more about the positive experience in team situations. In my experience – and in the experience of others that I've talked to some of the characteristics which mark a team which people enjoy being part of include:

good relationships
openness between members
mutual respect
supportive of one another
everyone was involved
the different giftings and experience of each person was accepted and respected
high levels of trust

set goals together – and worked together to achieve them
achievements
close friendships developed
spent time together
a sense of being able to achieve together more than we could have achieved on our own
it was fun being together and working together

You may have listed some of the characteristics which I listed – and I'm sure you were able to add other characteristics as well. And now let's look at the other side of the coin – the negative experiences of teams. Again in my experience – and in the experience of others that I've talked to, some of the characteristics which mark a team which people don't enjoy being part of include:

tension between members
open conflict between people
barely suppressed conflict
a critical spirit
arrogant members
some members trying to dominate and control
lack of direction

lack of integrity
self-centredness
some members were always complaining
tensions
unclear goals
competition about goals and direction
lack of achievement

As you review your list with mine, I'm sure there is some overlap – but again, I am sure you listed issues which weren't on my list!

We know what it's like to be a member of an effective team – and we also know what it's like to be a member of a team that isn't effective.

So why is it that some teams are great to be part of – and as we think about them, we feel good and positive and we have pleasant feelings about our involvement with that group of people. And why is that with other teams we've been part of we think about them with a sinking feeling in our stomach! And how can we insure that the teams that we put together in the future are more like the former rather than the later?

In this Unit, our focus is going to be on how to put together effective teams which will deliver what they've being asked to do and that it will be good to be a part of. And we hope this will be helpful to you in the partnerships that you might develop but also in your work and ministry roles as well.

In the last few units that we've worked through, we've referred on several occasions to the importance of what we've so far called "Working Groups." In many ways the different groups which develop to do the "real" work of the partnership provide the life blood of a partnership.

In a partnership there are several different types of groups and teams. There are the groups which emerge out of the consensus exercises to focus on different elements of the work of the partnership, there might be a facilitation team and there will be the wider team of partnership members which is developed to support the facilitator or facilitation team in the work between partnership meetings and at the partnership itself.

And it's important that each of these groups functions well – for the health of the partnership.

In the early and mid-nineteen nineties most partnerships described all the groups which the partnership developed as "Working Groups." However, some partnerships found that using this name wasn't so helpful, because some of the groups which were formed didn't seem to do much "work"; they didn't seem to achieve very much in terms of concrete actions. This resulted in frustrations from some members of the groups, and also from some other members of the partnerships – because a "Working Group" was thought to

need to show results. However, following some work by Mats Tunehag who examined why some Working Groups “worked” and others didn’t, it was realised that there are at least three different types of groups in a partnership, and that it is helpful to differentiate between these three different types of groups. By giving them different names and by differentiating the different functions, it ensured better understanding of the different functions of the groups and reduced frustration levels. As a result of this Mats and I began to use the generic term “Focus Groups”, which we divided into 3 types of groups:

Interest Groups
Working Groups
Task Forces

In the Readings Section, Read 8.1 Redefining Working Groups in Partnerships

Think about it?

Answer Box # 3

How would you describe the difference between an Interest Group and a Working Group?

How would you describe the difference between a Working Group and a Task Force?

What are the benefits of describing the different types of groups in a partnership more specifically?



learning

The Importance of Valuing Difference in our Groups and Teams

In any partnership there will be at least two people involved; you can’t have a partnership of one. And wherever we are in settings where there are more than one person involved we are involved in relationships. In a partnership we are involved in a multiplicity of relationships; and in the groups and teams we are part of in a partnership we are involved in relationships too. For our relationships to be positive with other people, we need to understand ourselves – and we need to understand other people too.

Think about it?**Answer Box # 4**

Read the following Scripture References: Romans 12: 6-8; 1 Cor 12: 28; Ephesians 4: 11-12
What do these scriptures tell us about ourselves and other people?

**learning**

The key here is that God gives each of us different gifts – and they are given for the benefit of the church. The point about different giftings is that they are different – but they are all needed! And because we have different giftings, we tend to function in different ways in the same setting. Sometimes we think that someone who functions in a different way to us is being difficult or awkward. However, we need to understand that they are rarely being deliberately awkward – they are just being true to themselves and the way they prefer to function in situations. However, we should note that the way we prefer to function may not always be the best in some situations, and there may be times when we need to modify our behaviour. We should also be particularly aware that because certain people do things differently to the way we do things, that this is perfectly normal for them – and indeed they may bring something to a group which is desperately needed for the group to function well.

If we are facilitating a partnership, it is particularly important that we appreciate the differences which different people bring into the group.

Answer Box # 5

At the end of the set of readings, there is a questionnaire called the Orientation/Style Questionnaire – Preferences which I would like you to complete now.

**learning**

Having completed the Questionnaire, you need to transfer your scores to the chart below

| | Score | Category P T R |
|----------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| Highest: | | |
| Next Highest: | | |
| Lowest: | | |

This is a very simple instrument which identifies our preferences of a style of working.

It identifies whether our primary focus is on relationships with people (P), whether our primary focus is on the task (T), or whether our primary focus is on Structure and Rules (R) .

In the chart above:
 Category P is PEOPLE
 Category T is TASK
 Category R is RULES

Think about it?

Answer Box # 6

- Review your scores.*
- Which of the categories did you score highest on? Was it People, Task or Rules?

- What was your score for this category?

- Which of the categories did you score next highest on? Was it People, Task or Rules?

- What was the difference between this score and your highest score?

- Which of the categories did you score lowest on? Was it People, Task or Rules?

- What was your score for this category?



If your highest score was for PEOPLE it means you place a very high value on relationships with people. You are concerned for them, you are interested in the way they function, you are interested in their needs and their concerns and you are strong at building relationships with other people.

If your highest score was for TASK it means that you are very focused on getting the work done, in achieving the goals and objectives which have been set. It is likely that you will do whatever is necessary to ensure the work gets done because that is what you see as important.

If your highest score was for RULES, you value structure and the way things are organised very highly. You like very clear policies and procedures and will be very uncomfortable in a highly flexible environment.

In any one group, you will find that some people will score highly on PEOPLE, others will score highly on TASK, and others will score highly on RULES.

It is not that those who score highly on one are the best people. In any group you want a mixture of PEOPLE, TASK AND RULES oriented people. In that way the group will be strong, whereas if you have a group where everyone has the same preference, you could find challenges in the functioning of the group.

Those whose primary focus is on PEOPLE tend to be so concerned with developing relationships and with ensuring that the needs of other people are met, that the work which is supposed to be completed does not get done. They tend not to be very good on time-keeping and in a group they can often arrive late for a meeting, will be very happy to drift off the agenda or programme and even focus on other issues if they see there are pressing personnel issues to be dealt with – even if this is not the focus of the meeting. The result can be limited or even a lack of outcomes and other people can get very frustrated, because there may be no clear direction and things are not achieved. If you're in a group which consists of people who all score high on PEOPLE, you may not get much done – but you'll have a great time together!

Those whose primary focus is on TASK tend to be so concerned about getting the job done that they ignore the relational side and can end up forgetting about the needs of the people in the group. I know someone who is so task-oriented that he thinks nothing of starting work at 6.00 am and continuing until 11.00 pm or midnight, and can get quite irritated when other people who he is working with leave the office at 6.00 pm – especially if they haven't arrived until 9.00 am! In a group a TASK oriented person can push to get things achieved so that the task becomes more important than the building of relationships and working together to get a job done. If you're in a group which consists of people who all score high on TASK, you'll get a lot of work done – but there won't be much fun!

Those whose primary focus is on RULES will want everything to be highly structured, they will want there to be a procedure for every eventuality; they will want a set of rules and will do everything by the rule-book. They will often want to ensure there is a rule for every eventuality, however unlikely it might be. They like structure and will always want to ensure that there is a very clear structure for everything that is being done, they will also ensure that issues like safety, book-keeping, legal issues are taken care of. If you're in a group which consists of people who all score high on RULES – everything will be done absolutely correctly and the structure will be very clear, but it won't be much fun, and you might not get much done either – because all the efforts are focused on structure and doing things “correctly.”

Think about it?

In any group you will find that there is a variety of people – who behave differently to you. For real

Answer Box # 7

Why would a group which includes some people whose primary focus is on People, some whose primary focus is on Task and some whose primary focus is on Rules be stronger than a group where everyone had the same orientation?



learning

effectiveness, we want groups consisting of a variety of people, so that relationships are developed, people's needs are met, the task gets completed and the group is well structured and knows the constraints it operates under.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 8

In Units 5 & 6, we focused on the process of running a partnership meeting. Thinking about a partnership meeting:

- a. What dangers do the TASK people bring to the process of meeting management?

- b. What dangers do the PEOPLE people bring to the process of meeting management?

- c. What dangers do the RULES people bring to the process of meeting management?



learning

Each of the three preferences bring dangers to the process of meeting management. The TASK people will always be trying to push for a decision before everyone is ready; they will be unhappy with the process of consensus building, and can want to tell the rest of the group what they think should be done – without allowing the rest of the group to develop ownership of the task.

On the other hand, the PEOPLE people will want to wait until everyone is agreed on a course of action, and that might take too long. We need to balance people and task if we're going to be really effective.

The RULES people will almost certainly push to get the structure (or the “form”) of the Partnership agreed, with officers appointed, lines of authority clearly described, a statement of faith agreed and an understanding of who is in “control.” We have found that when we focus on the form (or the structure) of a partnership, it can be divisive and will often result in the partnership achieving little – because it is so focused on its own organisation, that there is little time left over to discuss and agree on the function of the partnership. Always remember that function is far more important than form.

However, balanced against the dangers, there are also positives which each group of people brings. And it's the positives that we need to value. This section of the unit is focusing on our need to value difference. Read the following extract from the book “Body Matters – A Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission” (it's on page 118) and answer the questions below:

Think about it?

Answer Box # 9

“It may sound like a truism, but if you want to value difference, you have to be able to see some real value in it. It is not enough to say that valuing difference is the right thing to do; there must be reality behind it or it will be a shoddy, short-lived act of insincerity – lip-service without substance.

“Someone who exhibits ‘Difference’ almost certainly competes with my personal interests, challenges my comfortable opinions, offends my sense of propriety, irritates or threatens my personal security. My instinctive defence mechanisms tell me to reject him unless I can see clearly that the added value this ‘Difference’ brings exceeds the cost to me of adjusting to accommodate it. Like the Equation of Hope that heralds the end of a conflict, the recognition of real value added, worth more than its cost, enables me to value difference enough to prevent conflict developing in the first place.

“In our definition of Partnership, we emphasised the need for the partners to bring different assets to the table. That means they will also bring different perspectives and different approaches to the task too. How do I, as a member of the partnership, learn to value those differences? Answer: by looking for and recognising the real value inherent in them.”

Why can it be difficult for us to “value difference”?

What can we do to be sincere in our “valuing of difference”?



learning

Team Roles

One of the key things to understand, which will help us value difference more and which will help us develop more effective groups and teams is to understand that different people bring different gifts and roles into a team situation. We need to understand that effective teams require a diversity of roles for effectiveness and that each person in a team will bring different roles to the work of each team we may be a part of.

The understanding of team roles and their impact came about as a result of some research which a British Psychologist, Meredith Belbin, did in the early 1980's. He was researching into the reasons why some groups or teams were more successful than others. During his research, Belbin put various groups of people into teams, who then competed against each other in a "Management Game." The results of his research was then published his book "Management Teams - why they succeed or fail" (Published by Butterworth Heinemann) and available through Amazon.com.

Initially, Belbin made the assumption that effective teams were made up of super-intelligent people. But when he put that assumption to the test, he discovered that such teams were more likely to fail in tasks given to them. So he continued his work, and eventually discovered that eight distinct roles are needed in any successful team. It's important to note that he was not saying that this means 8 people have to be in every team – he was talking about the number of different roles, and as many of us bring two or more roles to a team situation, this thinking is relevant to a team from as small as 3 to as large as 12!

So, let's look at these 8 roles which Belbin identified and has described (the following section is based on material in "Management Teams - why they succeed or fail" by Meredith Belbin (published by Butterworth Heinemann) together with observations made by me over the past 15 years of working with teams!

The first role is the **PLANT**. The Plant is the ideas person of the team, someone who is creative and innovative, who sees new ways of doing things, and who is constantly coming up with new ideas and strategies. The Plant will take an independent and innovative view on most situations and will see patterns where most people will only see un-connected ideas, this give the Plant the ability to re-arrange ideas and ways of doing things, which can often result in breaking deadlock in a difficult team situation. In fact, like a real plant, the Team Plant will be constantly scattering his ideas and will be coming up with more ideas than the team will probably be able to cope with. The Team needs a Plant, because without one the team will be seriously lacking in ideas.

Each of the Team Roles brings strengths to the Team, but each role also has some weaknesses. And the weakness of the Plant is that he/she has no idea whether his/her ideas are good or bad; some of the ideas which the Plant comes up with will be totally impractical, which won't bother the Plant at all, because it's the ideas which are important! The Plant is not well organized – and tends to disregard practical details. The Plant can also be quite sensitive and needs careful handling.

If you have more than one Plant in a team, then conflict can develop between them – because where there are several Plants, there will be too many ideas – and each Plant will be giving very convincing reasons why his/her ideas should be followed, with the result that a team of Plants can end up arguing among themselves about which ideas to implement, which is one reason why a team of Plants don't make for a very effective team!

The second role is the **MONITOR-EVALUATOR**. The Monitor-Evaluator is the logical, analytical, objective member of the team. The Monitor-Evaluator tends to be quite serious and cautious and is the discerning person in the team. The Monitor-Evaluator likes to think things through; likes to come to a considered judgement on issues and can be quite slow in making up his/her mind. The Monitor-

Evaluator sees the implications of any course of action and can turn good ideas into brilliant ones, and mediocre ideas into ideas that will work! Without a Monitor-Evaluator, every idea will seem like a good idea - especially because the Plant will have very convincing reasons why you should take on their ideas. The real asset of the Monitor-Evaluator is in making shrewd judgments that will take all the factors into account and which will stop the team from going up the wrong path. In fact, the Monitor-Evaluator is very rarely wrong in his/her assessments so it's important to listen to him/her!

The weaknesses of the Monitor-Evaluator include being critical and negative, with a tendency to be very cautious. But the real problem with the Monitor-Evaluator is that he/she will try to start evaluating ideas too soon, particularly if you are trying to develop a range of ideas – such as brain-storming – it is important to try to prevent the Monitor-Evaluator from reviewing the ideas too soon, because that can limit the creativity of the group. But it's also important to protect the Monitor-Evaluator from other more vocal members of the group who may not give the Monitor-Evaluator the time to comment on the ideas which have been suggested – so make sure the Monitor-Evaluator has the opportunity to comment on the ideas which the brainstorm has created – once the brainstorming session has ended.

The Plant and the Monitor-Evaluator are both concerned with IDEAS: the Plant creates the ideas while the Monitor Evaluator evaluates them.

The third role is the **RESOURCE-INVESTIGATOR**. The Resource-Investigator is the person who connects the team with outside resources. He/she tends to be extroverted, out-going, enthusiastic, sociable and friendly and is extremely skilled at exploring new resources. They know lots of people, and if you want something done, they know exactly who can help you. They have books full of addresses and telephone numbers and spend a lot of time on the telephone. The Resource-Investigator is good at seeing opportunities and taking them. Resource-Investigators are ace networkers!

The weaknesses of the Resource-Investigator include not being good at detail, being over-optimistic, being poor at follow-through. They tend to lose interest in a project once the initial enthusiasm has passed and tend to go from one project to another and rarely get anything finished. They tend to be late for meetings and also tend to go from one project to the next without really completing anything!

The fourth role is the **COMPLETER-FINISHER**. The Completer-Finisher is the person who is most concerned with detail in the team. They are contentious, self-controlled and self-disciplined and expect high standards from themselves and from others. They work at every task they are given with great thoroughness and tend to be perfectionists, so that in a report all the spellings and punctuation will be completely correct. The main role of the Completer-Finisher is to protect the team from error, and they will make sure that whatever project is being worked on will be done with complete attention to detail.

The weaknesses of the Completer Finisher include worrying unduly, and they get very concerned about time and money being spent; they can often be over concerned with detail and they are reluctant to delegate. Because of their concern for detail, they will often spend much too long on an aspect of a project and will try to hold on to a project even when it isn't worth continuing with.

Resource Investigators and Completer-Finishers are both concerned with INFORMATION: the Resource-Investigator collects the information while the Completer-Finisher presents the information

The fifth role is the **TEAM-BUILDER**. The Team Builders is a good communicator, is good at listening to others and has a deep interest in how people relate and communicate. He/she will work well with most people, and is good at encouraging others and in

helping people to see their strengths and cope with their problems. The Team Builder tends to be diplomatic and sensitive to the feelings of others. He/she is the one who is most likely to be able to reduce any tension that occurs in a team – through a good humoured remark or a word of encouragement and will be able to recognise and resolve any developing conflict and other difficulties which arise between members of the team. The Team-Builder sees the importance of the team having social times together. The main function of the Team Builder is to promote a good team atmosphere, and as such is good at promoting a good team-spirit. The Team Builder is the most “people person” in the team.

The weakness of the Team-Builder is that he/she will avoid pressurised situations, can be indecisive, especially in times of crisis and although can help others work through conflict situations, he/she doesn't cope well with conflict situations in which he/she is personally involved.

Note, this role was originally called the Team Worker (TW), and you will find this role referred to as this in Belbin's books.

The sixth role is the **IMPLEMENTER**. The Implementer is the organiser in the team and is the best member of the team to turn ideas into practical actions. In fact he/she is an “ace” organiser. The Implementer is disciplined, conscientious, reliable and efficient. He/she likes an orderly approach to work, is very good at planning, and will have lots of good practical common-sense. The Implementer is always happiest when working out methods, procedures and rules for getting things done. He/she tends to respect established ways of doing at things. The Implementer tends to see the big picture rather than just the detail and always keeps the vision in mind, and will always be aware of the team's obligations both internally and externally

The weaknesses of the Implementer include liking to have procedures and objectives very clearly spelt out, not responding easily to change, and a tendency to inflexibility once a plan has been made. The Implementer will be strongly committed to any project he/she has begun and will be very unhappy if the plan has to be changed

The Team Builder and the Implementer are both concerned with PROCESS. The focus of the Implementer will be on making plans and making them work, the Team Builder focuses on the needs of the people.

The seventh role is the **CO-ORDINATOR**. The Co-ordinator is the person in the team who pulls the people and the task together. He/she recognises the skills and abilities of the members of the team and will have an innate sense of how each person can best be used. The Co-ordinator has strong inter-personal skills and is able to use those skills to achieve agreement in the team. He/she tends to be respected by the other members of the team, and is tolerant of other people – and their ideas. The Co-ordinator always thinks in positive terms, and is self-disciplined, self-controlled and self-confident. He/she is committed to team goals and objectives and is skilled at clarifying them. He/she will never lose sight of the task – or of the time! The Co-ordinator is very good at chairing meetings, is able to stop the discussion from becoming uncontrolled and has an almost innate sense of being able to bring into the discussion the right person at the right time. A good Co-ordinator will steer a meeting without dominating or being obtrusive and will help the team make some very significant accomplishments together. Meetings that are chaired by a Co-ordinator will tend to be good experiences for everyone!

The weaknesses which the Co-ordinator brings to a team include the fact that some people see the Co-ordinator as being manipulative – because they will control the discussion and may not allow someone to speak when that person wants to; the Co-ordinator can also take the praise for what was a team effort!

The final role is the **SHAPER**. The Shaper is the person in the team who is the motivator; the person with energy, determination, drive and courage to overcome obstacles and who will urge the team to achieve its objectives, challenging inertia, ineffectiveness or complacency. The Shaper is outgoing and dynamic, has tremendous drive and will quickly see exactly what needs to be done – and will be able to make it happen through motivating and enthusing the other members of the team. The Shaper has a need to succeed and to be “in control” of situations. The Shaper tends to be a bit pushy, and can often appear to be aggressive. The Shaper doesn’t like too much talk, always wanting want to “get on with the job.”

The weaknesses of the Shaper include wanting their own ideas accepted, being very critical of other people, being insensitive to the feelings of others, being impatient and irritable, being easily frustrated when problems occur and over-reacting to disappointment. If you have several Shapers on a team, the team is likely to be very unproductive – because wherever you have several Shapers, inter-personal problems are likely to arise because they all want to be “in control” and there can be a lot of open criticism of others.

The Co-ordinator and the Shaper are both concerned with CONTROL. Whereas the Shaper seeks to control the task and the people to ensure that objectives are met; the Co-ordinator is more concerned with controlling the environment in which people are working – to enable them to give of their best

If you review the eight team roles, you might note that the Implementer, Completer-Finisher and Shaper are all focused on TASK; the Co-ordinator, Resource-Investigator and Team-Builder are all focused on RELATIONSHIPS and PEOPLE; while the Plant and the Monitor-Evaluator are both focused on IDEAS

The point about Team Roles in this course is that it helps in our understand of partnerships and groups, because it highlights and aids our understanding of our own personal strengths and weaknesses. It can also give us a greater understanding of other people in our groups and teams and particularly can give us a deep understanding of what each person brings to the team and the partnership. And finally it can help us to modify our behaviour in team situations, so that we become a productive team members rather than an unproductive and disruptive team member, and can also enable us to compensate for any obvious deficiencies in the make-up of the team. For example, I am not a Plant, but I have been in teams where there was no ideas person, and because I knew the team would not be very effective without a Plant, I found myself being the ideas-creator in this team.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 10

Review the 8 Team Roles. Knowing yourself, which of the roles do you think you fit into? (you may have anything between 1 and 3)

What strengths do you bring into a team situation?



Think about it?



Answer Box # 11

What weaknesses do you have?

What do you need to do to minimise those weaknesses when you are working in a team situation?

Answer Box # 12

Identify a team of which you are a member; select one of the other members of the team and try to identify which of the 8 Team Roles this person brings to the team.

What strengths does this person bring to the team?

What weaknesses does this person bring to the team?

What do you need to do to maximise this person's strengths and minimize his/her weaknesses?

Think about it?

Answer Box # 13

Now, do this same exercise for another member of the same team. Identify which of the 8 Team Roles this person brings to the team.

What strengths does this person bring to the team?

What weaknesses does this person bring to the team?

What do you need to do to maximise this person's strengths and minimize his/her weaknesses?



learning

The key to understanding team roles is to recognise and accept that other members of the partnership will behave differently to you and that we need to value different people and the giftings they bring to a partnership or team setting. Other people bring valuable contributions to a team which you are not able to.

Developing Team Effectiveness

Understanding that each person brings different gifts to a team situation is one thing which will help us as we try to make Working Groups effective in our partnerships. Another understanding which will help in this process is an understanding of team development, and a key work which will help us in this process is "The Performance Factor" by Pat MacMillan (published by Broadman & Holman). This next section draws heavily on MacMillan's ideas, together with my experience of implementing his ideas in partnership settings.

If we are going to have effective groups and teams in our partnerships, in our ministries, our churches and in our organizations, the first thing we need to understand is that there are two elements which are needed in a team.

The first element is that there must be a **WILLINGNESS** to cooperate. In our partnerships, clearly we can't force anyone to cooperate. Cooperation is a choice! And the degree of **WILLINGNESS** to cooperate will impact the effectiveness of a team or Working Group.

The second element is that in the team there needs to be some **SKILL** in cooperation. Here, we're not talking about the technical or functional expertise which each individual brings to the team. We're talking about the ability of the Working Group to blend their technical or functional skills in the process of accomplishing the tasks they have to do together. **SKILL** in cooperation will include experience and ability in team processes like goal setting, problem solving, decision-making and conflict resolution. And the **SKILL** level in these areas of cooperation will have an impact on the effectiveness of the team or the Working Group.

By understanding how skill and willingness work together in cooperation, we can begin to build a model of group development – a model which is outlined in “The Performance Factor.”

So how do the two elements of **WILLINGNESS** and **SKILL** combine?

We begin by plotting the **WILLINGNESS** factor on a vertical axis; and the **SKILL** factor on the horizontal axis.

Most observers of group development have noticed that over time groups tend to move through four or five predictable stages of development.

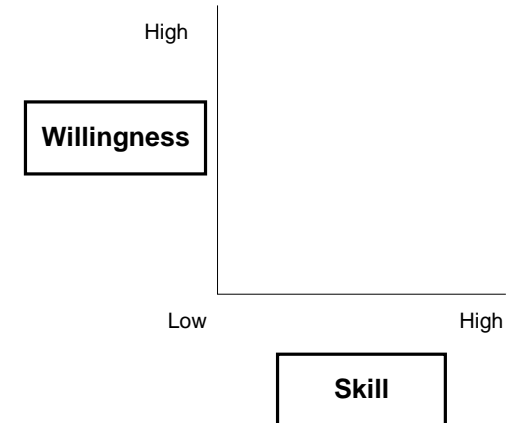
In the work which Pat MacMillan and his colleagues have done, they suggest there are four primary stages of healthy team development which groups need to move through in sequence, before they progress to become a highly effective team.

It's worth noting that it does not have to be a long process for a team or group to move through the stages for high effectiveness. But there are key activities which help a group move more quickly through the stages.

The Basic Group is the starting point for a healthy team. This is the state of the group as it forms. As a group forms, so the concern of each group member is that of alignment. In other words, when I join a new group or a team, the question I am asking myself is this: “are the other members of this group going in the same direction as I want to go?” In fact there are a series of questions which each member will ask themselves as they join a new group – and they may be asking these questions of themselves either consciously but more likely unconsciously:

- “is this group going where I want to go?”
- “do I want to go where this group might be going?”
- “is being part of this group in my best interest?”
- “do I really want to be a part of this group?”

If each member doesn't get good answers to these questions, the **WILLINGNESS** of some in the group to cooperate will be quite low.



As the group is newly formed, the inexperience of the group in working together will also have an impact and the level of SKILL in cooperation will be quite low. Although individual members of the group may be quite skilled in certain team processes, it is the overall skill of the group which is important here.

Therefore, in the Basic Group things will be done in a somewhat mechanistic, by-the-book manner. Feelings and true opinions will not be expressed openly, because there are too many unknowns. Members will be wary of each other and they will show very little trust of each other. They are sizing each other up!

In the Basic Group, the focus of the members is on their own self-interests. In diagrams of the Basic Group you will often see arrows pointing in different directions. Until group members can answer the question of whether they want to be a part of the group there is little chance that they will get to the next stage of team development. In fact many groups never get beyond this stage of development.

If there is good leadership and a clear task, the group will often appear to be effective – and to a limited extent, they are. However, results are more likely to be additive rather than synergistic. The power of this group lies in its potential rather than its current performance.

Summing-up: the core issue of this stage is Alignment – do I want to go where the other members of this group wants to go?

If and when the group members become somewhat convinced that being a member of this group is in their best interests, they begin to move into the second stage of development, which is ***the Adolescent Team***.

The members of this team, having become convinced that being a member this group IS in their best interests, have now moved up the WILLINGNESS Scale, but they still need to develop SKILLS of co-operation together.

At this stage, the members of the team become willing to risk being more open, and are more willing to express personal concerns and feelings. However their attention begins to turn from personal to interpersonal concerns. Trust is the core issue at this stage. And the focus of the team members is on getting to know their co-members – their strengths, weaknesses and the unique contributions each brings to the team. Through this knowledge and the process of sharing it, trust begins to build, and with it, the willingness to subordinate individual interests to a greater possibility. As the team members grow in their knowledge and trust of one another, they also begin to gain a more accurate picture of the scope of their task; and the team begins to turn towards the task.

Summing-up the core issue for the Adolescent Team is trust.

Within the group, WILLINGNESS to cooperate is now high, and SKILL in cooperation is beginning to grow, as the group has more experience of working together, and the Adolescent Team is beginning to transform into ***the Learning Team***.

Having resolved the issues of alignment and trust, the team is now able to move on to the task itself. And there are two elements which the Learning Team needs to work through. The first of these is taking ownership of the task they have been given. Although the team may have been given a task when they were formed, they now need to recast that task in their own terms. They need to develop a consensus about what their specific task actually is. If they can't do that, there is likely to be disagreements about what they are supposed to be doing and the energies of the team will likely be dissipated in conflict and competition for dominance in setting the direction of the group. So, the team needs to fully grasp what the task is, and have the ability to articulate it.

When they can articulate the task, the second element for the Learning Team is to work out how to accomplish it. Based on the trust they have already built within the team they can begin to openly discuss the processes and skills which are needed to accomplish the task. Roles are discussed and clarified; and the team asks itself “how can we cooperate more effectively?” There is more openness, there is greater trust, and people are more willing to help one another. Clearly their SKILL level in cooperation is growing.

To sum up, the core issues of the Learning Team are ownership of the task and agreement about how to get the task done.

The team is now displaying high WILLINGNESS to cooperate and high SKILL in cooperation. And having worked through the issues of Alignment, Trust, Task and Process, the team can now function as a **High Performance Team**.

At this stage, the team is able to balance the tensions between people and purpose; between individual initiative and collaboration. Everyone is committed to the whole task. There is flexibility, and responsiveness. There is a genuine concern about their effectiveness and how they can do better. Team members are in touch with both the task and with one another, and they have learned to balance both task and relationship. People enjoy working together and they are getting the task done. Results can be exceptional, because the core issue for the High Performance Team is the commitment to getting the task accomplished.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 14

List the groups and teams that you are a member of.

Review each of the groups/teams you have listed above and against each one state which stage of Team Development you consider it has reached. You may not be able to list a stage of Team Development against each of the teams you have listed.



learning

Pat MacMillan in outlining the four stages towards a high performance team, also suggests that there are four other types of groups that are at best dysfunctional – and which are clearly not effective as teams! Some of the groups/teams that you are part of might actually be dysfunctional – which is why you were not able to list which stage of team development some of your groups/teams were at. It’s important to be honest about the state of our groups and teams – because if we don’t recognise those that are dysfunctional, we may expect them to deliver more in results than they are able to!

The four dysfunctional teams which Pat MacMillan identified are:

The **Confused Crowd** has high willingness to co-operate but very low skills in working together. This group has the best of intentions and a great attitude to working together. But they do not have the skills needed to effectively combine and coordinate their efforts. There is willingness to cooperate, but they just don't have the skills. The problem could stem from inadequate training for the team – or even the make-up of the team (such as missing roles)

Warring Factions have skills in cooperation – but they aren't willing to cooperate with one another. The group is characterized by high levels of competition, internal politics or lack of trust, and the result is a group of interdependent people who are acting independently. Relationships are so bruised and broken that there is little chance that the individuals will subordinate their interests to the greater needs of the group. In a group like this, it is unlikely that anyone will take the risk of trying to do anything with anybody else; or that there will be any consensus as to who should give any leadership to the group. This group isn't cooperating – and doesn't want to!

The **Unruly Mob** has neither has the skills nor the willingness to cooperate. They are made up of individuals who are committed to doing things the way they've always done them, or doing things in their own way. They are independent operatives and their slogan is "I'll do it my way"! The situation is anarchy at worst, chaos at best!

The final dysfunctional group is the **Individual Stars**. This group has high skills in co-operation but their willingness to work together is dependent on their perceived individual interest. These group members are highly skilled in cooperation, but are in the group for themselves, not for the team. In other words, they don't have the willingness to cooperate. It is only when it is to their distinct advantage that they use their cooperative skills in a collaborative way. People have high competitive spirits and don't have any trust – and it's almost impossible for a group like this to move up the willingness to cooperate axis.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 15

Think about the groups and teams that you listed in Answer Box 14, and which you were unable to identify a specific stage of team development for. Was this because some of these teams are dysfunctional?

List those groups/teams which you are a member of and which display the characteristics of any of the four dysfunctional teams, and state why each one is dysfunctional



learning

The thinking which Pat MacMillan has done on team development is highly appropriate to the partnership setting – and particularly to the development of Working Groups, Interest Groups and Task Groups. By understanding the process of team development, we can help the leaders and members of these groups become much more effective and actually produce some stunning results.

As we look at the process of effective team development, there is a key question which needs to be answered for a team to be able to move onto the next stage. In our partnerships we need to help Working Groups ask and answer each question because it is only when the members of the group can truly answer that question than the group can progress to the next stage.

The question for the Basic Group is “Why am I here?”

There may be supplementary questions as well, such as “Do I want to be here?” “Can I do better on my own or with a different group?.” These questions are ones relating to disorientation and fear, perhaps even feelings of inadequacy. People don’t like to be in unfamiliar settings and it can be a challenge for them to be in a group when they are not certain they really want to be there – and they may even question whether they have anything to contribute to the working of the group. These are genuine questions, which we need to help each individual answer if we want to get beyond the Basic Group stage in the potential development of a Working Group

We can help the Basic Group move through this stage by ensuring that each member of the group understands both the contribution he or she can make to this particular Working Group and the reasons why he or she is a member of the group. It can be helpful for someone – the facilitator or a member of the facilitation team to spend time with the individual Working Group members to help them understand the unique contribution each one can make. It may take time, but it is time well spent in getting the group to move to the next stage of maturity. Because once group members have answers to this fundamental question, they can move on to the next stage – to the Adolescent Team.

The question for the Adolescent Team is “Who are you and why are you here?”

The core issue for the Adolescent Team is relationships. The focus of team members is on the other members of the team. As well as the basic question, there are also supplementary questions which may include “Can I rely on you?” “Can I trust you?” “Do you have a hidden agenda?” It is as members of the team get answers to these questions that trust begins to develop, and so communication becomes more open.

We can help the Working Group move through this stage, by the use of a very simple device – which we use regularly in partnership meetings, but was often not well-used in Working Group meetings. In a partnership meeting we accept the importance and the value of taking time on the introductions. However in Working Groups the assumption was often made that everyone already knew each other, and because of limited time, and the need to “get down to business and not waste any time”, it was (and perhaps can still be) a quick round of names. However, if we want the team to move effectively through this stage, leaving out introductions is a big mistake!

To move a Working Group through the Adolescent Team Stage, it is critically important to give sufficient time for introductions. It is important to give time for Working Group members to share their backgrounds, their experience, and their interest in being a part of this group, therefore giving sufficient time for quality introductions at the beginning of the Working Group is a key. Relationships are key

to effective partnering, and there must be opportunities for Working Group members to get to know one another, so in even in your Working Group meetings it's important to build in time for breaks and relationship building, because members of the Working Group need to understand one another and value one another. It is only when relationships and trust are settled, that the Adolescent Team can become a Learning Team.

There are two questions for the Learning Team. The first question for the Learning Team is “What are we to do?”

Having got the relationships and trust settled, the Working Group can now begin to focus on the task. When the Working Group was established, the members of the group might have been given a task to do. Now they need to focus on how **they** see the task. They need time to clarify their task – and to articulate it in their own words. If they don't do this, there will be confusion and disagreement in the team as different team members attempt to get the rest to do what they want them to do. This can lead to conflict and to positioning for influence.

To help the Learning Team through this stage, it is helpful to encourage the Working Group to take time to develop a **Working Group Statement of Purpose** is likely to be very helpful. Developing a Purpose Statement will take time, but until the team does this, they can't effectively begin to get the task done together. What the development of a Working Group Purpose Statement does is enable the team to clearly understand the task in detail. This detailed understanding of the task, means that the group's ability in getting the task done is much greater.

The second question for the Learning Team is “How will we do it?”

Having grasped what they are to do, the team then needs to ask the question “how will we do this task?” There are supplementary questions too, which include “Who will do what?” “In what order will we do things?” “How do the different parts of the task fit together in an integrated way?” “How will we make decisions?”

The team is now moving into specific planning to get the task done. They are identifying the roles and the responsibilities of the individuals in the Working Group. And they are thinking about the process, by which the task will be achieved.

To help the Learning Team in their planning process, it can be helpful to get them to outline the various roles that are needed to get the task done, and to list who in the Working Group will be responsible for each of the roles. It can be helpful in the group for each person taking on a role to describe how he/she sees the role, and for other group members to give feedback. In this way there is the opportunity for the whole group to become familiar with the different roles. This will also help with the integration of the roles – something that is very important if there is to be effective cooperation and collaboration. The group will also need to agree on how they will communicate, and how often and when they will meet together to report on progress. It is also important not to make the process too detailed or burdensome or unrealistic; if it does become too much of a chore group members will be overwhelmed by how much they have to do, and it is highly likely that little progress will be made.

Once the Learning Team knows what their task is and how they will perform their task, they move into the final stage – they become a High Performing Team. But they will only stay a High Performing Team if they constantly ask a further question.

And the question for the High Performance Team is “How are we doing?”

Even if a Working Group is being effective and achieving what it is supposed to do, if it doesn't ask this question, its effectiveness can slide. A High Performance Team will be concerned about what it is delivering, about its results, about its outcomes, about its effectiveness. So it will be constantly reviewing its progress by asking the question "How are we doing?" and reviewing its impact.

You may have identified some of the teams which you are a member of as being one of the four dysfunctional "types." So what can we do if we have a "Confused Crowd", or "Warring Factions", and "Unruly Mob" or "Individual Stars"? What can we do to turn a team which is clearly dysfunctional around?

If you remember, the Confused Crowd want to work together, but they don't know how to! The problem this team has is confusion about why they are in the group in the first place. To help the Confused Crowd, it's important to spend some time helping each person understand how they can individually contribute to the task, and to help them understand what the task actually is. In fact a Confused Crowd is often the result of a Basic Group which has been poorly briefed. Spend some time briefing the Confused Crowd, and they can soon become a Basic Group – and then you only need some time and relationships to see the group go through the process to become a High Performance Team.

However, there isn't such an easy solution to the other three dysfunctional teams, and for the Warring Factions, the Unruly Mob and the Individual Stars, there's really only one solution – it's probably best to disband the team and start again!

Always remember, that if you want to have effective groups and teams, in your partnerships, in your ministries and in your churches, you don't form them – you build them. Too often, we form a team to undertake a task, and then leave them to it. We leave them to run themselves. Sometimes they succeed, but often they fail. When there's failure we tend to blame the team, whereas perhaps we should look at how we've put the team together, and what support – and indeed training in team dynamics – we've given them.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 16

Review each of the groups and teams which you identified earlier and indicated the stage they are at. List each group/team here together with the stage of team development and explain what you will now do to help the team move to the next level, and when you will do it.



learning

Final Assignment



application

Final Assignment

1. Why are teams important in partnerships?
2. Describe how you intend to set up new teams in the future to enhance their likelihood of effectiveness.
3. Why is it important to value the different characteristics which different people bring to a partnership and/or team situation? Give examples from your own experience of how people with different gifts has enhanced a team which you have been a member of.

READINGS



reading

8.1 Redefining Working Groups in Partnerships

A paper by Mats Tunehag and John Rogers

Focus Groups in Partnerships

Instead of using an all-inclusive term such as “Working Groups” some partnerships have begun to differentiate between the different types of group that meet as part of the partnership. These groups are being given the generic term “Focus Groups”, and are defining the difference between the purpose and function of “Interest Groups”, “Working Groups” and “Task Forces.”

Interest Groups

The focus of an Interest Group is on networking or connecting for the sharing of information and mutual learning. It is held where there is a need for partners to meet together and discuss critical issues, but where the need to establish a Working Group for further cooperation or coordination might be inappropriate, unnecessary or even divisive. For example, a partnership might prefer to establish an Interest Group to discuss Church Planting, where partners can share information, but do not need to go as far as agreeing on a specific model of church planting that would be adopted for the partnership.

Sometimes an Interest Group may turn itself into a Working Group. It is better to allow this to happen naturally, than to force it.

When establishing an Interest Group, make sure that a Discussion Leader, Moderator or Facilitator is appointed to lead the discussion, and that he/she is fully aware of the purpose and context of the Interest Group.

Key Elements of an Interest Group:

- Primary purpose is information sharing and mutual learning
- Provides an opportunity for the discussion of critical issues
- Action Steps are not necessary (but some may come up out of the discussion)
- Often a “one-off” meeting (although often the same topic for an interest Group may be on the programme of successive Partnership meetings)
- Discussion leader is essential
- May lead to the formation of a Working Group

Working Groups

The focus of a Working Group is to enable ministries and churches to work together on a specific ministry area. Working Groups share information and then consider what can be done to make the work more effective in that ministry area, by identifying challenges, agreeing on strategies to overcome these challenges and developing objectives and plans to move the ministry forward. Working Groups will often come together around a specific area of ministry such as Radio, Scripture Translation or Human Rights. When establishing a Working Group, make sure someone is appointed who will provide leadership to the group, and that if this person is not able to undertake the leadership of the group long term, that an appropriate person from within the group is able to take on the leadership. As with partnerships, the leadership of Working Groups is critically important, and a Working Group is unlikely to be effective without long-term committed leadership.

When setting up Working Groups, it needs to be clear that commitment to the Working Group will need to be longer than for a single meeting. A Working Group is set up to focus on a specific ministry area, and get work done to move that area of ministry forward. For example, a Scripture Translation Working Group will have the task of overseeing the translation of the Scriptures into a specific language, and getting the Scriptures published. This is going to take more than a single meeting! Members of the Working Group need to be committed for the long-haul!

Key Elements of a Working Group:

- Primary purpose is the facilitation of cooperation among agencies and churches
- Focused on a specific broad area of ministry
- Sharing of information which leads to the agreeing of strategies to move the ministry forward
- Developing of objectives and plans
- Needs long-term commitment
- Facilitator of a Working Group is essential

Task Forces

The focus of a Task Force is to take action to forward a specific task that needs to be done in collaboration in order to advance the work of the partnership. A Task Force may develop out of a Working Group, or the Partnership may decide that a specific need should be addressed by the setting up of a Task-Force. A Task Force will have a specific focus, it will often be quite narrow or limited in its focus.

Key Elements of a Task Force:

- Primary purpose is to decide on collaborative practical action on a specific task which will forward the work of the partnership
- May develop out of an established Working Group, or may be set up by the Partnership for a specific purpose
- Develop Objectives and Action Plans
- Will take action on agreed objectives
- Facilitator of a Task Force is essential
- Limited life – when task is done, the Task Force winds up

8-2 Orientation/Style Questionnaire – Preferences

For each of the following pairs of Statements, please tick or put a check mark in the blank box along side the statement to select either statement a or b in each case, being the statement which best describes you. Do not mark the shaded boxes. You must not select both pairs of statement and must select one of each pair.

| | | | | | |
|-----|----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. | a. | I like working closely with people | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. | I like to have procedures clearly laid down | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | a. | I like to get the job done | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. | I think details are important | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | a. | I like to get to know people | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. | I hate wasting time | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. | a. | I think a clear rule book avoids confusion | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. | I like to help people with their problems | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. | a. | I think results are what count | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. | I prefer to see instructions in writing | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. | a. | I think people are the organisation's most important resource | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. | I think the absence of procedures leads to chaos | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. | a. | I try to make friends at work and at church | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. | I get things done on time | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. | a. | I find delays frustrating | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. | I find clear procedures are important | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. | a. | I like to help people | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. | I like to achieve my target | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. | a. | I like to belong to a team | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. | I think details are important | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. | a. | I like to see results | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b. | I think good procedures avoid chaos | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | | |
|---|----|--|----------|----------|----------|
| 12. | a. | I like to keep the work going | | | |
| | b. | I enjoy social contact at work and at church | | | |
| 13. | a. | I find people interesting | | | |
| | b. | I like to stick to policy | | | |
| 14. | a. | I prefer to have written instructions | | | |
| | b. | I hate hold ups on things I'm working on | | | |
| 15. | a. | I enjoy working with people | | | |
| | b. | I like to achieve my target | | | |
| 16. | a. | I like to consider peoples' feelings | | | |
| | b. | I think that clear rules matter | | | |
| 17. | a. | I like to see things done correctly | | | |
| | b. | I like to finish the jobs I'm doing | | | |
| 18. | a. | I like to make friends at work and at church | | | |
| | b. | I like to see results | | | |
| Please enter the total score for each column | | | | | |
| Please transfer the scores and categories to the chart below | | | <i>P</i> | <i>T</i> | <i>R</i> |

List your orientation/style in order of your scores:

| | Score | Category P T R |
|----------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| Highest: | | |
| Next Highest: | | |
| Lowest: | | |

Now transfer the information in the chart above to the similar chart in your work book

8-3 “The Performance Factor” by Pat MacMillan

Pages 180-208

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Confused Crowd | Willingness to Cooperate | High | Adolescent Team | Learning Team | High Performance Team |
| | | Low | Basic Group | Individual Stars | |
| | | | Skill in Cooperation | High | |
| Unruly Mob | Low | Warring Factions | | | |

An effective team needs to move through from
 Basic Group to
 Adolescent Team to
 Learning Team to a
 High Performance Team

Dysfunctional teams are the
 Confused Crowd
 Unruly Mob
 Warring Factions
 Individual Stars

Partnerships

Unit 9

Partnerships & Conflict



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Version 1.3

Unit 9 - Partnership & Conflict

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Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this unit you will be able to.....

- Describe how conflict can damage a partnership
- List some ways in which avoiding conflict can be dangerous
- Describe how a conflict can begin
- Describe how a conflict can escalate to a point where ministry can be seriously damaged or destroyed
- Describe what needs to be done to de-escalate a conflict situation
- Analyse a conflict you have observed or been involved in.

Supplementary text: "Body Matters – a Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission" by Ernie Addicott, published by Interdev Partnership Associates 2005

Lecture Notes & Workbook

Introduction Unit 9

This course is focusing on partnership – on the encouragement that we find in the Bible for Christian believers to work together in unity. However, although we might understand that we should “live together in unity” as the Psalmist encourages us (Psalm 133), our experience of living and worshipping and working with other Christians is likely that we don’t always find it easy to live and work together in unity!

For most of us, our experience of church and ministry is likely to include disagreement, arguments and conflict.

Your Own Experiences of Conflict

I want you to think about a conflict situation you have observed, or been a party to. Ideally it should be a conflict situation in a church or the ministry that you are a member of; it may have happened in the past, or it may be something which is on-going now.

Now, I want you to analyse the conflict by working through the following questions:

Answer Box # 1

Who is / was involved?

How were you involved?

What are / were the issues in the conflict?

In what ways did other members of the church / ministry get involved?

How did the conflict impact the church / ministry?

How is / was the conflict being dealt with?

How would you describe the relationship today of the parties involved?



learning

Causes of Conflict

James, writing to first-century Christians who are in conflict writes: “What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight.” (James 4:1-2a)

Think about it?

Answer Box # 2

What does James say causes conflict?

Conflict is demonstrated in what James calls “fights and quarrels”, and my reading of the text suggests that James is saying that it is our own desires that cause conflict. My aims and goals clash with the aims and goals of others. I want something which you will not let me have – or which you cannot let me have. Maybe I think I can run the youth programme at church better than you are doing it; but you’ve been appointed to the job by the church leaders; or maybe I want to start a church coffee-bar as a form of outreach, but it isn’t part of the church’s current strategy; or perhaps I want to lead an evangelistic outreach in one part of the town, but you want to focus on a different type of ministry in a different location.

In fact churches and ministries don’t seem to lack creative ways of finding things to “fight and quarrel” about! Issues around Bible translations, worship styles, hymns and songs, length of sermons, mid-week activities, youth ministry, building plans, colour of curtains, flavour of coffee have led to disagreements, fights and quarrels, and even church splits.

There are two elements to any conflict. There are the facts of the situation – the fact that you want something different to what I want.

But there are also the feelings, because with the facts come feelings – feelings of hurt, resentment, suspicion and anger. It is the “feelings” element in a conflict which does the damage to our relationships – because even if we get the facts resolved, the negative feelings we have experienced can often linger on. They can smoulder away, like a fire which we think has been extinguished, but then ignites again when we least expect it.

As far as their susceptibility to conflict is concerned, partnerships are no different to church and ministry situations. And in the same way that conflict impacts the life of the church, so conflict impacts the work of partnerships too.

Think about it?



learning

Answer Box # 3

Read the Account of a Conflict between Rev Hezekiah Hermon and Joseph Jeremias which you can find in the readings at the end of this unit.

This conflict is a conflict in a church situation, and you may have had similar experiences to either Hezekiah or to Joseph. This account really focuses on the conflict from Hezekiah's perspective.

I want you to think about the conflict, using the following questions:

Who was involved in this conflict?

What were the initial causes of the conflict?

What other issues developed as the conflict progressed?

In what ways did other members of the church and the denomination get involved?

How did the conflict impact the church?

How does the conflict impact Hezekiah and his ministry?

How does the conflict impact Joseph and his ministry?

We'll come back to this specific conflict later in this unit. But I want us to turn our attention to conflict in a partnering setting

Conflicts in Partnering Setting

Think about it?

Answer Box # 4

What issues might cause conflict in between churches, ministries or people involved in a partnering relationship?



learning

Some of the causes of conflict in partnerships which I've seen include the following:

- Where one person has made commitments which have not been fulfilled (for example Better World Mission may have offered to provide a water engineer for the partnership project in Happy Valley but was not able to find a suitably qualified person to take on the task)
- Where people see things in different ways (for example Southern Association of Languages and the Venerable Bible Society have strongly different views on how to translate the New Testament into the Bendistani language)
- Where one person doesn't agree with the way another person is working (for example the Director of the Northern Presbyterian Congregations of North America believes that the team leader of the "Jesus Film" Project for Kabuli is taking dragging his feet and isn't getting the "Jesus Film" distributed quickly enough)
- Thoughtless comments (for example where the Administrative Director of the International Christian College in Stuttgart makes a comment about the administrative capacities of the Principal of the World Ambassadors of God Seminary in Moshulu)

You may have suggested other causes – and that's fine – as there is a multiplicity of causes of conflict in partnership as well as in church settings.

Dangers in Avoiding Conflict

Because of the potential damaging impact of conflict in a church or partnership, some people believe we should avoid conflict at all costs. And in some cultures it is normal for people to try to avoid any conflict situation. However, there are serious dangers in avoiding conflict.

Think about it?



learning

Answer Box # 5

What are some of the dangers in trying to avoid conflict? What do you think?

I think there are a number of dangers in avoiding conflict. Some of the dangers include

- Changes which may be necessary are never made. We can get into a nice comfortable situation and stay there. Conflict forces us to look for new and more effective ways of doing things.
- Resentment can build up. When someone tries to avoid conflict, it doesn't mean that the tensions go away – the tensions are still there but they are under the surface. At times feelings can explode resulting in angry accusations and recriminations.
- Discontent grows. When we ignore conflict it can lead to increasingly dangerous relational situations, which result in attacking of one another. The result then is that the conflict becomes much more difficult to deal with.

We often think of conflict as being bad. But conflict is neither good nor bad; it is neither right nor wrong. Conflict is often caused by honest differences of opinion or by some change or a decision which affects people in some way. Where conflict is bad and wrong is when it leads to people being attacked or hurt unnecessarily.

The Escalation of Conflict

We're now going to look at how conflict can begin quite innocently and how it can escalate completely out of control. Conflict often begins as a result of how we respond to difference.

Do you remember the account of the conflict between Hezekiah and Joseph which we looked at earlier?

It started as a result of how Hezekiah responded to the Bible Study group which Joseph had started. There was a difference between how Hezekiah ran a Bible Study Group and how Joseph ran a Bible Study Group.

Answer Box # 6

How did the conflict begin?



learning

With difference we can do one of two things:

We can acknowledge that there is difference – and celebrate the fact. If we acknowledge the fact that there is a difference, and accept it, then conflict isn't the result.

However if we focus on the difference, that can lead to other feelings and actions which can lead to devastating consequences!

Now I want you to re-read the account of the conflict between Hezekiah and Joseph in the Readings, because you will need to relate that account to the next section of the unit.

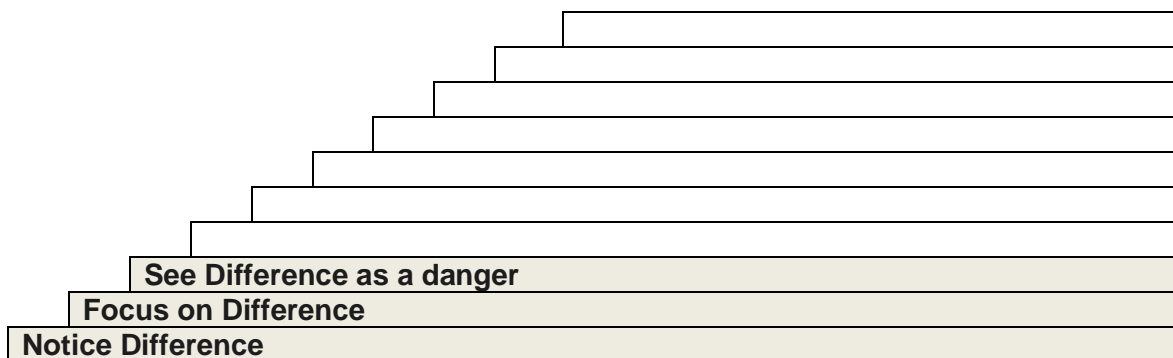
Conflict escalates like going up a series of stairs or steps. And the higher you go up the steps – the more dangerous the conflict becomes.

Earlier we talked about conflict starting by how we respond to difference. If we accept the difference there is between us, there's not problem. If Hezekiah had accepted that there was a difference between how he ran Bible Study Groups, and how Joseph ran them, there wouldn't have been a problem. If Hezekiah had valued the difference – and had been able to see the positive sides of the different ways they operated, Hezekiah and Joseph could have worked positively together, and the church would have benefited greatly. But Hezekiah didn't value the difference. He noticed the difference. And once we notice difference – that you are different from me – then we've put our first foot on the Conflict Escalator Curve.

Step 1 is to NOTICE DIFFERENCE, and from there it is very easy to get onto Step 2.

Step 2 is to FOCUS ON THE DIFFERENCE. When I focus on the difference, I think about the difference between us all the time; I can't get the problem or the situation out of my mind.

Step 3 is to SEE DIFFERENCE AS A DANGER OR A THREAT. I begin to see the other person as a danger; I begin to believe that their views could de-stabilize the rather comfortable situation I am in and that their actions could result in my losing my power, my authority or even my job. So, as a reaction to the danger, I cut off all communication with the other person, and from now on I am unable to share any common ground with him or her. And from now on it's feelings, rather than facts which will influence the course of the relationship.



As you can see, it's quite easy to get to the third step on the Conflict Escalator. And these three steps have a common theme. There is a distancing in the relationship because of the reaction to the difference.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 7

Look again at our account of the conflict between Hezekiah and Joseph.

1. In what ways did Hezekiah NOTICE the difference between Hezekiah and Joseph?
2. In what ways did Hezekiah FOCUS ON the difference between Hezekiah and Joseph?
3. In what ways did Hezekiah SEE THE DIFFERENCE between him and Joseph AS A DANGER OR A THREAT?

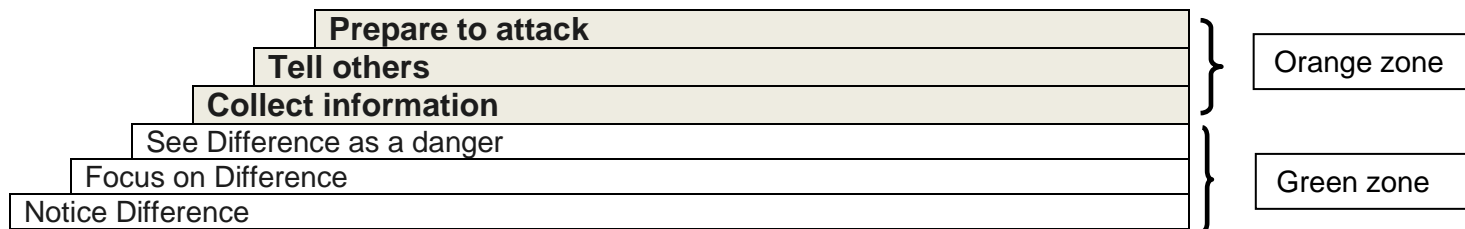
Now let's get back to the Conflict Escalator:

Step 4 is where I COLLECT INFORMATION TO MAKE A CASE. I've entered the "research-stage" and start collecting information to support my views. What I'm doing here is to prove to myself why this person is dangerous. And then I move to the next step.

Step 5 is a critical step to reach, because I TELL OTHERS. Here I am lobbying for support from those who I think I can persuade to think in the same way as I do. I want to make sure that others see and understand the rightness of my position. So I talk to other people. I talk to anyone who will listen. I feel I need to share with them the injustice which I feel. In fact I am seeking more than understanding – I am looking for support for my position.

I said that this is a critical step. This is because once we're on Step 5, we're involving other people, and so it now becomes very difficult to turn back. If I take a step backwards now, it is likely that my pride will be damaged, and I will lose face with those who I've told about my worries about the other person. And so I take the next step on the Conflict Escalator.

Step 6 is where I PREPARE TO ATTACK. I now begin to work out the tactics I will use to attack the other person, and decide on the timing of the actual attack. I am now committed to action – to actually hurt and damage those who I believe are against me. And at this stage I will talk to everyone apart from the other side!



If we used color, we would have the first three as **Green** and then would change the next steps to **Orange**. The situation is getting increasingly dangerous, especially as we're about to take another step up the Conflict Escalator.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 8

Look again at our account of the conflict between Hezekiah and Joseph.

4. In what ways did Hezekiah begin to COLLECT INFORMATION TO MAKE A CASE against Joseph?

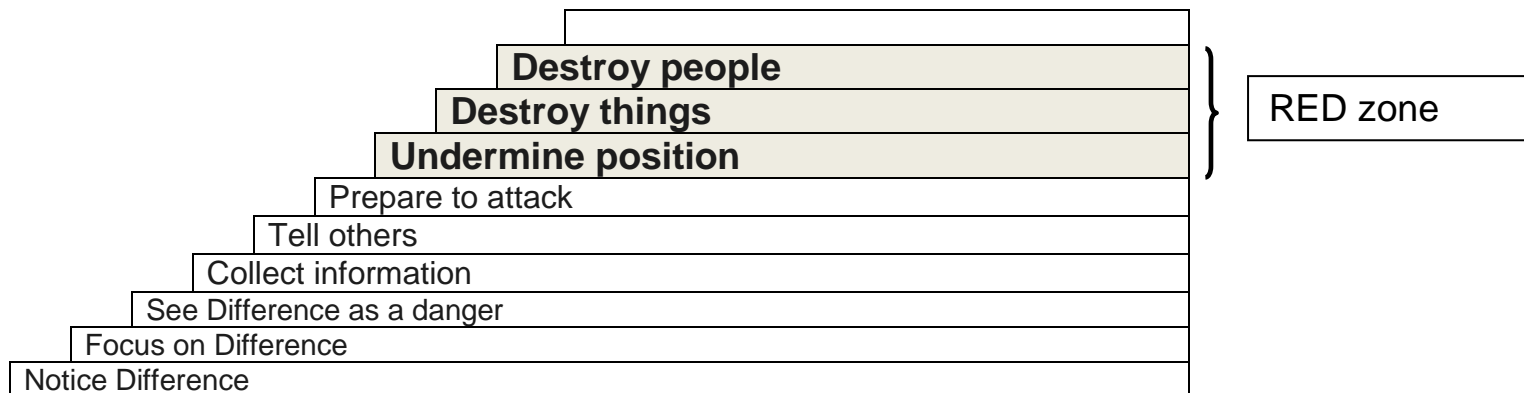
5. In what ways did Hezekiah begin to TELL OTHERS about his concerns about Joseph's behaviour?

Why is this such a dangerous step?

6. In what ways did Hezekiah PREPARE TO ATTACK Joseph?

Now let's get back to the Conflict Escalator again:
 Step 7 is where I UNDERMINE THE OTHER PERSON'S POSITION. This is where I begin to criticize the other person – his actions, his values, his beliefs.
 Step 8 is where I DESTROY THINGS. I attack the other person's work and their reputation, with one purpose in mind – to damage them. And I may actually do physical damage to property or things which are valuable to them.

Step 9 is where I DESTROY THE OTHER PERSON. My objective now is to do more than attack the other person, I am now bent on destroying the other person’s reputation, or in some situations I actually kill the other person. I adopt a situation in which my main aim is to hurt the opposition as much as possible.



Notice that this section would be RED if we used colors. Instead we have enlarged the TEXT with each escalation. We’re in the Destruction Section of the Conflict Escalator – and that’s a very dangerous place to be in!

Think about it?

Answer Box #9

- Look again at our account of the conflict between Hezekiah and Joseph.
- 7. In what ways did Hezekiah begin to UNDERMINE THE POSITION of Joseph?

- 8. In what ways did Hezekiah begin to DESTROY THINGS belonging to Joseph?

- 9. In what ways did Hezekiah attempt to DESTROY JOSEPH?



And coming back to the Conflict Escalator again, we can even take a further step – because Step 10 is to DESTROY SELF. My behaviour in attacking my perceived enemy may be such that I actually destroy my own reputation with other people, and in extreme situations can even kill myself.



Although our account of the conflict between Hezekiah and Joseph doesn't actually get to this final stage, it could very easily get there.

The Conflict Escalator can be applied in any conflict situation. It applies in conflicts between two people; it applies to conflicts between two organizations; it applies in conflicts between two nations. Sometimes the Escalator moves slowly; sometimes it happens very quickly. Sometimes it moves at a variable rate!

Using the Conflict Escalator to analyse a Conflict Situation

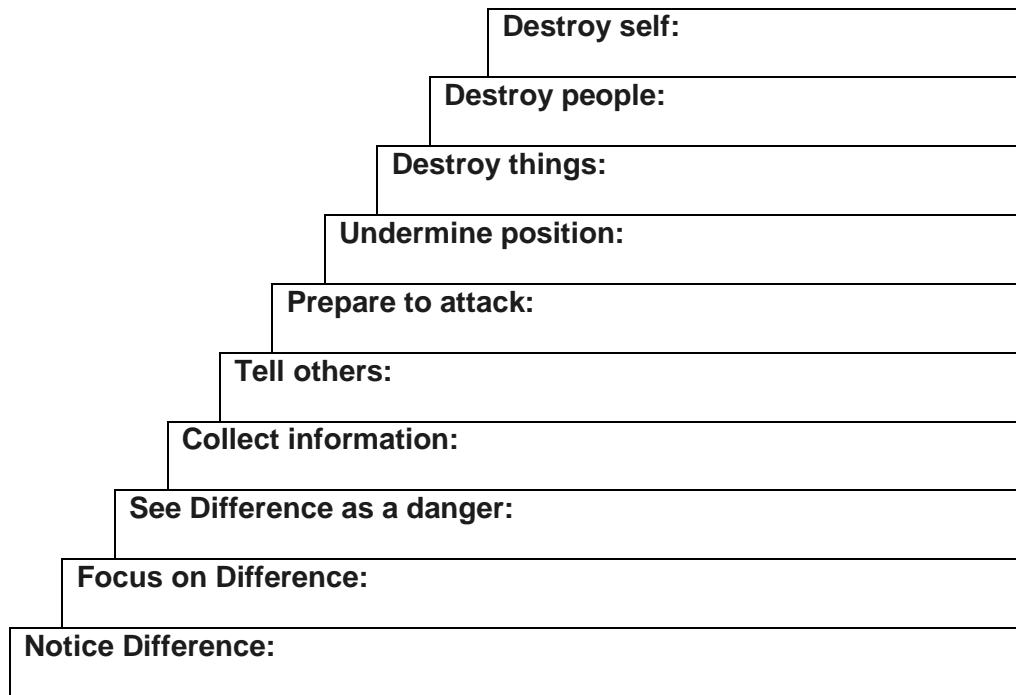
Think about it?



Answer Box # 10

Think of a Conflict you have observed or have been involved in, and which had reached the RED Zone

Analyze the conflict by describing how it started, developed and grew, using the Conflict Escalator:



Think about it

Answer Box # 11

- At what point did the Escalation of the Conflict Stop?
- What helped to halt the Escalation of the Conflict?
- What could have been done earlier to end the escalation of the Conflict?



learning

The Conflict De-Escalator

At some point comes the recognition that the cost of Conflict is greater than the cost of Reconciliation. And at that point you can begin to go down the other side of the Conflict Escalator. The encouraging point is that you don't have to go to the top of the Escalator to go down the other side! You can actually get off the Escalator at any of the 9 Steps! (if you've got to Step 10, it's too late to get off!)

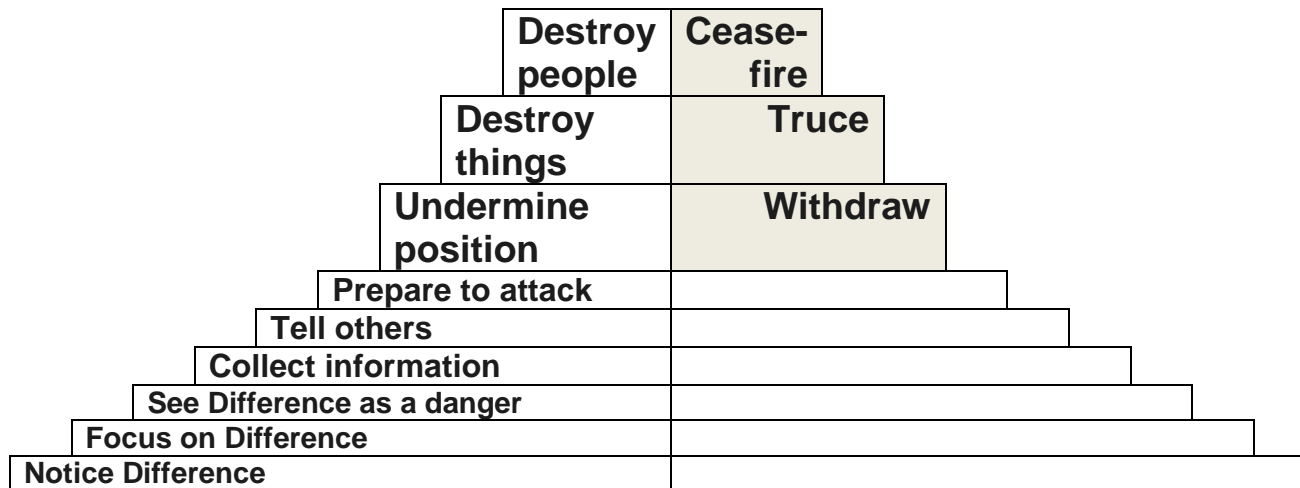
However, if you've got to Step 9, you need to start at the top of the Conflict De-escalator, and to help you through the first steps on the way down you will need the help of a third person a "peace-maker." Once you're in "destruction" mode, you can't approach the person with whom you are in conflict unless you have someone to help you, because you will risk being attacked yourself.

Step 9 is CEASE-FIRE. This is an informal decision to stop firing at each other. However, I am still on the alert, and although I won't attack you, I am not sure that you won't attack me. My level of trust of you is very low – or even non-existent

Step 8 is a TRUCE. This is where we agree to stop attacking each other, at least on a temporary basis, and we are willing to begin to look for an agreement. However, this is only a temporary peace, which gives us both the opportunity to draw back from our confrontational positions.

Step 7 is WITHDRAW. We're now ready to pull back from our previous positions. Until we do this, we can't start talking together. However trust remains very low, with both sides continuing to be very suspicious of each other, and each side continuing to be looking for signs of surprise attacks.

Looking again at the Conflict Escalator and De-Escalator, we can see that whereas on the way up, we were in the "Destruction" Section, we're now in the "Disengagement" Section. It's still a dangerous situation to be in, but step-by-step we're working at transforming the conflict into a positive outcome.



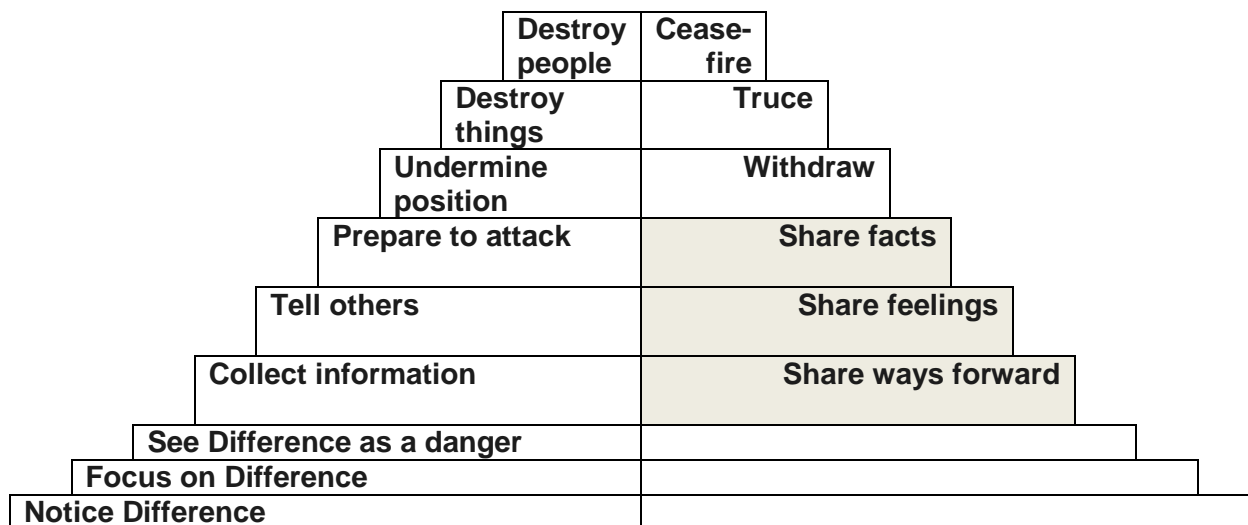
Once both sides have withdrawn, it now becomes possible to bring the two sides together and to re-establish the communication between the two people, organizations or nations involved in the conflict. There are two steps which need to be navigated for a successful re-establishment of communication – a sharing of the facts and a sharing of the feelings involved.

Step 6 is to **SHARE THE FACTS**. Both sides in the conflict need to spend time together. Talking together and listening to each other. Initially they need to share the facts – what actually happened, and how each side interprets those facts. They need to talk about what each person did in the conflict and why; and how they each saw the other side, and how they interpreted the actions of the other side. However, sharing facts is not enough.

Step 5 is to **SHARE FEELINGS**. We need to do more than talk about what actually happened in the conflict – we also need to talk about how we felt. We need to be able to talk about how we felt – we may have felt angry, hurt, let down, confused or afraid. If we don't deal with our feelings we will not come together emotionally and spiritually. Talking about feelings can be particularly difficult in some cultures, but neglecting talking about feelings in the Conflict De-Escalator is often a reason why complete healing doesn't take place in a conflict situation. Talking about the facts and the feelings will help us come to terms with the past and the present. But what about the future? We need to take another step down on the Conflict De-Escalator.

Step 4 is to **SHARE WAYS FORWARD**. We need to spend some time together talking about future possibilities in the relationship. The focus is now on what is going to happen in the future and you need to find a joint commitment to a different future than what has happened in the past. Future ways forward could be avoidance or separation (which means you go your way and I'll go my way). However that may not be helpful in the work we're trying to do. What we want to have as an outcome here is a commitment and energy towards a common vision for the future.

Whereas on the way up, we were diverging, the two sides are now converging. They are beginning to come together.



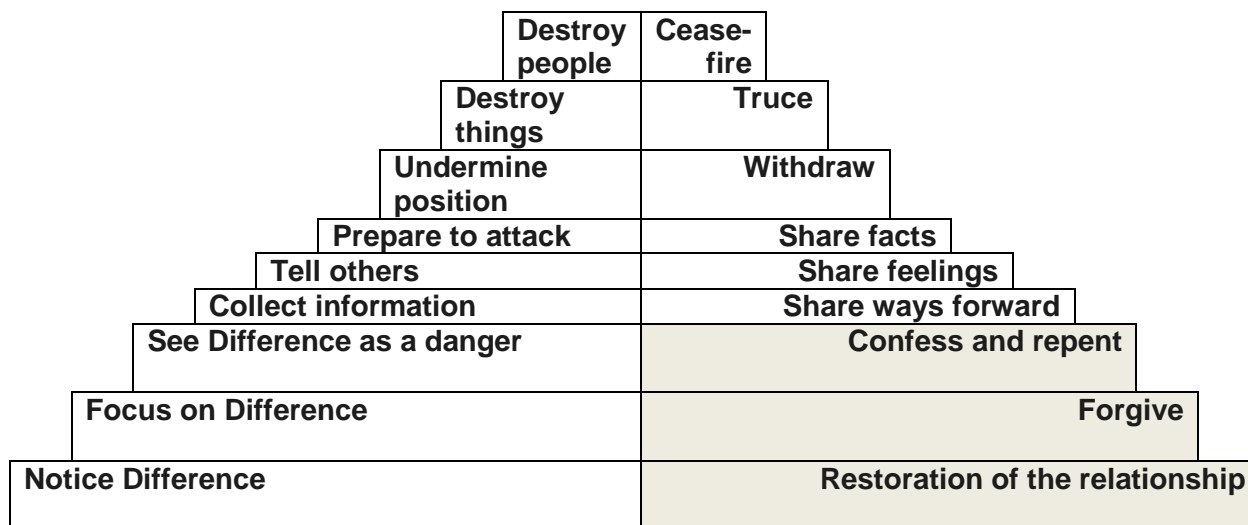
We're almost at the bottom of the Conflict De-Escalator, but there are still three steps to go. There is still some important business to complete. Too often we try to avoid the next two steps and jump down to the bottom step. However, there is a danger in trying to jump down several steps at once – because you can get hurt! And if you try to jump down from Step 4 to Step 1 – there's a danger that you'll get injured in the process! So make sure you don't avoid Steps 3 and 2.

Step 3 is CONFESS AND REPENT. Whatever stage the conflict reached, it is likely that one if not both parties have acted wrongly. Therefore there needs to be confession. And both sides need to confess – to admit they were wrong and to repent of the wrong actions, words and thoughts. With repentance, we need to go on and say that we are sorry for our actions and our attitudes – and to say that we knew we were wrong – and that (with help) we will not repeat that behaviour

Step 2 is to FORGIVE. There should be one response to repentance – and that is Forgiveness. With Forgiveness comes the responsibility to accept, forget and begin again.

And finally we get to the bottom step!

Step 1, which is the RESTORATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP. The relationship is restored; reconciliation has occurred and we can work together in unity once again



It is very important to note that you don't have to go all the way up the Conflict Escalator before you can come down. You can step of the Escalator at any time – and the lower down you take that step – the better it will be for everyone! However, you can't jump from anywhere on the up-escalator to the bottom step on the down-escalator. You need to need to note the colour of the step you are

on – and move to the top of that colour segment in order to descend safely. If you try to jump to the bottom step, or miss out any of the descending stages, you are storing up trouble for the future.

It would now be helpful for you to read Chapter 8 of “Body Matters – A Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission” by Ernie Addicott. The page references are 104-116.

On pages 105 -110, Ernie discusses what he calls the “Strife Curve” and the “Reconciliation Curve” and what he discusses there is similar to what we have called the Conflict Escalator and the Conflict De-Escalator.

Re-read pages 111-113, where Ernie discusses issues of conflict which arise because of sin. It would also be helpful for you to read Matthew 18: 15-22.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 12

What are the stages of dealing with the conflict when you are dealing with the sin of another Christian?



learning

My version of the Scriptures says “if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax-collector.” What does it mean to treat someone as a pagan or a tax-collector?

It would be interesting to have a discussion on the last question. For me, the key supplementary question is “how did Jesus treat pagans and tax-collectors?” As we know, he did not completely cut them off, he continued to meet with them, to eat with them and socialize with them – always with the hope of restoring them to a right relationship with him and with their fellow-men.

Conclusion

Conflict can destroy a church – and it can destroy a partnership.

In this unit we have tried to give you an over-view of why it is important to deal with conflicts as they arise and develop in a church and in a partnering context. Helping others to reconcile their differences and to resolve conflict is a challenging and demanding occupation; sometimes it can be dangerous, as those in conflict turn against those trying to bring reconciliation. Being an “agent of reconciliation” needs special skills, which can be learned.

If you are in-experienced in helping others to resolve their conflicts, be wary of jumping in too quickly. If possible, find an experienced mediator who can help. You may like to get some training in mediation skills. There is an entire course on this subject later in the course.

Final Assignment



application

Final Assignment

1. *Submit your analysis of a conflict situation which you have observed or were involved in and which you described in Section 7*
2. *In that example, describe what **you** could have done at each of the steps to bring an end to the conflict. [Note you don't have to be one of the parties in conflict to step in and try to bring reconciliation to the parties in conflict.] How might have each of your actions re-bounded on you?*
3. *Write a statement on how conflict could damage or impact a partnership (300-500 words)*
4. *Write a draft policy for a partnership you are or might be involved in on what partner members should do to minimize conflict in the partnership. (300-500 words)*

READINGS



reading

STORY OF CONFLICT IN PARTNERSHIP SITUATION

Rev Hezekiah Hermon is pastor of the Ambassadors of God Church in Cantona City. Hezekiah was one of the first students to be trained at the WAG Seminary and like many of the WAG pastors, he is very conservative. The Ambassadors of God Church in Cantona City is very traditional, and Hezekiah is complete opposed to some of the modern expressions of worship which is developing in some of the churches in Kabuli. Like many WAG pastors, Hezekiah has held revival meetings each year, but he has been disappointed that his church hasn't grown beyond the 30 or so regulars, who have been part of his congregation for the past 25 years. There is a mid-week meeting for prayer and Bible-Study at the church, but in reality the only person who has the opportunity to speak at the meeting is Hezekiah himself.

Recently, Joseph Jeremias, who grew up in the Ambassadors of God Church in Cantona City, has returned home, having studied at the University at Moshulu, which included a year's exchange programme with a university abroad. Joseph's experiences in Moshulu and overseas has given him a broader perspective on church and worship, and although he attends the Ambassadors of God Church on Sunday mornings, he has started a mid-week Bible Study for some of the younger families, many of whom have returned to Cantona City, having studied at the University in Moshulu. This Bible Study takes the form of fairly open discussion. Members of this group are also talking about meeting together regularly on a Sunday evening for a more informal worship service.

Hezekiah is concerned at these developments, especially by the fact that a number of the young people who are attending Joseph's Bible Study are not attendees at the church. In fact, the more he thinks about Joseph's Bible Study Group the more concerned he becomes. And the more concerned he becomes the more he thinks about the Bible Study Group.

In fact, the more he thinks about the Bible Study Group, the more he worries about untrained people openly discussing the Bible. He increasingly believes that error will creep into the church and he increasingly worries that Joseph will set up another church in Cantona in deliberate opposition to the Ambassadors of God Church in the town. At Sunday services, Hezekiah deliberately avoids Joseph. If he sees Joseph coming towards him, he moves off in the other direction. If he has to speak to Joseph, he finds an excuse to end the conversation as soon as he can.

Hezekiah now begins to write to other Ambassadors of God Churches in Kabuli to find out if they have had similar problems in their churches and he is particularly looking for evidence that will prove that any Bible Study Group which isn't led by the pastor eventually leads to the disintegration of the church. He also writes to other Ambassadors of God Churches in other parts of the world seeking evidence which will prove that Joseph's actions are dangerous and could split the church.

Hezekiah now shares his concerns with some of the older men in the congregation – men that he is particularly close to. He tells them that he is very worried that Joseph's behaviour will split the church. He tells them that he suspects that Joseph is trying to deliberately undermine his position and he asks their advice as to whether he should attempt to stop Joseph's Bible Study Group. He also writes to a number of the other pastors of the Ambassadors of God Church in Kabuli and shares with them his concerns about what is happening in his church and how he believes that Joseph is trying to destroy the church. Hezekiah is very relieved when both his friends in the church and many of the pastors he has written to write back and tell him how concerned they are for him and how difficult it must be to have a young revolutionary in his congregation.

Hezekiah has been confirmed in his beliefs, and now decides he must do something to stop Joseph and to protect the church from his evil influence. He begins to think about what he will actually do to stop the Bible Study Group and begins to plan how and when he will launch his actual attack on Joseph.

It's Sunday morning. Hezekiah preaches from 2 Timothy 3. He talks about the terrible times there will be in the last days. He particularly emphasises Paul's statement that in the last days people will be disobedient to their parents, which he applies to young people in the church doing things in opposition to the leaders of the church. He talks about the dangers of non-church based activities having the potential of dividing the church, and that people who encourage such activities are treacherous, rash, conceited and lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. He says that people who lead Christian activities outside the church are seeking to destroy the church and are men who oppose the truth. He says that members of the church should be very suspicious of anyone who leads Bible Studies unless he is the appointed pastor of the church. He says that such people are encouraging others to wonder from the faith. Although he doesn't mention Joseph by name, everyone in the congregation knows he is talking about Joseph. Some members begin to wonder if Joseph has come back to Cantona to deliberately destroy the church. Others in the congregation are very disturbed by Hezekiah's attack on Joseph, and decide to withhold their weekly offering. Hezekiah is concerned at the reduction which he notices in that week's offering.

Hezekiah writes to Joseph's employers to tell him that Joseph is under investigation by the church leaders because he is suspected of having stolen money from the church offering. He goes to the place where Joseph lives, while Joseph is at work, and burns Joseph's notes for the next Bible Study Group.

Finally, Hezekiah calls a church meeting where he formally proposes the suspension of Joseph's church membership, on the grounds that he has stolen money from the church, and his deliberate attempts to destroy the church because of his distortion of the truth of the Gospel and his opposition to the leadership of the church.

Partnerships

Unit 10

Trust, Evaluation and other key issues in partnership



Development Associates International

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Version 1.3

Unit 10 - Trust, Evaluation and other key issues in Partnerships

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Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this unit you will be able to.....

- Describe the importance of trusting relationships between members of partnerships
- Identify ways of encouraging trust in partnering settings
- Explain ways to encourage partner members to take a full and active part in ensuring the effectiveness of a partnership
- List ways in which cultural differences can impact a partnership and how to minimise the differences and maximise multi-cultural understanding
- Describe why evaluation of a partnership is important
- Develop an effective evaluation tool for use by a partnership

Supplementary text: “Body Matters – a Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission” by Ernie Addicott, published by Interdev Partnership Associates 2005

Lecture Notes & Workbook

Introduction Unit 10

And now we come to the final unit in this module.

We've explored issues regarding the underlying basis of ministry partnerships and we've examined in some detail practical steps to help you develop an effective partnership which should be able to assist you in your ministry area.

In this final unit, we will be exploring some of the other issues which we may have only briefly touched on so far.

We will be exploring issues of

Trust in Partnerships

Encouraging effective partners

Cultural Issues in Partnerships

Evaluation of Partnerships

Trust in Partnerships

Read the article by Aileen van Ginkel "Building Trust into Partnering Relationships" which is Reading 10-1 in the Readings Section of this unit. Then reflect and respond to the following questions:

Answer Box # 1

Why do we find difference so threatening?

According to Aileen van Ginkel what is the foundation for trusting relationships?

Trust is the very life-blood of partnerships – and of teams too. Trust is “the river that carries it along, that pulses with life, that brings thought and power to everything the team attempts.” (“The New Why Teams Don’t Work” by Harvey Robbins & Michael Finley).

A partnership cannot operate effectively without trust. Partner members need to trust one another; they need to trust the partnership facilitator, the facilitator needs to be able to trust others in the partnership. The challenge is often that people have worked with other people in the past, and through that experience, they have learned one thing – they have learned that they can't always trust other people – and in their relationships with others they've come to expect disappointment. The problem is that trust is a very fragile thing – and can easily be damaged.

A partnership is very like a spider's web. A partnership is a tangled web of relationships – but like the spider's web – it's a very slender thread which binds dissimilar people into a partnership. And it doesn't take much to break that thread – a broken promise, broken expectations, a hurtful comment, lack of truthfulness, or evidence of one or more partner members using the partnership for their own individual ends – and trust is destroyed.

Trust has been described as a kind of bank account (by Stephen Covey in "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People") and it has been suggested that whenever someone is involved in a new relationship with another person, each side begins with a certain amount deposited in the account. If each side is consistent and behaves in a reliable and trustworthy way; the amount in the account will grow immeasurably. However, the amount which each side began with and which might have been increased can be frittered away with thoughtless comments and continued broken promises. It is also possible to completely drain the account by a single act which destroys trust. Restoring trust once the account depletes itself is very difficult. Re-building trust once trust has been destroyed is an up-hill task!

The best way of restoring broken trust is not to let it be broken in the first place!

But sometime trust is broken, and when it does happen, it's best to acknowledge it, explain what happened and ask for forgiveness – and commit to working at ensuring that a break of trust doesn't happen again in the future.

Even if you acknowledge that trust has been broken and ask for forgiveness, it's still likely to entail a long road of re-building trust, by consistently keeping promises, ensuring you fulfil the expectations which others have of you, of being honest in everything you say and do and being totally reliable.

In the "The New Why Teams Don't Work", Harvey Robbins & Michael Finley talk about 9 strategies for creating trust. I've adapted their strategies for a partnering setting, which includes both the full partnership and working groups.

1. **Have clear consistent goals** which everyone in the partnership and/or working group understands and acknowledges. This is why the issue of having a clear vision and mission/purpose statement is so important and why it is important to develop plans and direction together. The saying "if you don't know where you're going, that probably where you'll end up" is very true! If you have a vision and mission/purpose statement and have developed agreement over the direction of the partnership which is accepted and owned by all members of the partnership – and which they have been instrumental in developing you have established a foundation of trust which will strengthen and develop over time as everyone works towards achieving that direction.
2. **Be open, and be willing to listen to one another.** Openness is a very important quality in a partnership, so be open with information as far as you are able to be and ensure that there is total transparency in the processes and decision-making in the partnership. It is also important to demonstrate that you are really hearing what other members of the partnership are trying to communicate. Openness and communication enhances trust; control and secrecy destroys it.
3. **Be consistent in how decisions are made.** Members of the partnership need to know and agree with how decisions will be made, and there needs to be consistency in the decision-making process. It's important to discuss and agree what decisions must be made by the partnership itself, what decisions can be made by the facilitator or facilitation team and what decisions can be made by working groups. It's also important to agree together how important and urgent decisions will be made outside the partnership meeting and how they will be communicated to the rest of the members.

4. **Be supportive of other partnership members.** Always speak well of other members of the partnership both to those who are part of the partnership and those who aren't. Any sense of disloyalty within the partnership will damage trust. Partnership members need to be able to rely on each other.
5. **Take responsibility for the actions of the partnership.** When things go wrong in the partnership (which inevitably they will) don't blame others; view mistakes as partnership mistakes, not the mistake of an individual within the partnership.
6. **Give credit to partnership members.** Always remember that all the effort in a partnership is joint effort; the success of the partnership is because of everyone's efforts and involvement. If one person – whether it be the facilitator or a partnership member takes the credit for what was essentially a team effort – others will begin to be suspicious of that person's motivation.
7. **Be sensitive to the needs of partnership members.** Working in partnership is difficult and there are times when it is hard, tiring and even frustrating! So show awareness of and sensitivity to the needs of other partnership members. Demonstrating to other members of the partnership that you are *genuinely* concerned for them – for their struggles and concerns – allows them to feel comfortable with you – and this will only increase trust. It's also important to be aware of the comfort zone of other people and try to relate to them within their zone. What this means is that you don't try to force someone to share more information about themselves or the work of their church or ministry than they feel comfortable with.
8. **Respect the other members of the partnership.** Different people have different ideas and as we saw in Unit 8, different people bring different giftings to the partnership setting. Respect each member of the partnership for the contribution they bring – and always remember for real effectiveness we need people who bring different strengths in working together.
9. **Empower partnership and working group members to take the actions they need to for the completion of the projects they are working on.** If partnership members always have to come back to the facilitator and if working group members always have to come back to the leader of the group, the partnership will make no progress in reaching its goals. Ensure that all members know they are empowered to make decisions and to do whatever is necessary for the progress of the project or partnership and support them when things go wrong, rather than apportion blame, and the result will be more effective work, and increased trust.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 2

Review the 9 strategies for creating trust listed above.

1. Which of these strategies do you find it difficult to apply in your setting, when you are working with other people?
2. Why do you think you find it difficult to apply these strategies?
3. What practical action can you take to apply each of the strategies you find difficult in the future?



learning

Now let's explore another way of looking at the issue of encouraging trust.
Read pages 50-58 of "Body Matters – a Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission" by Ernie Addicott.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 3

What does Ernie suggest are common factors across all cultures that encourage trust?

On page 51, Ernie talks about 5 common factors which will make a person credible and which will encourage trust. These are

- Honesty
- Humility
- Confidentiality
- Care
- Reliability

None of these factors are easy to demonstrate – and each of these factors will take time.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 4

1. In your culture, do you agree that these are common factors which will encourage trust?
2. If you disagree with any on this list, explain why you feel they do not encourage trust?
3. In your culture and ministry setting, how can you use the 5 common factors which Ernie outlines to encourage others to trust you?
4. Are there other factors in your culture which helps to encourage trust? What are they? Explain how they encourage trust.

As we've already discussed, trust takes a long time to build, but it can be destroyed in a single minute.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 5

What are some actions and behaviours which can destroy trust?



learning

On page 52, Ernie comments that one way of helping to build trust is by encouraging openness and he deals with the issue of openness on pages 52-54. He then goes on to describe how fear can damage openness and destroy trust (pages 54-58).

Think about it?

Answer Box # 6

1. What two ways are suggested to encourage openness in partnership settings?

2. What other ways can you suggest could be used to encourage openness?



learning

Ernie suggests that one way to encourage greater openness is to limit the information requested for sharing (which feels like discouraging openness!). The second way that Ernie suggests will encourage greater openness is to agree some ground rules on how information shared within the group may be used outside the group. I would suggest that it might be more helpful to reverse the order.

First of all agree the ground rules on how information should be shared outside the group – which effectively means a “Communications Policy” for the partnership (which some partnerships – especially those focused on areas of the world where sharing

the gospel is risky – have described as a “Security Policy.” Then having the communications policy in place, allow partner members to share information at a level that **they** are comfortable with. Over time, and as confidence in the process builds, the partnership will experience much greater openness. In fact, you cannot force people to be open with the information they possess. It is their information, and they will only share what they are comfortable in sharing. But if you have the foundations and parameters in place, you will find increased comfort in sharing at deeper levels.

Trust and openness is foundational to effective partnering. Without trust and openness, a partnership will be weak and will be unable to fulfill its potential. It is therefore important to encourage trusting relationships in every area of ministry, whether it be a partnership, a church or organisation.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 7

What will you do to encourage and enhance trusting relationships in your partnership, church and/or ministry?



learning

Encouraging Effective Partners

Perhaps it's obvious, but a partnership is only as good as its members. You may have a first-rate and experience partnership facilitator, you may have a dedicated and hard-working steering group, you may even have all the resources you need to develop the partnership. However, if you have partner members who are de-motivated, who are not committed to the goals and outcomes of the partnership, who are not fully engaged in the partnership process, then the partnership will struggle and will not be able to achieve the outstanding impact that could be possible.

Several years ago, I wrote an article on how to encourage effective partner members – and this is included as the second reading at the end of this unit. Please read this paper now.

It's important to apply the suggestions in this paper to your own situation. Thinking about the partnership that you have identified as being one that you could develop, respond to the following questions.

Think about it?**Answer Box # 8**

1. What strategies will you use to encourage partner members to effectively prepare for partnership meetings?
2. What strategies will you use to encourage partner members to be effectively engaged in meetings of the partnership?
3. What strategies will you use to encourage partner members to have an increased commitment to the partnership?
4. What strategies will you use to encourage partner members to tell others in their church or ministry about the work of the partnership?

Cultural Issues in Partnerships

As we begin to think about cultural issues in partnerships, the starting point needs to be what we mean by culture.

Geert Hofstede in "Culture and Organizations" describes culture as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another" (page 5) and emphasises that culture is learned, it is not inherited and that it is at least partly shared with people who live or lived within the same social environment where it was learned.

In their book "Ministering Cross-Culturally" Sherwood G. Lingenfelter and Marvin K. Mayers as "the conceptual design, the definitions by which people order their lives, interpret their experience, and evaluate the behaviour of others" (page 18).

Essentially, culture is how "we" do things – it's that set of rules, values and/or beliefs which are accepted as norm by a community of people.

When we talk about cultural difference, we tend to think of the differences between people of different nationalities, ethnic origins or languages. However, it is important to remember that the diversity in culture is actually much greater than these. In England, there are many different cultures represented – and not just those who are from different ethnic origins. For example, there are differences in the way that people in the London area think, behave and view as "normal" and people in the North East of the country. Similarly, I know

there are significant differences between various parts and peoples of India, and I am sure that if you live in Uganda, or Kenya or other countries in Africa, that there are differences in the way people from the various areas think, and behave and act.

As we explore culture, there are also cultural differences between churches, denominations, ministries and organisations. About two years ago, we moved from one church to another – and discovered we needed to adapt to different cultural values in our new church. At about the same time, I moved from working for one ministry to another, and needed to adapt to different ways of doing things. I labour this point because when we talk about cultural issues in partnerships we often think in terms of cultural challenges we face because of ethnic difference. However, in partnerships, we need to recognise that different churches and denominations define the way in which people order their lives, interpret their experience, and evaluate the behaviour of others in different ways; similarly different organisations and ministries order their lives, interpret their experience and evaluate the behaviour of others in different ways. Therefore, in a partnership you not only have the potential clash of ethnicity, but also the potential clash of the experience of what “church” should be and also how ministries and organisations organise themselves.

Therefore, in partnerships, culture is a many layered issue! And it can impact a partnership even where all the partner members are from the same ethnic group. In fact it’s in such a partnership where cultural diversity is unexpected, that the differences in church and organisational cultures can actually catch-out the partnership leadership.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 9

In the partnership which you might put together, which of the cultural differences we have already discussed might you need to be aware of?



learning

You may have listed:

- Ethnic differences
- Church and/or Denominational differences
- Organisational and/or ministry differences

Think about it?

Answer Box # 10

What are some of the specific challenges you might find you have to deal with in this partnership?

Some of the challenges you might have listed might have been:

- Language
- Understanding
- Decision making
- Meeting procedures
- Worship and prayer styles
- Sharing of information
- Ways of expressing ourselves

We can never be really easy to understand a culture that is “foreign” to our own upbringing, language, traditions and experience. But we need to aim to appreciate and learn as much as possible in order to facilitate complementary and respectful relationships. It is when multi-cultural alliances and partnerships have respect for the diversity in perspectives and skills – that you can see break-through results.

When we think about culture, we can sometimes think that my culture is right, and the culture of the other person is “not-right! Yet the reality is that my culture and culture of the other person is neither “right” nor “wrong.” They are just different. They are just different ways in which “people order their lives, interpret their experience, and evaluate the behaviour of others”!

There are various models for understanding other cultures.

In his excellent book “When Cultures Collide: Managing Successfully Across Cultures”, Richard Lewis provides a framework for understanding different cultural “types.” He suggests that the hundreds of different cultures in the world can be roughly classified into three groups:

- Task Oriented Cultures
- People Oriented Cultures
- Respect Oriented Cultures

Task Oriented Cultures are those where the people tend to be highly organised planners, are generally analytical and have a tendency to break projects into small tasks that are undertaken one at a time. They like to have a high degree of structure and conformity, and may want to have rules for relationships, so that every operational aspect is spelled out as a standard operating procedure. Task Oriented Cultures include:

- Germans, Swiss
- Americans (ie White Anglo-Saxon Protestants)
- Scandinavians, Austrians
- British, Canadians, New Zealanders
- Australians, South Africans
- Chileans, Argentinians, Uruguayians

People Oriented Cultures are those where people rely more on human interaction to get things done rather than policies and procedures. They do not have time for written documents, proposals, plans, letters and memos – but will talk over an issue for hours. They move from one project to another and try to use their influencing skills to get work done. They will resist pushing for a decision too quickly. People Oriented Cultures include

- Russians & other Slavic peoples
- Portuguese
- Polynesians
- Spanish, Southern Italians, Mediterranean peoples
- Indians and Pakistanis
- Latin Americans
- Middle Easterners
- Africans

Respect Oriented Cultures are those where people tend to be introverted and be reactive. They are among the best listeners in the world, and are intent on understanding the points made by others before offering their own points of view, so they practice what is called “active listening, which is intended to both register and demonstrate understanding. They will rarely interrupt and they avoid confrontation. They are thoughtful and may be perceived by other Cultures as “painfully slow” at arriving at a decision. Respect Oriented Cultures include

- Japanese
- Chinese
- Taiwanese
- Koreans

Inevitably it isn't as simple as it seems, and some Respect Oriented Cultures display Task Oriented tendencies and other Respect Oriented Cultures display People Oriented tendencies when they are reacting to situations.

Respect Oriented Cultures, which display Task-Oriented tendencies when reacting are
Singaporeans and residents of Hong Kong

Finns
Respect Oriented Cultures, which display People-Oriented tendencies when reacting are
Turkish peoples
Malaysians
Indonesians

This outline is based on material in *“When Cultures Collide: Managing Successfully Across Cultures”* by Richard Lewis.


Think about it?

Answer Box # 11

Think about your own culture. Which of the broad classifications defined by Richard Lewis does your culture fit into?

Which of the characteristics do you relate to?

Which of the characteristics do you find it difficult to relate to?

 **learning**


Ernie Addicott in his book *“Body Matters – a Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission”* discusses the issue of cultural differences in partnership on pages 119-130. Read this section in the book and answer the following questions on each of the five areas which Ernie explores:

Think about it?

Answer Box # 12

Differences in the way we take decisions:
What differences are highlighted here?

What recommendations are given for multi-cultural partnerships?

 **learning**

Think about it?

Answer Box # 13

Differences in the way we regard time:
What differences are highlighted here?

What recommendations are given for multi-cultural partnerships?



learning

Answer Box # 14

Differences in the way we view status:
What differences are highlighted here?

What recommendations are given for multi-cultural partnerships?



learning

Think about it?

Think about it?

Answer Box # 15

Differences in our attitudes to shame and saving “face”:

What differences are highlighted here?

What recommendations are given for multi-cultural partnerships?



learning

Think about it?

Answer Box # 16

Differences in the way we view accountability:

What differences are highlighted here?

What recommendations are given for multi-cultural partnerships?



learning

Culture will impact our partnerships, but as Christians involved in working together in unity for the benefit of the kingdom of God, we need to work at minimising the cultural differences which might divide us, and work at maximising our understanding of one another. Some of the ways we can minimize the differences and maximise our understanding of one another (whether we be of different ethnic backgrounds, or different church denominations or traditions or different organisations or ministries) are as follows:

- It's very easy to stereotype other people "that's what they're like from that denomination." So ***don't stereotype people***
- Most people don't deliberately set out to cause offence to other people; when they do offend you, it's probably because they are unaware of some cultural taboo which they are violating – it's ignorance rather than deliberately offensive behaviour. Don't assume that a certain behaviour which you find unacceptable is intentional. So ***be slow to take offence***
- Recognise that however much you think you understand another culture, there are often layers of understanding which need to be uncovered; recognise that it is very easy to make a cultural mistake when you are with people from other cultures; therefore ask questions about how the other culture would expect you to behave, and also watch and observe how things happen in that culture, and try to understand how things work. So ***be a learner***
- However hard you try to fit into a different culture, you will inevitably make some mistake at some stage. So ***acknowledge to members of the host culture that you are likely to make mistakes, ask forgiveness ahead of time and give them permission to correct you***
- Don't assume that people from other cultures will know how to behave when they are in settings which are alien to their experience; explain to people when they have to operate in a strange culture how they will be expected to behave. I remember being in an international meeting which was being held in a large hotel in Cyprus and which brought together people from a variety of cultures, some of whom had never experienced the phenomena of the "hotel room refrigerator" and didn't know that anything taken from it would be charged on their room bill – to ensure lack of embarrassment on

either side, it was very important to let people know how things “worked” in a Western hotel. So **communicate and let people know how a strange culture works**

One of the best ways of minimizing the differences and maximising mutual understanding is to express cultural curiosity and empathy, and then add some careful listening, sensitivity, patience and politeness, and then you should be able to operate anywhere in the world!

Alex Araujo, a former colleague, has thought long and deeply about the cultural dynamics in partnering situations. You can read some of his thinking in Appendix 1 of “Body Matters – a Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission.” Read pages 176-190.

Think about it?



learning

Answer Box # 17

Which parts of the Cultural Variables Help Tool do you find most helpful?

Why do you find these aspects helpful?

Which parts of the Cultural Variables Help Tool do you find least helpful?

Why are they not helpful?

What additional elements would it be helpful to include in this tool?

Evaluating the Effectiveness of a Partnership

I don't know if you are familiar with the cartoon character Charlie Brown. In one famous cartoon series, Charlie is shooting arrows at a fence; his friend Lucy comes along and asks Charlie what he is doing, to which he replies that he's doing target practice.

Lucy can't see a target and asks Charlie where the target is. Charlie then goes up to the fence and paints the target on the fence where he's managed to hit the most arrows.

Charlie evaluates his success at shooting arrows by deciding on the target at the end of his shooting session. It's rather different to the way that an Olympic archery champion evaluates his success; he sets the target, and then evaluates his success by seeing how many bull's eyes he hits!

In our final section of our final unit, we are exploring the issue of evaluation in our partnerships. And a key question is whether we do our work and then set the criteria by which we judge our success, or whether we set the criteria and then seek to meet it.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 18

What do you see as the purpose of evaluation in a partnership?



learning

I wonder what words you might have included in your response. Possibly you included words like assess, get feedback, measure impact, learn lessons.

The explanation that I like to use to explain the purpose of evaluating a partnership is that evaluation is an attempt to obtain information on the effect, the outcome or the impact of the partnership so we can learn lessons and improve in the future.

Unfortunately we sometimes think that evaluation isn't quite spiritual, that we shouldn't evaluate what we are doing in a ministry context. And yet God thought that evaluation was important.

Note, that God evaluated the creation process. Read Genesis Chapter 1. I hope you noticed that on each of the first five days of creation, God looked back at what he had done.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 19

What was God’s evaluation of his work on each of the first 5 days of creation?

His daily evaluation was “that it was good.” (Gen. 1: v10b, 12b, 18b, 21b, 25b).

When it came to the sixth day, what was God’s evaluation at the end of the creation process?

God evaluated his work as being “*very good*”! (Gen. 1:31)

Now turn to the New Testament and read the account of Jesus sending out the twelve apostles in Luke Chapter 9.

Think about it?



Answer Box # 20

What task did Jesus give the apostles?

Luke tells us that “He sent them out to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick.”

When the apostles returned what did they do?

“When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done.”

Why did Jesus require them to report back to him on what they had done?

My suggestion is that Jesus wanted the apostles to report back to him on their mission trip for three reasons:

- so they could be encouraged by the success they had had
- so that they could learn from the mistakes they had made
- so they could improve the next time! (If you look ahead to Luke 10:1, the disciples are sent out again!)

I suggest that Jesus was encouraging the apostles to evaluate what they had done.

Similarly there are three reasons for us to evaluate the work we are doing. It's to

- Encourage
- Learn
- Improve

Interestingly these are exactly the same three reasons why Jesus wanted the apostles to report back to him! In our partnerships it's important to

- **Encourage:** ourselves and the other partners – by reporting and measuring the success we have had.
- **Learn:** we need to recognize the mistakes we have made – and learn from them (as a good friend of mine says “*Let's not make the same old mistakes – let's find new ones!*”)
- **Improve:** we want to do better, and if we can review what we've done, then we can identify ways of doing better next time.

We've explored the “WHY” of evaluation. But HOW do we do evaluation?

There are several different ways of doing evaluating the work we are involved in. We can evaluate ourselves – and we can also ask others to evaluate the work which is being done. We can talk to people and get their opinions – but that's not a particularly scientific way of doing evaluation – because we can ask different questions to different people – and we may end up with an impression of how things are going, without concrete evidence of the success we've had, the mistakes we've made and how we can improve on what we are doing.

Therefore we need a more structured way of doing an evaluation of our work. This probably means that we need a set of questions which we can ask people. But we do need to think about what type of questions we should ask, and how we should ask them. We'll come to the type of questions in a moment, but first how should we ask them?

We can either take our set of questions and ask the same questions to different people verbally, and record their responses or we can type or write them on a piece of paper, and give copies of the same document to each person we want input from.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 21

- If and when you do evaluations in your setting:
- a. what are the advantages of using verbal responses?

 - b. what are the disadvantages?

 - c. what are the advantages of using written responses?

 - d. what are the disadvantages?



learning

In some settings, particularly in non-literate contexts, using a verbal response mechanism has stronger advantages over using written responses. However, when you are asking people to evaluate YOUR performance, it might be better to use someone who is seen as independent of the process to undertake the evaluation. People may not be totally honest in responding to a verbal evaluation conducted by one of the people involved in the project – because they don't want to lose face – or for the other person to lose face. This, of course, can also be a problem in some cultures with written responses to an evaluation questionnaire too!

Think about it?

Answer Box # 22

What can you do to ensure honest responses when doing evaluations in your culture?



learning

There will be different responses to this question from different cultures. It's not an easy question, but if we want helpful information to help us to encourage ourselves and others, to correct mistakes which have been made and to improve in the future, we need to engage with that question!

We may decide to do our evaluations verbally, or we may decide to ask for written responses, but whichever we decide, we need to frame some questions! So, the next issue is to consider what type of questions we should be asking.

Essentially there are 4 different approaches we can use to ask questions when we are evaluating performance.

1. We can ask **open-ended questions** – where the response will be descriptive answers. Examples of open-ended questions include:
 - a. *Which Working Groups are you a member of?*
 - i. *Which of these are working effectively?*
 - ii. *Why do you think they are working effectively?*
 - iii. *Which are not working effectively?*
 - iv. *Why do you think they are not working effectively?*
 - b. *What were the most helpful parts of the Partnership Meeting for you?*

When asking open ended questions it's important to remember to leave sufficient space for people to give a response. The advantage of open-ended questions is that it gives good, detailed information which respondents want to tell us about. However the disadvantages are that it can take time for people to respond effectively and helpfully, and respondents need to be given the time to complete the questions; sometimes respondents might give unhelpful one-word responses.

2. We can ask questions with **a choice of responses**, which are also called *multiple choice questions*. Examples of asking multiple choice questions include:
 - a. *Did the partnership meeting help to advance the purpose of the partnership? (select one of the following responses)*
 - i. *No progress has been made*
 - ii. *Some progress has been made*
 - iii. *Significant progress has been made*
 - b. *Did the partnership meeting (select one of the following responses)*
 - i. *Help you meet new people?*
 - ii. *Help you develop new strategies for your ministry?*
 - iii. *Help you with identifying new ways to partner?*

The advantages of using multiple choice questions include being fairly quick and easy for people to complete, it's easy to analyse and will help in the identification of trends. However the disadvantages are that it doesn't allow for people to really say what they want to say and the information you get isn't always very helpful!

3. *We can ask questions with responses which are **numbers** (eg 1, 2, 3, 4) or **words** (eg excellent, good, average, poor, dreadful, never again!). Examples of questions which ask for a response in numbers or words include:*
- a. *Rate the level of trust between partners on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent)*
 - b. *Rate the time given to prayer*
very good good satisfactory poor

The advantages of using questions where you ask for numbers or a word response is that it is easy for respondents to use and it can give you the average scores and responses across everyone who completes the evaluation form; However, many people tend to hit the middle point of the choices and you may not understand the reasons for any dissatisfaction which emerges.

4. Finally, we can ask a **mixture** of open-ended, multiple choice questions together with number and/or word responses such as:
- a. *Rate the effectiveness of the Working Group Leaders*
excellent good satisfactory poor
 - b. *What (if anything) would you like included in our meeting next year?*
(with space for response)

The advantages of using a mix of questions is that some questions need a quick response; others need a more detailed or thoughtful response and having a mixture of both will actually provide you with good, helpful and useful information.

We've so far considered the WHY and the HOW of evaluation, and now we come to the WHAT of evaluation. In a partnership WHAT should we be evaluating?

I always suggest that there are two important things which a partnership should be evaluating.

One is the partnership itself

The other is the partnership meeting

Unfortunately most partnerships are very good at evaluating the partnership meeting, but they are not so good at evaluating the partnership itself!

When you are evaluating the partnership as a whole it is important that you do so in relationship to the vision and the mission or purpose which the partnership itself has agreed. When you are evaluating the Partnership Meeting, you need to evaluate the progress and the effectiveness of the programme which has been set.

In the readings at the end of this unit, you can see an example of an Evaluation Tool for a Partnership (as opposed to a partnership meeting) – its Reading 10-3. Note that this allows the partnership to review progress over a period of 4 years, which can be a helpful in observing the growth and development of the partnership.

Appendix II in “Body Matters – A Guide to Partnership in Christian Mission” (Pages 191-206) also reviews some of the issues surrounding evaluating a partnership as a whole. Read this section now. You may find it helpful to return to this section when your partnership has been fully developed and then for you and others in the partnership to complete the chart on pages 204-205 and compare your responses.

Finally in your readings at the end of this section, (Readings 10-4) you will find a selection of Evaluation Questionnaires to evaluate the partnership meetings for a number of different partnerships.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 23

What do you find significant about this selection of Evaluation Questionnaires?



I hope you noted that there is a wide variety of possible questionnaires. Each of these questionnaires was designed for a specific partnership and partnership meeting. As you come to develop an evaluation tool for you own partnership, I would discourage you from taking one of these and using it, however, you can use these tools as models for your own evaluation tool.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 24

Why is it dangerous to use an Evaluation Questionnaire which has been designed for another purpose?



I hope you noted that the meeting design and shape is very likely to be different. You therefore need to design your evaluation questionnaire to reflect the design, content and shape of your own meeting. For this reason, it is important not to automatically use the evaluation questionnaire you used in a previous year.

Think about it?

Answer Box # 25

Think about the partnership which you have identified as one you could develop as a result of this module (and perhaps you have already started to develop the partnership). Using the material in this unit, together with the examples in the readings and your reading of the section in “Body Matters,” develop an evaluation tool which you could use as a basis for the partnership you will develop.



learning

We're at the end of this module on partnerships in a ministry. If you would like to read more about the subject, or delve deeper into some of the issues, there is a list of books which you might like to explore in the readings at the end of this unit.

At the beginning of this module on partnerships, we wrote “Our expectation is that this course will help you in your understanding of the importance of partnerships in ministry today. We also hope that this course will give you tools to help you develop a partnership which could enhance your own ministry, whether you are working in a church or a para-church setting. Indeed you will get more out of the course if you follow the processes provided in the course to develop a partnership yourself. Indeed, we hope and pray that the fruit of your taking this course will not be a series of written assignments, or the acquisition of more knowledge ABOUT ministry partnerships, but that you develop a partnership which will help you and others be more effective in your ministry! May the Lord give you understanding of the material, and the courage to step out in faith and build partnerships!”

As you conclude this unit and this module, just reflect on the original aims of the course on partnerships, and answer the following questions:

Think about it?

Answer Box # 26

Have I understood the importance of partnerships in ministry today?

Have I now gained tools to help develop a partnership which could enhance my own ministry?

Is there are partnership which I could develop which could enhance my own ministry and be more effective in building the Kingdom of God?

What is it?

What can I do to get this partnership started?

What are the first steps I will take to explore and form this partnership?



As we have commented before, this is not a theoretical module, but a very practical one. May the Lord give you the courage and creativity to develop a partnership which will glorify God and build His Kingdom!



application

Final Assignment

Final Assignment

1. Why is the development of trust between partnership members so crucial in a partnering setting? How will you encourage the development of trusting relationships in the partnership that you hope to develop?
2. In the partnership you hope to develop how will you encourage partner members to be effective partners in the partnership?
3. Review the “Cultural Variables Help Tool” developed by Alex Araujo: explain which parts did you find most helpful and why; explain which parts you found least helpful and why. What other cultural issues are important for effectiveness in partnerships?
4. Develop an evaluation tool for your partnership (you can use the tool which you developed in the unit) and describe how you will use it to get the maximum information for the benefit of the partnership.

READINGS



reading

10.1 Building Trust into Partnering Relationships

A paper by Aileen van Ginkel August 6, 2004

Ministry partnerships require trusting relationships at all stages of their development. The kind of trust in view here goes deeper than the recognition of integrity and competence in one's partners, although those are crucial elements. Building deeper levels of trust demands that we go to a place of mutual respect, where we know that our colleagues value our unique contributions toward achieving a stated goal and where we in turn value their unique contributions toward that same goal. For respect to flourish at this level, we need to understand how our individual callings and identities relate to the goal at hand – all within the context of placing individual mission within the overall mission of the Church of Christ and centring partnering relationships in the person of Jesus.

In her book *e-volve!*, Rosabeth Moss Kanter projects exciting opportunities for organizations that take teamwork and partnering seriously. As cited by Patrick MacMillan in *The Performance Factor*, the decision to enter into such modes of operation is based in her view on a “simple psychic-economic calculation,” namely, “do the gains from dropping certain interests/goals in the name of cooperation outweigh the losses?”

Moss Kanter's calculation suggests that some kind of collaborative effort has already been articulated. In other words, we likely know at this stage what it is that we can do together better than we can do alone. Her question demands that we be clear on our commitment to the partnering vision on offer. Just why should we participate, given the other demands on our time, energy and resources?

No ministry leader can present the case for partnering without weighing the costs and benefits at many different levels. Additional factors must be entered, however, if we are to expect lasting satisfaction from participating in ministry partnerships. Helpful questions that we need to ask of ourselves and of our partnering colleagues include:

- What is at the heart of God's calling to my congregation or ministry organization? What constitutes our unique identity and thus shapes our contribution to a collaborative effort?
- Similarly, what is at the heart of God's calling to the other congregations or organizations that I am or may be partnering with? What constitutes their unique identities and contributions to our collaborative effort?

Partnering endeavours among congregations and/or ministry organizations may be vulnerable to attempts to smooth over differences in the rush to define affinities and the efficiencies of working together. The urgency and practicalities of the tasks before us seem to demand cooperation of us, and since "we're all members of One Body" we feel that we'd better not shirk such demands. Moreover, brewing in all of us in unprecedented ways is a Holy Spirit-inspired yearning to model the unity that Jesus prayed for in John 17 and to heed Paul's exhortations to love and encourage one another.

Our desires for unity require, however, a clear understanding of what God demands of us. The rhythm of unity comes out of harmony, not uniformity. Nowhere do the Scriptures suggest that we will all be the same. Indeed, the picture we are given of the City of God in Revelation 21 glories in the diversity of nations and cultures – each of them bearing different gifts – that enter into it.

Yet our history suggests that we tend to quarrel whenever differences are discussed. The various traditions within the Church have been quick to point out their superiority in relation to others, rather than seeing their uniqueness as a gift from God that needs to be used to the edification and growth of the whole rather than just a part. Given that background, we now tend to shove our traditions' distinctives aside, preferring to focus on our commonalities and on the pressing needs of the world around us that demand our joint attention.

This "practical ecumenism" on the broader level of Christian traditions is mirrored in how we, as localized expressions of Christian mission and ministry, treat differences between us. Denying or suppressing our differences is more likely to breed suspicion, however, than trust. What agendas are being hidden? we wonder. What underlying motives are truly driving the actions of others? we ask ourselves.

To experience deeply rooted trusting relationships with our ministry partners we must start with a trusting relationship with the God who calls us and gifts us with particular resources to carry out our callings. We begin by thanking God for who we are and for how we were made us to be, thus valuing our unique identities.

We see ourselves as recipients of God's grace, invited into the work of restoring the health of a creation in crisis, as demonstrated in the life and actions of Jesus Christ. The Kingdom of God that was won by him requires post-victory volunteers for various cleanup duties. Gathered into his Body, the Church, we volunteers recognize in ourselves and in each other a common calling, which, enabled through his Spirit, is expressed in a wide array of worship styles, ministry foci and visions for mission and witness. Our gratitude to God is the foundation for valuing our own uniqueness and thus the uniqueness of others.

At the same time that we find ourselves standing tall, we will look up to those others with whom we're ministering. We will come to the point of saying, "I believe in you, in God in you, and I'll do all that I can to assist you in being the best you can be." Respect at this deep level, when experienced mutually, forms the heart of the trusting relationships on which fruitful partnerships depend.

Knowing, then, that each partnering agency seeks to operate in faithfulness to its unique calling and identity, we can expect that God's Spirit will lead us through prayer to an understanding of how the parts fit together to make the whole. The differences are factored directly into the equation; with the expectation in mind that those differences are meant to complement, rather than fracture, we are ready to ask the question, "How then can we 'work complementarily' with each other?" Approached in this way, our partnering endeavours have a greater chance at success than if we limit ourselves to undertaking only a cost-benefit analysis. In addition, our partnering opportunities will no longer become add-ons to the "essential" mission of our congregation or ministry organization. Instead they are welcomed as central to the expression of our calling and identity. Over time, as working complementarily becomes the standard mode of operating, the notion that most things are better done alone will diminish and partnering synergies will increase. We'll be able to integrate our differences in a healthy way, and we'll celebrate diversity at more than a superficial level. In so doing, may we also experience more fully the blessings God sends where brothers and sisters "live together in harmony" (Psalm 133, *NLT*).

Aileen Van Ginkel is Canadian and works for the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, where she serves as Director of the Centre for Ministry Empowerment

NOTES: Cited in Pat MacMillan, *The Performance Factor: Unlocking the Secrets of Teamwork* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers), p. 50.

As said by Adrian Jacobs at a meeting of the EFC Aboriginal Ministries Council, June 26, 2004.

10.2 ENCOURAGING EFFECTIVE PARTNERS

A paper by John Rogers



When we are discussing partnerships, we often talk about the importance of the role of the facilitator for an effective partnership. However, if we effective partnerships, we need more than a good facilitator – or team of facilitators. An effective partnership needs effective partnership members!

So, how do we encourage effective partners for our partnerships? This question is relevant if you are a partnership facilitator attempting to make a partnership more effective, or if you are a partner member wanting to play an effective part in making the partnership effective.

As I have reviewed what a partnership really needs from its partner members, I have come to the conclusion that there are several key areas for effective partners to commit to. These include:

1. Preparing for the partnership meeting
2. Attendance at a partnership meeting
3. Commitment to the partnership
4. Tell others about the partnership in your own ministry

It can be helpful to think about the word PACT – and have a pact with yourself that you will be a good partnership member.

Superficially we might think that just attending the partnership meeting might be sufficient – or even where we should start – but if there isn't preparation beforehand, partner members will not be able to fully participate in the meeting – and therefore won't be very effective partners! So, as we consider these four areas, we will start with Preparation for the Partnership Meeting.

1. Preparation for the Partnership Meeting:

- a. If you live near to where the meeting is being held it is always tempting to stay at home or if you have friends who live close to where the meeting is being held, you think of the advantages of staying with them. However despite the fact that it is always nice to stay at home or with friends, there are real advantages in staying on-site
 - It will allow you to maximise the time outside the formal sessions
 - It will give you the time you need for networking and meeting people who you may be able to develop work/ministry with
 - You don't miss sessions by being late to the meeting
 - You don't get tired commuting into the meeting
 - You don't upset your host (if you are staying with friends by not spending sufficient time with them!)
- b. Clarify in your own mind what are the key activities of your ministry which are relevant to the meeting
- c. Review the reasons why you are attending the meeting
- d. Clarify in your own mind what you want to get out of the meeting – you may want to write down what you want to get out of the meeting rather than think of it vaguely in your mind!
- e. Discuss the meeting with other members of your ministry, and agree with them how far you can commit your ministry to action
- f. Review the resources you have – and be clear about which of your resources you are willing to share and which you are willing to give away for the greater good.
- g. Prepare yourself for the brief introduction to yourself you will probably be asked to give, and prepare yourself for the ministry report which you will need to give
- h. Identify who you would like to spend time with during the Partnership Meeting – and make a list so you have the information recorded

2. Attendance at the Partnership Meeting

- a. Try not to take any other work with you – you probably won't get it done anyway, and if you try to do other work, it will distract you from the real reason why you are there
- b. If you are on e-mail – consider staying out of e-mail contact for the duration of the meeting (even if you are addicted!).
 - just the effort expended on trying to connect to e-mail may be frustrating when you are at some sites
 - you may take up a huge amount of time trying to connect – without any success
 - you may get distracted by the messages you receive!
- c. If you have a lap-top computer with you, don't work on other matters when other people are presenting/reporting – keep focused on the work of the partnership
- d. Bring to the partnership meeting all the relevant papers – and especially the papers you have been sent for the meeting

- e. Using the list you made of people you want to spend time with at the meeting, make arrangements with them as soon as possible – it's very easy for the people you want to talk with to get meals and spare-time booked up; remember that you might meet new people that you need to spend time with as well, so make sure you keep some appointments available
- f. Fully participate in the Partnership Meeting – by attending the plenary meetings and taking a full-part in smaller-group discussions
- g. When giving your ministry report – don't over-run the time you have been given; use visuals and illustrations if you can.
- h. Take an active part in Working Group Meetings
- i. Be prepared to lead a Working Group

3. Commitment to the Partnership

- a. Have a vision for partnership and the people to be reached
- b. Recognise that partnership is promoted by God
- c. Understand the concept of different roles in the body of Christ, and recognise that as a ministry, you can't do everything which is needed – and that you need other parts of the body to be truly effective
- d. Have an understanding of the strengths of your own ministry
- e. Have an understanding of the contribution you can make as a ministry to the partnership
- f. Take time to follow up contacts made at the partnership meeting (you will meet a lot of people – but if you don't follow-up the relevant contacts you have made, you will lose a lot of the value of the meeting)
- g. Be willing to share control with other ministries
- h. Be willing to share results with other ministries
- i. Be committed to good communication – with the Partnership Facilitator and with other appropriate members of the partnership
- j. Recognise that partnerships do not achieve results overnight, that partnership projects take time (and that sometimes doing something in partnership will actually take longer to do than if you do it by yourself – and actually be comfortable with that!)

4. Tell others about the Partnership in your own church or ministry

- a. Explain and interpret the partnership to members of your own church or ministry
- b. Help your own church or ministry be committed to the partnership
- c. Help others in your church or ministry to understand the value of the Partnership and of partnering
- d. Fully brief anyone who will succeed you as the church or ministry representative at the Partnership Meeting

With good partners, a partnership will make good progress. However good the partnership facilitator is – the progress the partnership will make will be very dependent on how good the partners are. Remember that you don't get anything out of something if you don't put anything into it.

10.3 AN EVALUATION TOOL TO EVALUATE A PARTNERSHIP

Eighteen Indicators of what is happening in the XXX Partnership

| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| <i>Does the Partnership have:</i> | | | | |
| 1. Facilitator? | | | | |
| 2. Steering Committee / Facilitation Team? | | | | |
| 3. Newsletter? | | | | |
| 4. E-Mail Conference? | | | | |
| 5. Security Guidelines? | | | | |
| 6. Purpose Statement? | | | | |
| 7. Statement of Faith? | | | | |
| <i>How many:</i> | | | | |
| 8. Ministries / Churches involved? | | | | |
| 9. Working groups meeting? | | | | |
| 10. Joint projects operating? | | | | |
| 11. Enquirers reported? | | | | |
| 12. New churches planted? | | | | |
| <i>On a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent), within the partnership, how would you rate:</i> | | | | |
| 13. The level of trust between the partners? | | | | |
| 14. The quality of relationships? | | | | |
| 15. The level of communication? | | | | |
| 16. Progress towards agreed objectives? | | | | |
| 17. Commitment to collaboration? | | | | |
| 18. Involvement of nationals? | | | | |
| | | | | |

10.4 A SELECTION OF EVALUATION TOOLS TO EVALUATE PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS

Please note in the following examples, spaces which were originally in the various documents for people to record their responses have been largely omitted. Remember when you are developing an evaluation tool to leave sufficient space for respondents to respond!

10.4A Meeting Feedback Form for XXX Partnership

| | |
|---|----------------|
| <p>1. Are you attending the Partnership Meeting as: Please circle the appropriate response</p> <p>a field based worker a non-field church representative a home office worker other</p> | |
| <p>2. Have you attended the XXX Partnership Meeting before?</p> <p>If Yes, please circle which years you have attended:</p> <p>1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000</p> | <p>Yes/ No</p> |
| <p>3. What are your language group/ministry interests?</p> | |
| <p>4. To what extent did the Partnership Meeting meet your expectations:</p> <p>Not at all Partly Fully Beyond my expectations</p> | |
| <p>5. The Partnership Meeting has the following Purpose: We exist to</p> <p>1. Encourage unity among workers in and for the Region</p> <p>2. Impart vision for establishing and developing the church through holistic ministry among the people of the Region</p> <p>3. Mobilize prayer for the Region at and through the annual Partnership Meeting</p> <p>4. Connect resources with the region and its partnerships</p> <p>5. Increase awareness and understanding of issues relating to the task of establishing and developing the church in the Region</p> | |

To what extent do you consider the Partnership Meeting helped/took steps forward to meet the stated purpose: (please put A, B, or C after each statement above)

- A. No progress/ no steps forward/ **the Partnership Meeting** did not help meet this purpose
- B. Some progress / some steps forward/ **the Partnership Meeting** helped somewhat to meet this purpose
- C. Definite progress/ significant steps forward/ **the Partnership Meeting** really helped to meet this purpose

6. Organisation and Accommodation:

- a. General organization of the Meeting very good good satisfactory poor
- b. Quality of accommodation very good good satisfactory poor
- c. Overall value for money very good good satisfactory poor
- d. Access to e-mail very good good satisfactory poor
- e. Level of security very good good satisfactory poor
- f. Opportunities for networking very good good satisfactory poor

7. Any additional comments on organization or accommodation?

8. Program

- a. Orientation session very good good satisfactory poor
- b. Opening session very good good satisfactory poor
- c. Bible Expositions very good good satisfactory poor
- d. Worship & Prayer very good good satisfactory poor
- e. Presentations very good good satisfactory poor
- f. Discussion Groups very good good satisfactory poor
- g. Working Groups very good good satisfactory poor
- h. Overall Program very good good satisfactory poor

9. Any additional comments on the Program?

10. Please comment on the following:

- a. Format of the Partnership Meeting:

- b. Length of Partnership Meeting

- c. What you liked best about the Partnership Meeting and why
- d. What did you least liked about the Consultation and why
- e. Any aspect of this Partnership Meeting which you feel should not be included next year
- f. Anything which you would like added to the Partnership Meeting next year

Please use this space for further comments

Please return this form to xxx or any member of the Steering Committee before you leave.

10.4B Meeting Evaluation for YYY Partnership

How worthwhile was this consultation (1 'not' – 10 'very')?

Have you developed new relationships with other consultation participants?

Number of new relationships developed:

Have you identified new projects involving one other church or ministry?

Number of such new projects identified:

Have you identified new projects involving two or more churches and/or ministries?

Number of such new projects identified:

To help us in planning for the next meeting:

Preferred location:

Preferred level of accommodations:

- Same (Decent hotel)
- Less expensive

Preferred timing of event:

- Mid-November
- October 1st Holiday
- May 1st Holiday

Preferred length of event:

- 3 days
- 4 days

Can you think of anyone who is not here who should be?

List their names, ministries and contact details:

Are you aware of any reason this person / these people are not here?

- Not Invited:
- Timing:
- Cost:
- Language: Location:
- Security concerns:
- Other

Suggestions for next year's plenary speaker:

What workshops would you like to see?

10.4C Another Partnership Programme Evaluation Tool

Please rank the following aspects of the Consultation on a scale of one to five as indicated below. Suggestions may be given on the line under each item and on the back of this page.

| | Excellent | Average | | | Unacceptable | |
|--|-----------|---------|---|---|--------------|--|
| Quality of networking with colleagues Comment: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Relevance of Working Group topics Comment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Relevance of Workshop topics Comment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Quality of plenary sessions Comment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Spiritual encouragement Comment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Scheduling and pace of consultation Comment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Consideration given to confidentiality issues Comment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Venue, facilities, logistics Comment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Balance/needs of field-based vs agency personnel Comment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Overall relevance of the consultation for my work Comment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Which Working Group did you attend? | | | | | | |
| Which Workshops did you attend? | | | | | | |

The greatest strengths of the consultation have been:

Some areas for improving the consultation are:

On the back of this sheet, please give us the name and contact information of someone you would recommend to be invited to future consultations.

10.4D Another Example of an Evaluation Tool from a Partnership Meeting

Please read the following statements and circle round whether you Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) or Strongly Disagree (SD) with them. If you do not feel you can make one of these responses for whatever reason just circle 'N/A'. Where there is a star (*) we would be pleased if you could add a few details on the back of this sheet.

| | | | | | |
|---|----|---|-----|---|----|
| Existing relationships deepened | SA | A | N/A | D | SD |
| No of significant new relationships/contacts made | SA | A | N/A | D | SD |
| Encouragements received | SA | A | N/A | D | SD |
| Useful knowledge / understanding gained of the People Group & their context | SA | A | N/A | D | SD |
| the indigenous church & their needs | SA | A | N/A | D | SD |
| the community of Christians focussed on the People Group | SA | A | N/A | D | SD |
| Partnership (what it is; the benefits of it; how to do it) | SA | A | N/A | D | SD |
| Useful resources obtained | SA | A | N/A | D | SD |
| Direction from God received (direct or through His people) | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|----|-----------|---|----|
| | SA | A | N/A | D | SD |
| Misunderstandings/relational tensions reduced/resolved | | | | | |
| | SA | A | N/A | D | SD |
| Your involvement in partnership activity increased * | SA | A | N/A | D | SD |
| Overall satisfaction with the Consultation | Excellent Very Good Good OK | | | | |
| NEXT TIME: | | | | | |
| Should we have another such Consultation? | Yes | No | Comments* | | |
| Should we have one around the same time next year? | Yes | No | Comments* | | |
| Should we have one in the same place? | Yes | No | Comments* | | |
| Should it be the same length (2+1 days)? | Yes | No | Comments* | | |
| What did you like most about this Consultation?* | | | | | |
| How can we make the next one better?* (Structure, content, quality of presentations etc.) | | | | | |
| Who else should be invited to the next Consultation? | | | | | |
| How would you be able to help make the next Consultation a success? | | | | | |

- c) Keynote Talk (Tuesday) 1 2 3 4 5
- d) Keynote Talk (Wednesday) 1 2 3 4 5
- e) Group Discussions on "issues" 1 2 3 4 5
- f) Report on model of training (Tuesday) 1 2 3 4 5
- g) Report on model of training (Wednesday) 1 2 3 4 5
- h) Communion & Prayer 1 2 3 4 5

4) The overall purpose of the RS Consultation is stated thus: *“We share the vision and goal of promoting God’s Kingdom in the X Region. We therefore meet together to learn from each other and to facilitate networking and working in Partnership.”*
How well do you think this Consultation helped achieve this purpose? 1 2 3 4 5

5) Questions, comments or practical suggestions to help make the next RSC better: