



## ***Expanding Your Camp & Conference Worldview (part 2)***

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This workshop is about extending your ministry internationally. Today's discussion will answer:

1. What do they need "over there?"
2. What will it cost?
3. Where do other camps find the money?
4. Do I have to buy a camp site?
5. Where are the legitimate opportunities?
6. What results can I expect?
7. Where do I start?

### **INTRODUCTION**

Ministry in other cultures is not just an "away game."

The other playing field is not the same; boundary lines are in different places and seem to move for no apparent reason. Points are not scored by crossing the goal line, but by negotiating its location.

Confusing? Yes it is. And this is exactly how foreigners sometimes perceive *us* and our Western ways. These are not issues of right or wrong, but of *difference*.

Within you there is much information and experience—perhaps more than all the staff at the foreign camp combined. It is also likely that your understanding of how all your knowledge applies to their culture is zero. Therein lies the risk: knowledge isolated from its origin and application contexts will usually be misunderstood, and often misused. Misunderstanding spoils the relationship. Misuse spoils the work. You need *them* as much as they need you. This document will help you engage in best practices for cross-cultural ministry.

### **1. WHAT DO THEY NEED OVER THERE?**

- 1) *A relationship with continuity.* Relationships take time. Plan on being in this for the long haul (primary continuity), or link with an ongoing established work (secondary continuity). Short-term missions is best when it supports an ongoing work.
- 2) *Hope.* "I see you!" Wind beneath their wings. Someone who will listen; believe in them. If your soul doesn't thrill at seeing *others* succeed while you decrease, you'd best stay home.

- 3) Intangibles first: things that cannot be confiscated, e.g. knowledge, skill, philosophy. Instead of starting *your* own work, help expand *theirs*. “Stuff” can come later.
- 4) Their own program, don’t attempt to duplicate yours over there.
  - a) Listen to their dreams; go in asking, not telling.
  - b) Realize it’s about relationships, not things.
  - c) Principles are universal; programs are often not.
  - d) Provide expertise that enables *their* goals. Especially the “why.”
  - e) The future of missions is equipping indigenous leaders.
- 5) Mutual relationship, not dependence. Don’t do what indigenous leaders can do themselves. Support is okay, but never 100%.
- 6) To know that you are part of the Church. “Para-church—what is *that*?”



**Go in asking  
and listening;  
be a learner**

Principle: Go in asking and listening; be a learner. You’re learning how your expertise can be the most beneficial. Do not assume you already know. In the unlikely chance your assumptions turn out to be right, the relationship bridges you build by starting in this way will make a healthy difference from now on.

**Some real-world examples:**

- A new camp in a post-communist country appealed to a camp in a developed country for financial help. They were sent a gift equivalent to \$20,000 USD. When the donor visited, he found the camp director driving a new \$20,000 4-wheel-drive *personal* vehicle. “Oh, I use it for camp, too.”
- A well-intentioned Westerner brought a young rising star camp director to the USA for “training.” That rising star never returned to his homeland, and the loss of his leadership significantly impacted the camp movement there.
- A zealous Westerner was doing so-called street evangelism overseas. He did not think to contact those already involved there, but was “led” to go on his own. The first day he read his gospel tract to several people on the street and even prayed with some of them to receive Christ. He was elated, and wrote the good news to his supporters. That evening in a bar, one of those men he had prayed with told his friends about the experience; and the friends told similar stories of praying with foreigners over a little booklet. “I prayed with three guys on the street today,” one said. “Well,” said another, “I prayed with *four!*”

People in relationship-oriented cultures tend not to listen to what we have to say until they see the truth of our words lived out in our lives. For that to happen takes t-i-m-e. Which is, by the way, why camping is so particularly effective in those countries.



**We must be careful not to take Fahrenheit solutions into centigrade situations**

If you were told the temperature will be 25 degrees when you get off the plane in Siberia, you'd want to have your coat handy, right? Nope. They use the *centigrade* temperature scale there. It will be a balmy 77 degrees *Fahrenheit*.

Without knowledge of the other culture's "scale," misunderstanding is inevitable. Many well-meaning servants of Christ offer winter coats on summer days and wonder why they don't have better results. Don't take Fahrenheit solutions into centigrade situations.

## **2. WHAT WILL IT COST? SOME EXAMPLES FROM ACTUAL CCCA CAMPS.**

- 1) One CCCA member camp helps support an overseas camp for disabled (throw-away) children. They do not send USA staff, instead they underwrite: Local training for the director (tuition, travel, room & board, materials); Funds for special equipment (wheelchairs); Camper scholarship assistance. About \$14,000 a year, or roughly \$2 per USA camper.
- 2) Another USA camp has a cultural exchange program with Latin America. Since it is during summer, room and board costs at the USA camp are absorbed into the budget. Travel is the primary cost: total expense: around \$1,000 for two leaders, just pennies per USA camper.
- 3) In cross-cultural ministry the greatest cost is usually travel, next is visa (if required). Travel round-trip can be \$400 to Latin America; up to \$1,800 for Africa & Asia, and varies seasonally.
- 4) When you go to a developing country, cover all your own costs so you won't be a financial burden on your host. Costs include: airfare, room and board, passport, visa, insurance, immunizations, gifts appropriate to the culture, and travel supplies if needed (luggage, clothing, etc.). Remember, if you do not speak the language, you will need to pay an interpreter's salary, cover their travel, plus room and board. This can range, per day, between \$150 - \$300 depending on the country.
- 5) Examples of total costs per week for one person: To Kenya in September, \$2,200 per person. To Russia in winter, \$1,800. To Latin America in Spring/Summer, \$1,400. Add to this any resources you plan to carry in and leave, trainee scholarships, or additional financial support for the local ministry.

## **3. WHERE DO OTHER CAMPS FIND THE MONEY?**

- 1) One camp asks parents to sign an agreement that designates leftover camper store money to their international mission outreach. No refund checks to write, no parents waiting in line. How much is your average camper's left over store money? In some camps it adds up to thousands. And it doesn't impact the camp store manager's budget like missionary offerings sometimes do.

- 2) At another camp, the summer staff challenged the board to match whatever they raised for missions. The director got the staff so inspired that many of them were handing back their end-of-summer paychecks. The board had to match several thousand dollars, and loved it.
- 3) Staff at one camp used Facebook to raise enough funds to support the camp's mission outreach to Africa. No appeal letters; it was all raised friend to friend.
- 4) Many camps just put it in the budget; an additional dollar or two per camper.
- 5) One adult conference center took a special offering to help purchase the office for a CCI Association overseas; an investment that has enabled the training of more than 10,000 camping leaders who have reached 600,000 youth.
- 6) A denomination takes up a missions offering at each of its camps every summer; those funds are pooled and divided among many endeavors, leveraging their vast network of campers and families.
- 7) Some camps have a board member or primary supporter who is passionate about missions and funds an outreach each year.
- 8) Frequent flyer miles can be donated.
- 9) Sometimes each individual camp staff member raises personal support the traditional way, by letter from their own network of friends and churches
- 10) Tell your returning staff: "Volunteer at camp for 9 weeks and the camp will pay for you to go on our outreach." So called short-term mission trips are increasingly competing with camps for summer staff. That makes this idea particularly appealing: The staff member gets her mission trip, she doesn't have to raise support, the camp gets a mission-hearted staff member most of the summer, and none of this impacts the camp budget; everybody wins.

#### **4. DO I HAVE TO BUY A CAMP SITE?**

No. Never at first; maybe not ever. It's the wrong emphasis. It can result in the foreign camp having so much overhead they cannot support it. It is far better to begin by investing in training and equipping indigenous leaders. In the USA, when we say "camp" we think of a place. However, in many countries camp is an *event*. The best use of resources, particularly early in the relationship, is to prepare *people*, not facilities. Exceptions to this are rare. What you put into the head and heart of a leader can never be confiscated.

#### **5. WHERE ARE THE LEGITIMATE OPPORTUNITIES?**

The greatest needs are in developing countries where smart, passionate leaders just need training and expertise. Begin by seeking guidance from a reputable ministry that can help you match your passion with an international camp. Global Outreach Group does that. There are opportunities to come along side leaders in Russia, Latin America, Caribbean, Eastern Europe, Asia,

Middle East; the list is long. Global Outreach Group can help you make the right connections. We will also consult with your staff and board on principles that will set you up for success. The best practice is to find a ministry already at work that needs what you can offer; often it's a church or mission organization. Also, before you go it is advised that you contact others in the area who are doing camping ministry in order to build good rapport and cooperate when possible.

## 6. WHAT RESULTS CAN I EXPECT?

Careful with expectations! It is better to go with an attitude of *expectancy* that God will use you for His good purposes. You will find that some of the most hospitable, generous people in the world are in developing countries. The initial coolness to foreigners vanishes once a relationship is built, and is replaced with a depth and warmth seldom seen in the West. For those who will stretch beyond what is comfortable and reach out in Jesus' name to our brothers and sisters in another culture, God will open a new world of relationships that will richly bless beyond what you can imagine. You may start out to help change hearts over there. But watch and see who else's heart changes in the process. (See the Nine Benefits of Cross-cultural Ministry below).

## 7. WHERE DO I START?

- 1) With prayer for: 1) an international camp with a kindred spirit and doctrinal alignment, 2) wisdom, 3) cross-cultural sensitivity.
- 2) Gain stakeholder support for the *idea* from your board, staff, constituency.
- 3) Begin investigating international opportunities: Who do you already know? Where is God drawing you? Is your heart stirred for a particular people or region?
- 4) Make some contacts; do NOT make any promises.
- 5) Go check it out; *do not* bring leaders here first, if ever.
- 6) Contact Global Outreach Group for names, places, opportunities, and ideas. It's what we do.

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## SOUNDS PRETTY TRICKY. IS IT WORTH IT?

Absolutely! And the two-way blessings far surpass the difficulties. Not to mention something Jesus said about taking the gospel message "into all the world."

## NINE BENEFITS OF CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRY:

1. Broadens vision and expands horizons.
2. Deepens our lives and ministries through relationships that enrich.
3. Reaches to the poor in obedience to the will of God; blessing follows obedience.
4. Fulfills the Great Commission to go.

5. Creates an awareness of other cultures and the breadth of God's Kingdom.
6. Requires faith / builds faith—the essential ingredient for pleasing God.
7. Adjusts our values and perspectives.
8. Allows God to perfect His strength in our weakness.
9. Adds an adventure component to our lives which is healthy for the soul.



**Cross-cultural ministry adjusts our values and perspectives**

## **THREE PRINCIPLES FOR GOING WELL.**

### **1. RELATIONSHIP BEFORE RESOURCES**



**Your funds will be misdirected if your eagerness to give outpaces your knowledge of the culture**

Memorize that phrase. It's the most important concept in cross-cultural ministry. The risk is very high that your funds will be misdirected if your eagerness to give outpaces your knowledge of the culture. For this reason, invest in building a personal relationship with the leadership of the foreign camp *before* providing

resources. Christians from formerly oppressive regimes are conditioned to be very guarded—even with the truth. The tendency to resist full disclosure is not motivated by dishonesty, rather it is the only way of life they have experienced. On our part, patience must go hand in hand with wisdom.

- If you want to provide financial support but do not have the time or ability right now to personally form such relationships, make certain your resources are given through a reputable intermediary who does have a relationship—such as Global Outreach Group.
- Connect with a work in progress.
- Know the cultural do's and don'ts before you get involved.
- Slow and deep beats fast and broad. Relationships take time; if you hurry and push, you will jeopardize the future of the relationship.
- Don't let denominational differences sidetrack you. "Broad in fellowship; narrow in doctrine" is the rule. Major on the majors, minor on the minors. Don't deal in controversial theology.
- Do not make promises in the emotion of the moment, they'll be harder to keep than you think. Don't even say "we'd like to help with that." It will be taken as a commitment.

## 2. GIVE YOURSELF BEFORE YOU GIVE THINGS



This is the practical application of "*Relationship Before Resources.*" Send someone from your organization first. Go in the camping season; stay at camp. Fully engage. Meet the pastor of the sponsoring church or leader of the mission. Make no financial commitments initially; leave no money. Be clear that *you are praying about further involvement.*

**Be quick  
to go,  
slow to  
bring.**

- "But it costs so much to make an exploratory trip!"
  - ✓ It could cost a whole lot more if you don't.
- "We'll just bring them over here for training."
  - ✓ Doing so without a relationship puts the work in jeopardy because:
    1. The bounty they see here entices many to permanently leave their homeland;
    2. The contrast with what they *don't* have can overwhelm and discourage;
    3. Exposure to two worlds often results in a divided heart;
    4. You will probably not accurately read their motives for coming;
    5. Will they say you're *giving* yourself, or *showcasing* yourself?

## 3. GIVE THINGS BEFORE YOU GIVE CASH

- **It is okay to give cash when:**
  1. There is an individual you trust, with whom you have a solid relationship.
  2. There is a track record of successful ministry which can be demonstrated.
  3. Virtues such as integrity, dependability, and good reputation have been tested over time.
  4. An accountability system is in place (budget, results reporting, tracking).

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Global Outreach Group [www.globaloutreachgroup.org](http://www.globaloutreachgroup.org)

Do's and Taboos Around The World edited by Roger E. Axtell; John Wiley and Sons, Inc. 1993

Foreign to Familiar Sarah A. Lanier; McDougal Publishing. 2000

Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands by Morrison, Conaway, & Borden; Adams Media Corporation. 1994

Ministering Cross-Culturally by Lingenfelter and Mayers; Baker Book House. 1986

Operation World Johnstone & Mandryk; Praternoster Publishing; WEC International

Revolution in World Missions by K.P. Yohannan; gfa books. 2003

Serving with Eyes Wide Open by David Livermore; Baker Books. 2006

[www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com) For traveler's information on all countries

Travel Document Systems [www.traveldocs.com](http://www.traveldocs.com) For visas, passports, other documentation

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) For immunization information, health risks, travel alerts

*"Christian camps are the most effective means of reaching the most receptive hearts."™*