



Claybury International

Questions for finding your team
leaders for short term mission.

Colin D. Buckland

Choosing Leaders for Short Term Missions.

(Follow up document from GC Short Term Missions Forum)

The Leadership philosophy was unpacked at the conference and the PowerPoint's were emailed. This document serves as a gentle reminder of some of that but more as additional information to be of practical help in the day to day selection of team leaders.

We definitely need to differentiate between leaders of short term teams who will be in place from something like one week to one month. If our organizational interpretation is longer than this, say two months to two years then we would need a more thorough going evaluation of leadership abilities. (See the later section in these notes.)

If we accept that Christ-centred leadership is the best model for leadership then we must begin to use this framework to make our choices for our teams and not stray. Remember these simple values as you make your choices:

This means that as we choose we are looking for people who manifest or seem to be closer to these values in their approach to leadership.

1. So, character is important! Do our candidates seem to have moral and spiritual character that is clear from their presentation and in the interview?
2. Do the references that we have asked for back up the sense that we have of this person's character?

In the forum/conference we discussed questions that could be asked to help you to choose your team leaders. If we are thinking of short term as a matter of days and weeks then some of these questions may be asked of the individual on the application form and then backed up with questions asked in the interview and others may be asked of the referees. We will need to look for reasonable parity in answers from these three sources. (Three sources – The application form, the referees response to questions and the candidates response at the interview stage)

A. Questions to go alongside your usual ones on the application form but focussed on leadership –

- a. Have you ever been chosen as a leader in your life. Yes/No. If the answer is Yes then please answer in the space below, if your answer is No then proceed to b. below:

- i. What was it that you were leading?

- ii. How was the experience of leadership for you? E.g. Did you enjoy it? Was it difficult for you? In your own words describe the experience.

iii. What challenges did you face as you were leading?

iv. What do you think that you could have done better?

b. A QUESTION FOR ALL APPLICANTS - Do you think that Jesus was a good leader? (If your answer is Yes, why do you think that and what do you learn from it? If your answer is NO then say why you think that.)

c. If you were chosen to lead a team for this mission, what do you think your major responsibility in leading would be?

d. If you were chosen to lead a team for this mission, what would you do to help your team to succeed in their task?

- c. What evidence of those strengths can you give me today as we discuss this?

- d. What would you say are your weaknesses in leadership?

- e. How would you overcome your weaknesses in leadership?

- f. Do you think a leader should help the team by directing what happens?

- g. What would you do if your team members disagreed with your direction?

- h. Who is your favourite leader (in life or history) and what do you most admire about them?

These simple questions then are reflecting on the three sources. By having them asked this way we should be able to get a better idea of the suitability of this candidate for leadership in this short term mission team. There will always be mistakes and some candidates who answer well but fail to deliver on the field for a wide range of reasons. It is important that we have these candidates observed in action and properly de-briefed after the event. This only needs to be a series of questions designed to be sure that they were not traumatised by the experience.

If the term 'short term' in your mission is say from two months to two years then you will need a more extensive development for your leaders. The questions from above will help in gaining information but we will want to provide more cross-cultural training, more leadership development and more team building understanding. It may be that you are already geared for this but if not I invite you to contact us at Claybury International with your questions.

Remember that I introduced you to the book *The Performance Factor*, MacMillan P., Broadman & Holman Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee. 2001. © Team Resources Inc., In my view as a Leadership and Organizational development specialist, this is perhaps the best book on the market currently. It is practical, easy to read and has a number of built in resources for team leaders to use. I also introduced the Belbin Team Type Indicator and Claybury is able to offer you a managed process of measuring for type with this instrument. In choosing leaders for these 'longer' short term appointments I would also recommend the use of some other psychometric measurements as practical helps in growing an awareness of giftedness and ability for leadership. These would include a 16PF for Leaders, a Bar-on Emotional Intelligence Indicator. These and other tools we are using around the world in mission and they are proving helpful in lowering the damage factors in mission and heightening the positive experiences of mission. To discuss the use of such inventories please be in touch with us at Claybury International.

Blessings to you in your valuable work,

Colin D. Buckland

Chief Executive – Claybury International