

Missions Strategy Summary

Definition:

A church missions strategy is an intentional plan to accomplish what a church believes to be their unique contribution in world evangelization. The vision comes from God and is translated into priorities, goals, and objectives. A strategy deals with the resources of people, prayer and finances.

Purpose:

To help a church set a unified and agreed upon direction for blessing people outside of the church. The process of developing a strategy and what it forces people to reflect upon and learn can be as beneficial as the actual outcomes.

Benefits:

- Earnestly seek God – to discern His strategy
- Stretches Faith – to consider extending the gospel in ways only God could accomplish
- Sets a Unified Direction – for education and mobilization
- Enables Accountability – to established goals
- Simplifies Pastoral Care – prioritizing those in strategic locations
- Provides a Standard – for measuring one place and ministry to others

Process:

- Gather up to date records of what missionaries are doing and who is their target audience
- Survey church leaders to see what ministries and locations they believe are strategic
- Assess the kinds of ministries and places that would have a special connect with the congregation
- Draft an initial document for review and revision by church leaders so they will sense ownership
- Complete in a written form the guiding strategy and present to the congregation
- Utilize the strategy for future decision making. Alignment of strategy with other church ministries is essential if the strategy is to be most effective.

Outcomes:

Churches that have made the effort to develop a written missions strategy use this document to primarily guide their future support decisions. Priority will be given to ministries and missionaries who work within the strategy guidelines. Churches will also use the strategy to guide them with their existing ministries in terms of where to prioritize their missionary care, sending of short term trips and mobilization for involvement from the congregation. Unless a church is under tight financial restriction, the strategy should not be the basis for discontinuing support in any immediate fashion. It is, however, often the basis for deciding which ministries and missionaries the church has limited connection with and determining an appropriate way complete involvement after a certain agreed upon transition time.

Conclusion:

Strategy is not just a business concept, it is found throughout the Bible. If a church can develop and implement a strategy when their missions budget is small, they will avoid many struggles later on. If a church already has a large budget and number of missionaries, it is wise to set a course to bring the church in line with the strategy over a period of 3-5 years. By educating the congregation for the strategic focus and sending short term teams to those locations, in time the church will find people interested to engage accordingly.

Source: Tom Horn