

Major Mistakes Which Will Ruin a Missionary's Relationships, Ministry and Career

Midwest Conference on Missionary Care, Breakout Session, 25 February 2012

Common Mistakes Identified

- Patronizing (2x)
- Controlling (2x)
- Misunderstanding
 - Cross-cultural misunderstandings
- Expectations (2x)
 - False expectations
 - Unrealistic expectations (3x)
 - Underestimation of spiritual warfare (2x)
 - Unmet expectations (2x)
 - Not managing changing expectations of spouses or children
- Assumptions
 - About culture
 - About people
- Reluctance to share
- Inappropriate clothing/jewelry
- Insufficient preparedness for the field (2x)
 - Culturally (2x)
 - Support network
 - Financially
 - Lack of spiritual warfare training and awareness
 - Inadequate training
- Self-centeredness
- Self-reliance, not relying on the Lord
 - Not asking for help
- Wrong motives
- Messiah complex
 - Ministry possessiveness (2x)
 - Feeling "I have to do it all"
- Authority/submission issues
- Compromise values
- Neglect soul care/Spiritual nurturing (7x)
- Neglect self care (5x)
- Not recognizing needs
- Poor conflict resolution
 - Avoiding conflict resolution
 - Allowing unresolved conflicts (2x)
- Lacking transitional help
- Pride (4x)
 - Unteachable
 - Personal
 - Cultural
 - Spiritual
 - Organizational
 - Not asking for help
- Sin (3x)
- Lack of boundaries (4x)
 - Spreading self too thin
 - Not taking enough rest
 - Inability to say "NO"
 - Sexual Boundaries
 - Assuming you have to do everything – can't delegate
- Putting ministry before family/Not caring enough for family (6x)
- Task over relationships
- Universalism
- Cultural rigidity/Ethnocentricity (3x)
 - Doing things the "American Way"
 - Too connected to home culture/maintaining "roots" at home
 - Poor cultural adaptation
 - Not integrating into culture/engaging culture
 - Failure to adapt children to culture (2x)
 - Cultural enclaves
- Lack of honesty
- Inability to adapt
- Unforgiveness
- Disunity (3x)

- Cliques
- Lack of cooperation
- Lack of Language learning (6x)
- Not taking time for Spiritual disciplines (3x)
- Loss of vision (2x)
- Loss of passion
- Loss of focus (2x)
- Mismatch with mission board or sending entity
- Poor interpersonal relationships (4x)
- Lack of being able to relate to other culture
- Lack of identification with culture
- Isolation (4x)
- Poor choices in children's education
- Poor communication (2x)
 - Telling the wrong people your problems
- Lack of flexibility (3x)
- Dogmatism
 - With things like children education
- Ministry conflicts
- Not taking care of physical health
- Insufficient supporter contact (4x)
 - Poor communication (2x)
 - Not being heard
- Competition between missionaries
- Not understanding gifts and abilities of coworkers
- Going before you are ready (3x)
 - Maturity
 - Physical
 - Experience
 - Emotional
 - Spiritual
 - Relational
- Going for wrong reasons (2x)
- Not preparing for next transition
 - Not managing TCK transitions (2x)
- Reluctance to take time to Sabbath, vacation, furlough (2x)
- Undervaluing relationships (2x)
- Not having accountability/mentors (2x)
- Hiding hurts/failures from self and others (2x)
- Not integrating
- Lack of support
- Self awareness (2x)
- Allowing self to be defined by work
- Being in a hurry
- Unhealthy escapes
 - Pornography
- Spiritual dryness
- Bitterness against leaders
- Entitlement mentality
- Failure to listen and take advice from stateside people
- Going to bed angry
- Taking offense
- Too much computer time
- Legal questions
- Lack of transparency
- Transferring to a needed role to meet a need, but isn't necessarily a good fit w/gifting
- Team dynamics
- Trying to be too independent
- Assuming that others know what they need
- Not taking time to grieve losses
- Not maintaining relationships
- Not keeping balance in life

Strategies and Resources to Manage the Most Damaging Mistakes

ISSUE	STRATEGIES AND USEFUL RESOURCES
UNMET EXPECTATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List expectations to provide a framework or categories to work through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create a setting to work through (maybe several times) • Make realistic goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Realistic expectations • Ask what are the expectations of them as the missionaries • Be able to explain/talk through the “why” or value of expectation • StrengthsFinder® (www.strengthsfinder.com) • DiSC® (www.onlinediscprofile.com) • Understanding each other to understand the heartbeat of the person • Background on the team you will be working with • Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are they my expectations? ○ Are they selfish ○ What are the values or expectations of each other? • Setting up w/what God wants • Clearly communicate expectations • Myers-Briggs MBTI® (www.myersbriggs.org)
SIN	<p>PREVENTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily time in the word/worship/Sabbath • Knowing/recognizing/communicating needs • Accountability/trust (men&women) • Culture of grace • Interpersonal Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sharpening Your Interpersonal Skills (SYIS) workshop (www.itpartners.org) • Humility/service • Sending Organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide deep marriage encounter opportunity <p>RECONCILIATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice of reconciliation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Forgiveness – service of forgiveness on regular basis • Leadership modeling forgiveness • Meditating on the cross/confession • Spiritual retreats • CSA® (www.cernysmith.com) • Create awareness of how my sin impacts others • Give permission to someone to speak to me about my sin • Be willing to say “I’m sorry. Will you forgive me?”

<p style="text-align: center;">CONFLICT RESOLUTION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring it to Jesus • Identify problem • Identify persons affected • Bring in mediator/3rd person • Identify severity of problem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do officials need to be notified? • Role play/practice ahead of time • Sharpening Your Interpersonal Skills (SYIS) workshop (www.itpartners.org) • Peacemaker Ministries (www.peacemaker.net) • Book: “Total Forgiveness” R.T. Kendall
<p style="text-align: center;">MAINTAINING BOUNDARIES</p>	<p>MORAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural perspective • Set boundaries • Live within boundaries set • Accountability • Have boundaries with coworkers <p>TIME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set boundaries • Schedule your priorities – time in the word • For family – spouse – children • Say “NO” (learning the appropriate way to say it) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharpening Your Interpersonal Skills (SYIS) workshop (www.itpartners.org)
<p style="text-align: center;">EFFECTIVE SOUL CARE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular time for retreat/personal time • Establish rhythm/plan • Seek new resources • Go deeper/stretch self • Accountability • Take a break/energize/renew self

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">DISUNITY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify causes • Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who is it? ○ What is there role? • Recognize expectations and differences • Discussions about team, with team • Focus on “focus” – change viewpoint to emphasis of unity • Make regular times to play as a team and with individuals • Point out strengths and develop • Appreciate uniqueness and strengths of team members • Discuss needs openly • Utilize good resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “The Trust Languages” ○ Book: “Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In” by Roger Fisher ○ StrengthsFinder® (www.strengthsfinder.com) ○ Book: “The Five Dysfunctions of a Team” by Patrick Lencioni ○ Book: “The Five Love Languages” by Gary D. Chapman • Utilize outside resource/intervention • Focus on personal “log” before “specks” of others • Focus on own relationships with God • Discipline of time with family
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">COMPARING/JUDGING OTHERS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training beforehand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Testing to know your gifts ○ Get to know your team • Embrace other’s gifts • Be accepting of yourself as Christ has accepted us • Careful in comparing host vs. home culture • Team culture sensitive
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">COMPETITION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strength coaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ StrengthsFinder® (www.strengthsfinder.com) ○ CSA® (www.cernysmith.com) • Corporate prayer • Dealing with personal insecurities • Identify problem • Thankfulness for the way God has made me – I was not created to look like someone else • Identity in Christ (read books about this) • Charitable assumptions (gentle answer) • Books on showing grace • Lois Dodds’ article on assuming the best, www.heartstreamresources.org