



EFCA The Mission Leadership Team January 2011

Steve & Kathy Austvold, EFCA Mission Mobilizers Serving the NCD, NPD, and Beyond

Steve.austvold@ncdefca.org

Kathy.austvold@efca.org

Dear Pastors and Church Mission Leaders,

There is a real variety of church mission teams. Some churches have very active church mission teams that meet once or twice a month. Some meet monthly, some meet once a year to prepare budget items for the annual meeting. Some churches have decided they do not want church mission teams. Instead they put mission efforts are put into the hands of church elders or leadership.

How would you rate your mission leadership team? If you were asked, what is the role of the mission leadership team, would you know how to answer?

David Mays has done us a great service. He just published a book called The Mission Leadership Team. David has worked with APMC and now he is the director of Learning Initiatives for The Mission Exchange. Here is what he writes about his book. "This workbook provides a stimulating overview of the job of leading missions in a local church, including current issues, practical suggestions, additional helps, space to work in the book, and an excellent list of current resources."

David continues with a summary of his own book. I have edited his book review into a shorter format.

1. Foundations - What is our charter?

The charter includes four elements: 1) a purpose statement for the mission team, 2) a biblical basis statement for mission, 3) the scope of mission and 4) the authority granted the team. "The mission leadership team exists to help church leaders fulfill the purpose of the church." (8) Therefore, the purpose statement of the mission team should clearly connect with the church purpose statement.

2. Functions - What are we supposed to do?

The major categories in this chapter are communicate, plan, manage, mobilize, partner, and send. "An aim for any mission team is to make mission a normal, regular part of congregation life." (19) "The mission team may be looking for ways to help the church staff and board understand the overriding priority of the Great Commission." (23) "The team also carries a responsibility to ensure that people pray for the world, for the lost and hurting, for mission work, for countries and nations, for persecuted believers, for leaders and workers in the community and around the world, for the church in mission and for their own commitment and involvement." (27)

3. Qualifications and Training - What do we have to be and know?

There is much a team needs to know to make wise decisions and do good planning for mission. They need to know some things about missions, history, geography, mission methods, mission organizations, and a host of other things. And it is critically important to have a clear understanding of the mission priorities of Scripture. The team needs spiritual qualities, a variety of skills and diversity. And it needs to be representative of the congregation. Mission teams need ongoing education, partly because most of us are woefully ignorant of the above, but also because the world is changing, the culture is changing, the church is changing, and missions is ever changing.

4. Constituencies - With whom do we work?

Mission teams interface with pastors, elders, ministry and other leaders, missionaries and workers, partners, and others in the Great Commission community. How does a mission team maximize its influence in all these arenas, encouraging, equipping, caring for workers, and involving all parts of the church in mission? "Ideally the mission team becomes the resource team, equipping every ministry in the church to participate in mission." (76)

5. Structure - How do we organize ourselves?

In some churches one person handles all the mission business. At the other extreme, one church had 140 people in mission leadership? What is best for your church? One person? One leader with support from others? A team? A team with sub-teams? A steering or management team with multiple teams? Or some alternative structure?

6. Operation - How do we execute?

Who leads the team? What is the role of the mission pastor? How do you handle the difficulties of meetings? How can you most effectively get the work done? Who handles the finances? How might an annual retreat help you? "How can you oversee a global marketing operation on one meeting a month?" (95)

As you begin this year, I would encourage your mission team to order this book for each member of your mission team. Going through this book, I believe, will be a good exercise to improve and fine-tune your mission team for maximum effectiveness.

Books can be Ordered at www.TheMissionExchange.org. Click on the visitor link, create a profile, and go to the online store. Get a bundle of six for \$9.50 each +s/h. For larger orders contact [David Mays](#).

Blessings,

Steve Austvold