

Preparing Understanding and Strategizing

‘Many ministries fail because they are built on inadequate cognitive, attitudinal, and relational foundations. Unless the team members love among the people they are called to reach, they will not go very far in church-planting mission’

Global Church Planting, Ott & Wilson p185

During this stage, there are six key questions to answer.

1. How did this place become here?
2. Who makes up here?
3. How do things work here?
4. Who should we connect with here?
5. Who do we need to reach here?
6. How are we going to plant here?

Emphasis on HERE: develop your understanding of PLACE

1. Geographically: how does it fit in?
2. Historically: what’s its story?
3. Demographically: who’s there?
4. Ethnically: where are they from?
5. Ideologically: what does it think?
6. Culturally: how do they do things around there?
7. Economically: what have they got?

1. How did this place become here?

‘Different subcultures, classes, generations, and educational and socioeconomic groups within the same general culture may have distinct, beliefs, and aspirations. For this reason all church planters should carefully study and become acquainted with the ministry focus people, even if it is not a cross-cultural work’ p186

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1.1	Toponymy
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2. Who makes up here?

‘Some neglect the study of the ministry focus people because of a sense of urgency about the mission. Team members may feel that studying the people is impractical or a waste of time. Yest successful church planting always requires a basic understanding of the people that are being reached’ p188.

Three benefits to this kind of research

1. Understanding transforms the messenger:
2. Understanding builds relationship.
3. Understanding enables effective communication.

‘One of the tasks of contextualization is to make the message meaningful – that is, more easily understood, not more palatable’ p190

Three Approaches to Understanding the ‘Ministry Focus People’

1. The lens of lived experience:

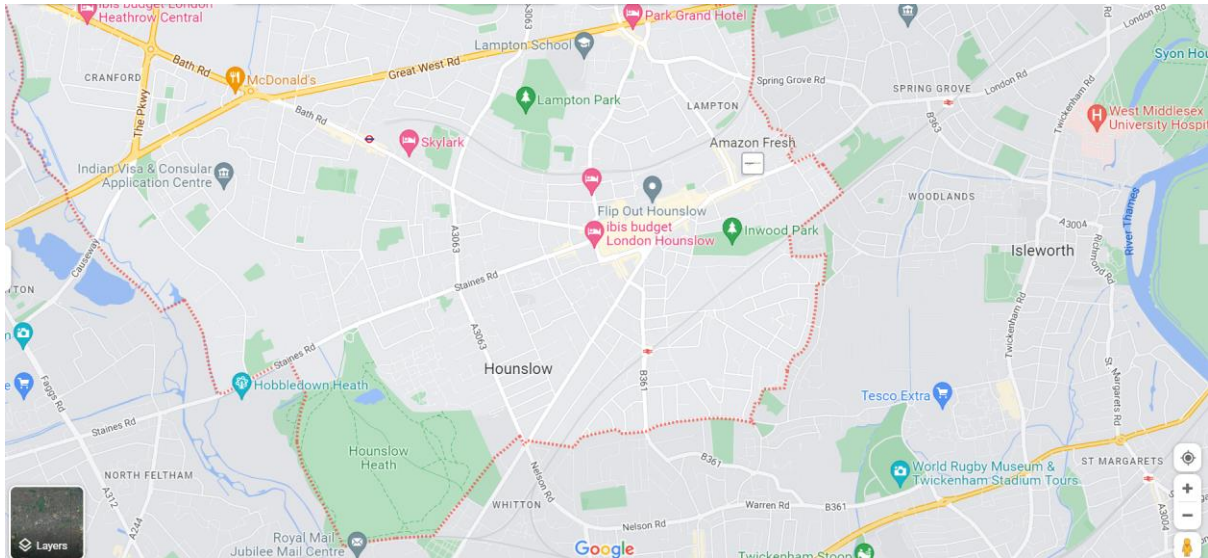
‘There is no substitute for living with a people if the goal is to understand and appreciate them. One experience first-hand their lifestyle and ways of interacting socially and discovers at a personal level their interests, worries, joys, fears, and beliefs. This is the way church planters, fuelled by Spirit given empathy and insight, can develop an insider’s perspective over time’ p191

2. The lens of demographic study:

Category	Information
Population Growth/Decline	Biological: Births and Deaths Movement: people entering or leaving the community Gains or losses in housing Future development plans (new housing, industry etc)
Family	Percentage for various age groups (children, young adults, pensioners etc) Size of family Number of persons per household Single, married, divorced
Economic	Average household income Standard of living Commercial and industrial activity in community Primary forms of employment Unemployment rates Public or other assistance for poor and unemployed Transportation, commerce, tourism
Education	Educational levels of the population Literacy rate Schools and post-secondary educational institutions Availability of libraries, tutoring and adult continuing education
Social/Political	Ethnic groups Language groups Subcultures Refugees, immigrants & asylum seekers Political parties and affiliations Available social services Availability of medical care
Religious	Religious affiliation Active practice of religion Beliefs Religious institutions: churches, mosques and temples

3. The lens of participant observation

‘Urban societies, with great influxes of rural people, are increasingly pluralistic – they typically have multiple subcultures with different ethnicities, worldviews, value systems, and classes interacting and modifying each other’ p196



1. Print out a map of the geographical area that you're wanting to reach
2. Take notes as you go around the area
3. Meet with one or two allies and get them to give you an understanding of the area
4. Where's the centre? What are the directions of travel?
5. What's the provision of public transport like?
6. Where are the schools?
7. What are the types of housing?
8. What are the sizes of gardens? Are they well looked after?
9. What kinds of cars are people driving? Are they old or new?
10. What kinds of shops are in the street? Where are the supermarkets?
11. What types of things are promoted on fliers?
12. What can you learn from the churches from what's on their noticeboards and the general appearance of their buildings?
13. What recreational facilities do people have in the area?
14. What are the places in which people congregate?
15. What tends to bring people together?

3. How do things work here?

The focus should be on four main areas

1. Understanding what they think they need
2. Understanding what they're after
3. Understanding how they make decisions
4. Understanding who is most likely to respond

Redeemer Church Planting Centre: **Model 'Ethnographic' Interview**

Interviewing a Community Leader

Situation: Meeting with a School Head Teacher

Purpose: I'm new to this area and would like to start a church that meets the needs of this area. Is there a convenient time for you to give me some advice?

1. As you deal with young people from this neighbourhood, tell me what are their hopes, aspirations and pleasures? To what degree are these realistic dreams?
2. What appears to be their greatest fears and problems?
3. What kind of church, if any, would people come to? Describe a church that would meet this area's needs?
4. In your opinion what views of right and wrong do these young people hold? How are these values formed or nurtured? How are they destroyed?
5. What are the major religions represented in your student body? Would you say that most students are religious? How are the religious bodies in the communities doing?
6. Which ones seem to be the most effective?
7. Finally, could you give me some idea how the material/economic aspect of society in this area is affecting the fulfilment of aspirations and dreams? How could a new church help?

Thank you for your time and valuable information. Who else would it be profitable for me to talk to?

4. Who do we connect with here?

There are two types of people

1. Community leaders.
2. Community gatekeepers.

5. Who do we need doing what here?

A team is a group of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose and work together in agreed upon ways to achieve that purpose, holding each other fully and jointly accountable for the teams' results.

Five Features of a Team

1. Complementary characters & skills
2. Committed to common purpose
3. Choosing how to work
4. Collaborative execution
5. Accountable for results

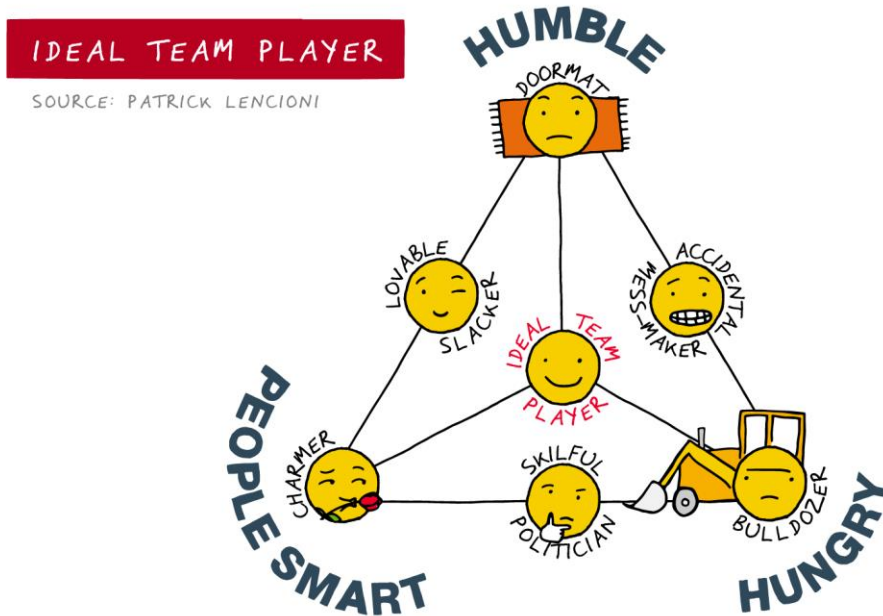
Three Aspects of Forming a Team

1. Recruiting the Team
2. Building the Team
3. Leading the Team

Recruiting the Team: The Five C's

Who do you choose?

1. Character what are they like?
2. Convictions what drives them?
3. Chemistry how well do they fit?
4. Competency what can they do?
5. Capacity how much can they do?



LEAD
50 models for success

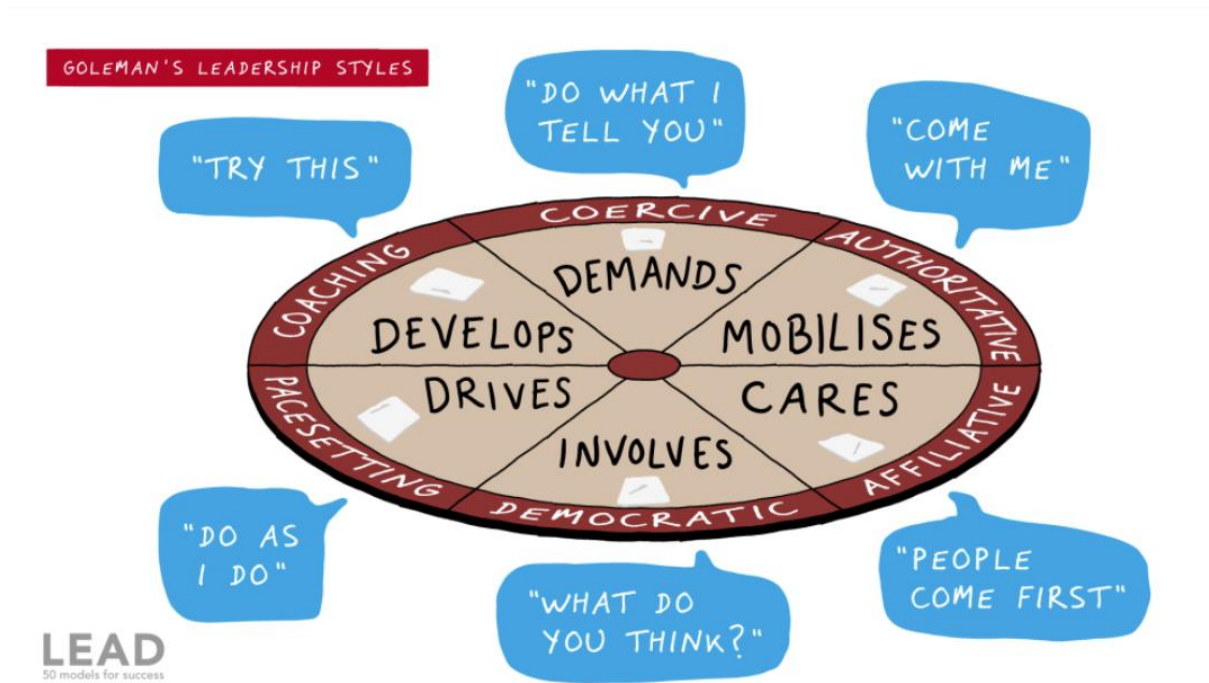
Building a Team: Life Cycle of a Team



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Stage	Description	Team	Leader
Forming	They 'form' as they come together and start their collective work	Who are we and why are we here?	Recruit with vision and provide clarity in terms of roles and purpose
Fighting	They 'storm' as they work out what needs to be done, who's responsible for what and how they're going to relate to one another	What are we doing and why isn't this working?	Observation, analysis and intervention and encouragement
Figuring	As they come to agreement, they start to agree on 'norms'	I think we're beginning to get the hang of this	Observation, encouragement and reminding them what they're accomplishing
Flourishing	With these in place they can then focus on the goal and begin to 'perform'	Look at what we're doing!	Get out of the way, you're your hands off but cast the occasional eye

Leading the Team: Leadership Styles



Leadership Style	
Coercive	In a crisis or to kickstart a turnaround this may come into play
Authoritative	When people need a clear vision this is the invitational command
Affiliative	Heals rifts in a team or helps motivate folk under stress, creates harmony
Democratic	Builds consensus and encourages participation
Pacesetting	Works best with highly motivated and highly competent people, for others the relentless drive can be exhausting and demoralising
Coaching	This has long term development at its core, asking people to try this builds progress

6. How are we going to plant here?

What do you do with his?

1. It helps choose your pastor
2. It helps create your plan
3. It helps craft your pitch

Appendices

Twenty Questions to Understand a Ministry Focus People¹

1. What are the core values of this group evident in their choices, speech and practices?
2. What are their convictions regarding the supernatural: God, spirits, demons, unseen powers? How do they talk about God? How do they feel about him?
3. What do they fear most? What do they value most: objects, ideals, goals, principles, standards? What are some of their deepest longings and aspirations?
4. What is their understanding of causality, that is, the role of blessings and curses, taboos, charms, prayer, natural laws, personal efficacy, fatalism and the like?
5. What concept of time do they have? Is it linear or cyclical, more task oriented or event oriented? Are they most focussed on the events of the past, the present, or the future?
6. What is the social structure of society? What is the most important social unit: the nuclear family, the extended family, the clan, the nation or the tribe?
7. How is the larger society governed? Who are the key people of influence? What are the primary institutions?
8. How are decisions made? Is individual freedom valued over the wishes of the group, or are personal decisions subordinate to the wishes of the group?
9. What are the forms of socialization? How are the children disciplined and educated? How does society deal with social deviation and reward positive behaviour?
10. What are the means of social control: police, courts, jail, peer pressure, or ostracism?
11. What are the means of transportation and communication? How is information passed on or disseminated? What or who is considered a credible source?
12. What are the key rites of passage (e.g. birth, entering adulthood, marriage, death) and how are they conducted or ritualized? What meanings are associated with them, and what larger role do they play in society?
13. What can you learn from their holy days and festivities?
14. Who are their heroes, past and present?
15. What do popular myths, legends, stories, and metaphors communicate about the culture and worldview?
16. What is their attitude towards social outsiders and people of other faiths?
17. How attached is the younger generation to the traditional way? What segments of the society are more tradition oriented? Which are open to change?
18. How is interpersonal and intergroup conflict resolved?
19. How do people understand and deal with guilt, suffering and death?
20. What are the most offensive sins of the society? What are the highest virtues?

Four Analytical Questions

1. What do they live for?

- What do they hope for? What makes them happy? What do they fear? What do they aspire to? What are their issues?

2. What do they believe to be true?

- What aspects of the gospel they understand? What do they accept of biblical truth? What do they deny? What are the stories that they rehearse and hold onto?

¹ Ott & Wilson, *Global Church Planting*.

3. What is their social context?

- What is their economic level? What is their educational level? How are they related to other social groups? Are they exploiting or being exploited?

4. What's their exposure to the gospel?

- Which churches and religious institutions are in place? What are those within the area doing? How are they organised? What ministry models appear to be effective?