Missionary Training by Nationals

IN THE NEW SENDING COUNTRIES

by David Tai-Woong Lee

The following paper was originally delivered in the College of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. It has been revised and strengthened to fit this current publication.

The Global Missionary Training Center (GMTC) has recently celebrated 12 years of cross-cultural missionary training. The problems we faced when we began the work were numerous. The major one was discouragement from both within and without. Some expatriates expressed their doubts privately: “How can you train missionaries when you lack missionary experience yourself?” Yet the discouragement from within was the most painful—for it came from some of our own supporters who expressed the same doubts. Thus, even after investing a year in planning and preparation, we were still unsure whether we should begin to train our Korean cross-cultural missionaries or not.

As my wife and I were returning from the Korean Baptist Seminary in Daejon where we were teaching, I shared my thoughts with her concerning this dilemma. She listened and then said, “It’s true we lack missionary experience, and it’s true we may fail or do a mediocre job, but we need to start someplace, don’t we?” With this reasoning to encourage us, we began the missionary training program.

This sort of story may not be unique to GMTC. It may also have happened with others in countries that are starting to send missionaries. After 12 years of training Koreans, I think we can give a realistic assessment of the training of missionaries by people of their own nationality. First, however, I’d like to summarize the current state of Two-Thirds World missionary training. Then I will share some specific advantages and disadvantages of nationals training missionaries.

A Global Scene

Up until the 1980s, most of the Two-Thirds World missionaries were sent out with little or no specific missionary training. Through research done for the World Directory of Missionary Training Centres (William Carey Library, 1995), Ray Windsor found only 30 non-Western missionary training centers founded before 1975; 95 new ones were added to these between then and 1991. Some of the earlier missionary training centers in the Two-Thirds World were the East-West Center (Korea, 1973), AVANTE (Brazil, 1983), ACTI (Singapore, 1985), NEMI (Nigeria, 1986), the AIC Missionary College (Kenya, 1986), and GMTC (Korea, 1986).

In 1989, the World Evangelical Fellowship Missions Commission (WEF MC) sponsored a missionary training consultation in Manila that launched the International Missionary Training Fellowship (IMTF). This became the first global network of cross-cultural missionary trainers and centers. Subsequently, there have been a number of regional meetings and consultations sponsored in Asia, Latin America, Africa, the South Pacific, and the Caribbean. A number of national consultations have followed these regional ones. As a result of these meetings, there seems to be a significant growth in the numbers and the quality of missionary training centers in the Two-Thirds World. Windsor (1995) identified 514 such centers in the worldwide network and profiles 281 of them in the 1994 edition of his directory. In Korea, there are 12 missionary training centers listed in the 1996 edition of the Korean Mission Handbook, whereas there were almost none until the early 1980s.

Recent Breakthroughs

In Curriculum Designing

It all began in July of 1991, with the “profiling” exercise conducted by WEF MC staff member Jonathan Lewis. He led missions-related institutions and programs from the “southern cone” countries of Latin America in a process that produced a...
chart detailing knowledge, skill, and character components expected in an entry-level missionary from that region. Second, core trainer's profile, learning objectives, contributions were made. First, a profile chart detailing knowledge, skill, and character components expected in an entry-level missionary from that region. Robert Ferris describes the process in Establishing Ministry Training: A Manual for Programme Developers (William Carey Library, 1995, p. vi):

The technique used to create the first missionary training profile was adapted from an approach used primarily by vocational educators. The DACUM (Developing a Curriculum) process emerged in the 1960s and '70s as a method for determining the competencies needed to perform effectively in a given occupation. Essentially, a small group of expert practitioners employs a consensus process to create a comprehensive descriptive chart. The approach requires identifying in precise terms what trainees need to know, what they need to be able to do, and what attitudes they need to manifest. A second part of the exercise involves setting measurable standards of competence for each item on the chart.

After the Argentine profile was published, profiling exercises for missionary training began to be conducted in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Countries such as Colombia, Mexico, Puerto Rico, India, Nigeria, and Korea were included. Later on, the exercise was also conducted in North America. In February 1994, this exercise and other profiling exercises enabled trainers to get a macroscopic view of the curriculum plan, whereas formerly each program tended to compile a list of courses in a somewhat random fashion.

**Curriculum Designing**

During the Evangelical Fellowship of Asia Missions Commission (EFA MC) Missionary Trainers Workshop in Manila, 1993, the exercise was taken one step further. Several important contributions were made. First, a profile chart was developed that included the trainer's profile, learning objectives, and learning activities. Second, core subjects were determined. Third, the core subjects were matched with the learning activities, which resulted in a training curriculum plan. This last accomplishment was achieved for perhaps the first time in history. The cultural milieu of Asia may have helped in this achievement. As in most of the Two-Thirds World, the Asian worldview is “concrete-relational,” and those who view the world this way need concrete curriculum plans. Thus the concept of “core subjects” emerged, and participants came to consensus on the following nine areas:

- Spiritual maturity
- Integrity of character
- Family life
- Emotional and physical health
- Relational skills
- Biblical and theological knowledge
- Missionary life in cross-cultural skills
- Ministry skills
- Practical skills

Core subjects of missiological programs in theological seminaries tend to include Theology of Mission, History of Mission, World Religions, Church Growth, Cross-Cultural Communication, etc. Compare these subjects with the Asia consultation list. It is obvious that one is vastly cognitive, while the other is integrative or holistic. This realization has opened the way for missionary training to legitimately focus on the total person through holistic training, rather than on cognitive areas only. These innovations in curriculum design have stimulated a tremendous growth in missionary training and curriculum design, both in the West and in the Two-Thirds World.

The curriculum that was developed in this way was incorporated into existing programs, such as the one offered by GMTC, as well as others in India and elsewhere. At GMTC, we created our own profile from the Korean context by adding Korean cultural aspects and designing our own curriculum. This experience provides much of the basis of my observations in the following section.

What I share may be truer of non-English speaking cultures where a heart language predominates, such as Korea, Japan, Thailand, and China, than in countries that have adopted English as their national language.

**Advantages of Missionary Training by Nationals Over Expatriates**

In holistic missionary training, nationals are more likely to succeed than expatriates in several areas.

**Spiritual Maturity**

Training in spiritual maturity is one of the areas in which an understanding of the heart language, culture, and worldview is crucial. This is especially true for those whose worldview embraces concrete-relational thinking, in which emotional factors play a much larger role than conceptual factors. To get to the bottom of spiritual matters, nationals have a definite advantage.

Normally, spiritual maturity is cultivated through non-formal and informal educational modes. Within the GMTC training context, tutor-group encounters are used, where the tutor listens to students and picks out problematic areas. The tutor then uses counseling sessions with the students and/or classes on spiritual formation. Under this classification, GMTC covers a variety of subjects such as Inner Healing, Definition of Spirituality From a Biblical and Historical Perspective, Personal Management, Spiritual Gifts, etc. In addition, there are a number of community living and socialization factors, as well as modeling by teachers.

**Character Development**

Building integrity of character demands cultural sensitivity. Small discussion groups are used for this purpose. One must understand the worldview of the participants in order to cue in on these small group discussions and help those who are being trained. The Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis (T-JTA) test is often used for in-depth interviews. Tutors are the ones who interpret the test results for the trainees. Counseling and correction usually accompany this process. The testing is to assure the students that they are not simply getting a subjective biased opinion, but rather are receiving an objective analysis and help from the tutor. Without a thorough understanding of
the worldview of the trainee, the trainer may not be able to touch on deeper problems that may haunt the trainee on the mission field.

**Family Life Seminars**

Working with the family also requires a great deal of cultural sensitivity. Unless one is culturally attuned, it is difficult to understand the source of problems a marriage may be experiencing, whether it is communication, a childhood trauma, etc. Often, it takes very difficult encounters to improve a marriage relationship. Workshops are helpful in this regard. These include teaching and counseling elements.

**Emotional and Physical Health**

Training in this area is always necessary when working with missionary trainees in the Two-Thirds World. Counseling and the Life Formation classes are helpful. Sharing one’s personal history in a group setting is a very important tool. Every student draws his or her own spiritual life’s journey. Students try to visualize their own self-image, particularly at the feeling level. The T-JTA test is very useful in this regard if used with sensitive counseling sessions. Where there is spiritual oppression, “power encounters” are used.

**Personal Relationships**

The primary means of working in this area is to identify the areas that are hindering sound relationships. This may include exploring the trainee’s early life. Often, one may need to go back as far as early childhood to scrutinize relationships with significant others—usually the trainee’s parents.

The above areas are perhaps the ones in which national trainers have the advantage. For theology, missiology, ministry, and practical aspects, both nationals and expatriates could do equally well.

The advantages of utilizing nationals in holistic missionary training are obvious. Nationals have an ingrained understanding of the trainees’ worldview. It is difficult for expatriates to achieve this level of understanding. Also, the use of the “heart language” is most effective in achieving many holistic ends. Language is not just symbols. It is part and parcel of any culture. Cultural sensitivity is very important to pinpoint problem areas in character development and emotional stability. Even in cognitive areas such as missiology, lack of high language proficiency in the teaching language by trainer or trainee can become a tremendous barrier to understanding.

An experiment of sorts was recently conducted in Manila which bears out many of these factors. Thirty Korean missionary candidates went to Manila to be trained by a multi-national group. Some of the highly experienced missionary trainers were handpicked because they were good communicators and had much expertise in their areas. They were good models for the trainees. In spite of these assets, the final evaluation of the experience showed that the trainers were not able to penetrate deeply into the hearts of the trainees in ways that affected character development, family life, emotional health, and spiritual maturity. In terms of exposure to the mission field, learning adjustment skills, and gaining missiological knowledge, though, the training was excellent.

**Disadvantages to Training by Nationals and Some Solutions**

The greatest disadvantage is a lack of cross-cultural awareness when training is done strictly with nationals. Often, the presence of expatriate trainers will help remove this discrepancy. In addition, short trips to the mission field can help fill this gap. Simulation games as well as utilization of certain teaching techniques can also foster cross-cultural awareness.

The scarcity of qualified trainers is another big disadvantage. Since the Two-Thirds World mission movement is still young, there are not enough experienced trainers who have had some cross-cultural missionary experience. This situation will change as a number of veteran missionaries begin returning from the field.

In some areas, there is still a great need for those who have formal studies in missiology. Although having a background in missiological studies is not the only factor in becoming a qualified missionary trainer, it is still one of the important components. Expatriates can be of great service as lecturers in this area. The WEF Missions Commission has made a remarkable contribution over the past decade in identifying International Missionary Training Assistants (IMTA) who have been able to help newer missionary training centers. Ultimately, the real solution is to make practical missiological training courses widely available for trainers.

**Conclusions**

There are some exceptions to the above suppositions. Expatriates ministering in radically different cultures rarely achieve a thorough acculturation. However, those in distant or near cultures who have become acculturated will find their effectiveness increased. Koreans in Japan may be able to achieve high levels of acculturation, as can Americans in Europe or in some parts of Latin America that have Western cultures. The language barriers are lessened, and the worldview is easier to understand.

Another exception is workers among their own Diaspora. Chinese in Hong Kong and numerous ethnic groups in North America are examples. Parts of Africa where English, French, or some other European language is the official means of communication may also fit in this category.

Overall, it is apparent that nationals have the advantage in achieving many of the holistic missionary training goals. It would be good for Westerners and non-Westerners to acknowledge this fact. This should produce a stronger commitment by expatriates to encourage and empower nationals in the training of their own missionaries.

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Why do some missionaries leave the field and return home early? What lies behind unscheduled departures? The book Too Valuable to Lose: Exploring the Causes and Cures of Missionary Attrition (W. Taylor, Ed., William Carey Library, 1997) reports on a study of unwanted attrition among 20,000 missionaries serving 453 missions agencies from 14 nations. The book says surprisingly little, however, about language-related causes of attrition. My own experience as a linguist has convinced me that a lack of language competence is often a major cause of unwanted attrition. Common sense says that without competence to communicate in a community’s language of choice, missionaries are at risk, seriously limiting the nature and extent of their influence, and they become prospects for early departure with all its implicit waste.

Listed among the 26 causes of attrition differentiated in Too Valuable to Lose is “language difficulties,” which is defined merely as “unable to adequately learn the language.” This factor only ranked 24th in the importance given to it by missions administrators, among the 26 reasons identified through the study (Brierley in Taylor, Figure 6-6, p. 92). One might infer from this that the lack of language competence has little to do with attrition. A closer look, however, will show us that a lack of language competence lurks in the shadows of other, more explicitly stated reasons for attrition.

### Cases of Language-Related Attrition

Over the past 40 years, I have observed many cases of unscheduled departures by missionaries. Many were cases of language-related attrition. These include:

1. **Demands of national bodies for language competence that outweigh the motivation of new missionaries to meet those demands (Thailand, Chile, Mozambique, France, et al.).**
2. **Hidden or unexpected dimensions in the development of language competence, which take a new missionary by surprise (Middle East, Central Asia, et al.).**
3. **Manifestation of unhealthy attitudes about a community’s language, according to national leaders (Nigeria, Costa Rica, Brazil, et al.).**
4. **Failure of a missionary to measure up to the standards that other missionaries have achieved (Kenya, Japan, Dominican Republic, Macao, et al.).**
5. **Failure of the mission agency, according to the newcomer, to provide opportunities for meeting expectations for competence (Hong Kong, Pakistan, India, Central Asia, et al.).**
6. **Failure of a missionary, according to the mission, to adequately utilize the opportunity provided to meet standards for competence (Costa Rica, Brazil, France, Spain, Germany, Kenya, et al.).**
7. **A sense of incompetency to begin work, even after a year of language study and even though peers feel that the missionary can pick up competence as he goes along (Dominican Republic, Kenya, et al.).**
8. **Having the local people make fun of a newcomer’s “American accent” in a community where another variety of English is used (Scotland, Singapore, et al.).**
9. **Resistance in learning an important local pidgin on the grounds that it is “inferior” and that learning it is like “learning to ride a broken bicycle” (Belize, Central African Republic, et al.).**
10. **Inability by a new missionary couple to manage a “spouse gap” adequately when a serious discrepancy in competence appears and increases steadily, resulting in the curtailing of the couple’s effectiveness (Kenya, Philippines, Thailand, et al.).**
11. **Differences between husband and wife where the husband is given a more-than-adequate opportunity in a good language school to develop competence, but the wife is given none, yet she succeeds in developing competence and he doesn’t (Tokyo, Korea, Hong Kong, et al.).**
12. **Failure in a multilingual community to develop language competence in the most appropriate language, as local people perceive it (Ivory Coast, Philippines, Thailand, et al.).**
13. **Discovery, after studying a language in school and arriving in the target community, that the wife should have studied a different language to maximize effectiveness (Rwanda, Senegal, Taiwan, et al.).**
14. **Continual frustration by a newcomer in a target community where locals much prefer Language A to Language B in certain life situations, because the missionary’s competence is limited to Language B (Paraguay, Taiwan, Greece, et al.).**
15. **Failure to take the language difficulty of one location against another into consideration in allocating a new missionary to a place and position that matches his or her strengths (Brazil, Hong Kong).**
16. **Failure to manage a situation where two important languages are involved and where a newcomer can only tackle one language at a time (Bandung, Indonesia: Indonesian and Sundanese; Kazakhstan: Kazakh and Russian; Taiwan: Mandarin and Taiwanese; Morocco: Arabic and French).**

### Reasons for Language Deficiencies

The nature of my work has allowed me to observe why scores of missionaries lack adequate language skills. Chief among the reasons are:

1. **Organizations failing to provide clear expectations for language competence and appropriate opportunities to acquire such competence.**
2. **Language schools and tutors failing to have missionaries capitalize on ordinary people in their community to contribute to their language-learning process.**
3. **Pre-field orientation programs that focus on language-learning techniques but fail to get at counter-productive attitudes and perceptions that render such techniques virtually useless.**

### Recommendations

First, the lack of language competence as an underlying cause of all sorts of attrition needs to be considered in any further study, such as the one continued on page 5
reported in Too Valuable to Lose. Second, unwanted attrition caused in part or in whole by lack of language competence needs to be addressed seriously. Third, in addressing this kind of attrition, new programs and resources should be developed and tested to meet the reasonable demands of the new generation of missionaries.

We also need to protect ourselves against escalating costs in the development of language competence, since it discourages language acquisition with subsequent decreased effectiveness potential. One practical way we could do this is by requiring short-termers to develop some limited language competence. With appropriate pre-field orientation, 10 percent of the individual’s total time (the “tithe principle”) could be allocated to an appropriate language learning program. The key is to begin building the right attitudes early on and to take advantage of the opportunities every cross-cultural context presents for language learning.

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Peruvians Initiate Cross-Cultural Training Program

Adapted from a report by Peter Hocking

When Peruvian missionary Peter Hocking founded Segadores in 1963, it was the only ministry in Peru mobilizing and discipling teams of young people in missionary outreach. Hocking, a missionary kid from the Wycliffe clan, is a naturalized citizen of Peru.

He loves the jungle and has dedicated his life to promoting the work among tribal groups in that great land. Three years ago, in response to perceived needs, Segadores’ leaders decided to replace its historic youth missionary training with a cross-cultural training program. It was evident that many of the Peruvian missionaries that are ministering cross-culturally have become discouraged by poor results. It is not surprising, for most of these have had no training in how to penetrate a culture. Although there are several missionary training programs in Peru, the others don’t emphasize the cross-cultural dimensions in practical ways.

In February of 1996, six members of the Segadores staff traveled to Costa Rica and participated in an innovative training program designed and run by Peter Jones, another Wycliffe MK. The ETNOS training program is conducted in association with the Federation of Evangelical Missions in Costa Rica (FEDEMEC). Although it is conducted primarily in a jungle setting, it equips cross-cultural missionaries for all fields. Impressed by the program and its apparent results, the Segadores staff began a similar program in Peru led by Saúl Huamán.

The new Cross-Cultural Training for Reaching Ethnic Groups (ETAE) program was launched in 1997. During the first two weeks of February, appropriate courses were taught in a place near Lima, the capital city of Peru. Thirteen students attended, including two Peruvian missionary couples from the jungle. During that time of studies, the students were prepared physically for the field training by building simple huts to sleep in and by doing hard physical labor on Saturdays.

The second stage of the training involved living 15 days with the Yanesha tribe in the jungle. Seven students participated in this part of the training. Three of the Segadores leaders took part as disciplers, and a Yanesha Christian couple gave practical training in matters of language, customs, and how to live and work in the jungle. To continued on page 6
The workshop was jointly organised by Nigeria, from 26th to 30th August, 1996. Participants from various African countries attended, including Benin, Central African Republic, South Africa, Tanzania, Chad, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, and UK, and they participated in a workshop held at Maingo, near Jos in Nigeria. From 26th to 30th August, 1996. The workshop was jointly organised by the Theological and Christian Education Commission and the Evangelism and Missions Commission of the AEA.

Upon arriving at the small village of Santa Maria, they hiked another hour through mud and jungle to the rustic house where they were to live. Augusto, the native brother, taught the men how to hack out a farm in the jungle, how to plant it, how to fish, how to make a balsa raft, etc. His wife Yolanda taught the women how to cook on a wood fire, how to prepare the fermented cassava drink masato, how to prepare and cook fish, etc. The group ate native foods and slept on hard wooden floors without mattresses.

The time in the jungle was especially difficult for those who had never been there before, but the Lord enabled all of the trainees to adapt, and their lives were enriched. Some found it hard to be observers and learners rather than teachers—but they are all thankful for the lessons learned.

God’s grace extended to His protection. No one became ill, no one had a serious accident, and no one was bitten by a poisonous snake or spider. God provided through His people for the expenses of the training. His goodness and blessing were apparent. With the success of this initial program, Segadores is developing a permanent site in the jungle to provide a field base for its training.

**“Some to Be Evangelists, And Some to Be Pastors”**

*by Rev. Alan Chilver*

Does there need to be a dichotomy between “pastor” and “evangelist”? Does it have to be a choice between either “outreach” or “maintenance” ministry? How can the indigenous “missionary” and the local “pastor” best work together in the ministry? “Church planting”—but what sort of churches are we planting?

Probably for the first time ever, certainly in Africa, evangelical theological colleges and missions training institutions came together, and under the title “Missions Training in Africa” they looked critically at various options in training for the task of mission on the continent. Representatives of both kinds of training institutions were invited from Benin, Central African Republic, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Chad, Uganda, and UK, and they participated in a workshop held at Maingo, near Jos in Nigeria, from 26th to 30th August, 1996. The workshop was jointly organised by the Theological and Christian Education Commission and the Evangelism and Missions Commission of the AEA.

Seven well-researched papers, carefully balanced from the perspective of both theological and missions training schools, stimulated discussion. Fundamental questions were considered regarding the complementary, yet differing roles of the pastor and the indigenous missionary in accomplishing the missionary task and ministry of the churches in Africa. The sort of institution in which African missionaries should be trained was also explored. Models of training were presented and evaluated, along with the most appropriate patterns for theological and missions training institutions to ensure the promotion of missionary outreach, as well as the planting of theologically balanced churches. Arguments were raised over the missiological and theological factors that are involved in designing a curriculum for training which is adequately rounded both theologically and missiologically. Finally, the issue of relationships between pastors and mission workers actively engaged in ministry was realistically tackled in a paper entitled “Love Your Neighbour.”

This was a workshop, so all the discussions ultimately led to the very practical result of drawing up guidelines for minimum essential curriculum content for both theological and missions training in establishments planning programmes to develop mission-minded pastors and theologically equipped missionaries.

The recommended guidelines for curriculum content, together with the papers, group reports, and findings of the workshop, have been edited for publication as a Compendium. All those engaged in training for the church’s ministries in Africa will want the help of these guidelines and will find them invaluable in considering the underlying rationale arising from the presentations and discussion.

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**For further information on the availability of the Compendium, write to either the Administrative Secretary (Alan Chilver), TCEC, c/o P.O. Box 64, BUKURU, Plateau State, Nigeria, or to the Executive Secretary, EMC, P.O. Box 1933, JOS, Plateau State, Nigeria.**
Teaching for Transformation
by Daniel Rickett

As servants of God, we are called to enable people to become personally responsible to Jesus Christ. We can teach information about the Bible and about life, but we cannot stop there. Our role is to make disciples—lifelong learners of Christ. We achieve this when we help people take responsibility for their own growth in Christ, when we equip them to read and study the Bible for themselves.

In order to equip people to do their own learning, our teaching, while conveying necessary content, must always place the learner at the center of the learning process. After all, what is important is not that you get to teach, but that others get to learn. You as the teacher must do more than present well-organized and stimulating information. The learner must be just as active and involved in the study as you are.

A learner-centered teacher makes every effort in planning a lesson to find ways for learners to discover the truth. Just as you would guide others walking along a trail, your learners must do their own walking; they must be active, not passive, to benefit from the exercise and to reach their intended destination. Remember, you have spent the time to study, investigate, and think through the importance of your subject. That’s why you feel your teaching is vital. Now you must guide your learner through the same process.

A good presentation does not necessarily make for good learning. For example, if a subject is outside a learner’s frame of reference, effective learning is greatly hindered. Or if too much material is presented at once, learners get a form of “mental indigestion,” because people need to process information in small bites, interact with it, and integrate it with what they already know.

True, whenever people listen to a good presenter, one who speaks well and uses quality audiovisuals, they do “absorb” something. Yet it is unreasonable to expect people to recall even major points of too long a lecture, let alone apply the material correctly.

Active learning strategies recognize that people need to be actively involved in the learning process. People learn best when allowed the opportunity to discover new information and participate in experiences that reveal the content they are learning—in short, to interact with the subject matter. Typically, this happens in a 50- to 75-minute session that includes opportunity for participants to talk about the subject with others, discuss its implications for themselves, and make a personal application.

In this context, “interact” is an action-packed verb that should evoke images of learners touching the subject matter to get a feel and texture of it, grasping it with their hands, examining it closely with their eyes, pulling apart its constituent parts and putting it back together—perhaps not in exactly the same way you would have done, but in a way which suits their learning needs nonetheless.

The Active Learning Model

Learning follows a natural flow. Whether people are learning how to plant a garden, fix a leaky faucet, budget a million-dollar project, lead people, or rear children—they always follow a pattern, a sequence of learning phases. What is more, whether the learning occurs in 10 seconds or takes 10 years, the order in which they go through the stages is always the same. Maybe you are not convinced yet that there is such a universal pattern, but just suppose for a moment it is true. Would you prefer to have your instruction go with the flow, rather than against it?

You would want your teaching to be structured in such a logical order so as to provide for the learner’s need to be involved in a complete learning process. The model or plan around which you build your teaching would provide for all the phases of the learning cycle that people actually go through when approaching a learning task. By keeping that teaching plan before you, you would actually be making learning easier for others—all the while clarifying your role as guide, catalyst, and facilitator.

The Active Learning Model has several parts. Each part provides the learner opportunity to be involved in learning, while you, the leader, guide the learning process. The model also helps you in your planning. In short, the Active Learning Model becomes your best planning tool to aid your preparation as well as be a constant reminder to keep the learner at the center of the learning arena—not yourself. That subtle difference can make all the difference for the learner.

The kind of teaching plan that goes with the flow of learning, instead of against it, has the following four parts:

1. **Preparation**
2. **Exploration**
3. **Conclusion**

Consider for a moment what these words mean and how to use them in developing your lesson plan.

**Preparation** means that the learner must be comfortable with other learners, with you, and even with the room. Remember, every learner enters the learning arena with many other “agendas” and needs. Before learners can approach the subject matter without interference from physical, emotional, and intellectual environments, they must be comfortable and prepared to learn.

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You would want your teaching to be structured in such a logical order so as to provide for the learner’s need to be involved in a complete learning process. The model or plan around which you build your teaching would provide for all the phases of the learning cycle that people actually go through when approaching a learning task. By keeping that teaching plan before you, you would actually be making learning easier for others—all the while clarifying your role as guide, catalyst, and facilitator.

The kind of teaching plan that goes with the flow of learning, instead of against it, has the following four parts:

1. **Preparation**
2. **Exploration**
3. **Conclusion**

Consider for a moment what these words mean and how to use them in developing your lesson plan.

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or social barriers, their comfort with you, with other learners, and with the environment must be assured.

Introduction means that the learner has opportunity to relate the subject matter to some knowledge or experience he or she already has. The learner has to be “introduced” to the subject and become familiar with it.

Exploration is the process of discovering new ideas, attitudes, or ways of thinking. In Bible study, exploration is defined by seeking God's perspective on the subject matter. The learner is guided to examine new facts, information, attitudes, or skills in the light of God's living Word.

Conclusion requires that learners have opportunity to integrate the knowledge or experience and apply it to life in general or to their present situation.

Each phase of the framework describes a particular aspect of the lesson you may be teaching. Remember, the aim is to help you think in terms of how the learner can be involved actively in each part of the study.

Each phase will represent one aspect of the learner's relationship to the study, the teacher, and the information. As you plan your next teaching opportunity, let the lesson plan remind you that learners need to be actively involved in the process of entering the learning arena, becoming familiar with the subject, discovering new truth, and making application.

Further information can be obtained from Daniel Rickett, the director of Salt and Light. Salt and Light is a division of Partners International and provides teaching and consulting services to overseas ministries in leadership, organizational effectiveness, and resource development. They can be reached at: Salt and Light, P.O. Box 15025, San Jose, California 95115, telephone 408-453-3800; e-mail <salt@partnersintl.org>.