

On Mission 2020

Topic Focus: Mobilization

Jamie Farr - Wycliffe Bible Translators **Removing Hinderances to Mobilization**

Removing Mobilization Hindrances. If you're like me, when you heard of mobilization hindrances, certain thoughts immediately triggered in your own mind. Maybe you were thinking about "Oh, yes. These are the issues that come up in the confidential section of our interview." Or on that weekend, there were the things that you we're looking for that are telltale signs that this person isn't quite ready to go. Maybe you remember names associated with some of those issues.

When I think about that but from an organizational standpoint, sometimes we think about the, "Will they fit our culture?" We don't call that a hindrance, but sometimes we don't want them to move forward. Some of the hindrances that we think about are, "Are they morally pure?" So how are we addressing that issue early enough that if it's like pornography or something else, they are demonstrating a freedom from that early enough? That's about being emotionally healthy. How do we help them with that early on in their journey? Is it counseling? Or is it that they need to have more healthy self-talk Sometimes it's the spiritual disciplines of learning to walk with God of being patient or quiet before the Lord or a regular disciplined walk with God.

Today, our largest issues is so much of the church isn't even reading the Word of God. I think about, "We want to go share the gospel." But, does the audience even know the gospel? Do they actually know the Word of God? We can talk about global missions. Part of the hindrances though, really are, where are those people who actually know the Word? Who are grounded and who are ready? So even finding them can sometimes be difficult because they may be sitting beside everyone else in the same place, in the same church, in the same pews even, but for whatever reason, they have gotten this. They are living this out while others in that very same place are not.

The other things that we think about in terms of hindrances are relationships. Either relationships with parents or with their special others, I mean, I can think of a number of people where they were determined that they were going and then suddenly this concrete plan that had been three or four years suddenly was just seemingly derailed in the moment. What are the things that impede progress for people? You know, I've been talking a little bit about as an organization what we think about. But the reality of it is, is it's not just about what our expectations as an organization are, what are the thoughts going through the individual's mind. They may be thinking about:
"How will my friends perceive me?"

"I'm not confident in my skill sets."

"Will I be able to survive long term?"

A year. Okay. Maybe it's longer than that." But their perception has been looking at one year as a really long time in missions.

"Will my family stand behind me?"

After all, Mom and Dad paid for my college education. Am I just throwing that away?"

"Will I be successful with the team?"

"Will the leadership team over there accept me?"

"Well, will I be able to learn the language?"

These are all very real issues in the heart and lives of those that are considering service. But there are still other hindrances that really are important depending on the background where someone comes from. Are they Hispanic, African-American, Caucasian? Socio- economically, where are they from? What does their church think? See, the church and the family considerations can have a huge impact on the ability of somebody to serve or the time it may take for them to get there. If a person is at a church that does not support global missions, it could be really hard as you say, "Are you part of a church that will send you?" It may cause them to rethink again where are they going and they will need to reinvest perhaps some of their time in a wholly different church than they've been going to. If they've been off to college, University or working somewhere, but they don't have the network of people there, that new them in that context, sometimes it's reengaging with those who know them.

The other thing is, is the church focused on the same ends? Sometimes we have churches that have a specific vision and it's not bad. It's just that the vision may be different than you as an organization are focusing on. It's a good thing to find out that those visions are aligned. We've talked about three levels or stakeholders. I think there's a critical fourth, and that's your field partners. What are the intercultural team dynamics? What are they thinking as they engage? One of the questions that they may be asking that an individual may not even know to ask is,

"Are they prepared to live, cook clean?" Do life in an entirely different part of the world unfamiliar to them, when there isn't a grocery store, when there isn't a place to shop, when there isn't a microwave, when they have to go to a market with unlabeled things, just find everything buy it for dinner, can they do that?

The other thing is this adult thing. Maybe it's just learning how to socially interact across cultures long-term or it is learning how to develop relationships when people look the same but speak different languages. Can they survive outside the normal comfort zone? These are some of the very real issues that I know that you are dealing with, but as we began to put these things together, I think it's important that help us some [cut words] of these in a way that a very smart and adept group of missions participants, those concerning missions, so they're thinking to help them do a good assessment of considering the factors. Because some they may consider, some you may consider, some your field partners consider. But there are questions. So how do we put these together into a road map that a person can say,

"I have prayed about it and these are the issues that I see. I see college debt." Maybe it's a moral purity or some relationship entanglements, unhealthy relationships that, "I need to address." Or maybe it's the healthy relationships that they do not quite have with the church or depending on what background or diversity. Do they have the relationships at the right members of that community?

So as you think about these things, if you can think about a process whereby a person can identify these together with your missions mobilizer or coach, not sure what you use or recruiter and then begin to say, "God, we want to bring these issues to you because if you're not big enough to help with these issues, then you're not being enough to send me. But if you can help with these very real issues that I am dealing with..." Which may actually only be a perception on their part, but it's real for them. Then, I think that you have the opportunity to help a person walk a journey.

Sometimes these hindrances are the very things that God is using to build faith into their lives. Or they can say God helped along the journey with this hindrance in the following ways and I'm putting a date on it. And I'm putting another date on this one. I saw God provide the support I need. I saw God help me get confident in this. I saw God overcome my fear of relating. I saw God help me with this fear of languages. As they begin to put dates and answers to prayer and the way God has helped them through his people prepare, it builds faith and builds a resilience for long term success. I hope this has been helpful for you as you think about how do we help overcome the hindrances that stop people from being mobilized, or the hindrances that has immobilized you. You're saying, "Wow, people are really walking through issues!" And then God is preparing a generation and sometimes, it takes more steps than we think about but as we do it together, God reveals His faithful hand in peoples' lives.

Have a great day.