

COMMUNICATION IN PARTNERSHIPS

Establishing, Inviting and Maintaining Partnerships

Partnership: Two sides working together on a common goal, with both sides seeing benefits

We desperately need help, and we know what we need, and we know where to get it, but we often don't know how to actually put the two together. Communication is the missing link for most of us. We need help understanding how to establish a partnership between the church and missionary, how to invite others to join you and then actually carry it out. Let's take a few minutes to look at some key questions we can all answer that will prepare us to be in better partnerships together.

What is your definition of partnership?

It is important that you understand what a partnership is, and what you are asking for. Partnerships might be a new concept to many churches and or missionaries, so it is important that you understand what you are looking for, and that you are able to explain and eventually ask for it. You cannot simply say the word 'partner' and assume you both are on the same page.

Partnership in our ministry looks like:

How do you invite someone to partner with you?

In inviting people to join you in partnership, you must have predetermined what it is you are needing, and how others can join you in establishing the ministry further. Having some specifics laid out to share with your future partner is good for them to see some specific ways they can be involved in what you are doing. It is important to understand that not everyone will resonate with all your needs, so you need to be flexible and adjust the ask as you discover their wants and needs, and then you can begin negotiating. In negotiating you want to be specific and relational at the same time, not only focusing on your needs, but also on their vision, their abilities and their focus for ministry too. When you can find the natural fits, through negotiation you will both benefit from the partnership.

Before your meeting, answer the following questions.

- What is the goal of this partnership?
- What are the benefits for them in partnering with you?
- What is your why for the ministry over all?
- What is your why for this partnership?

How do you establish the partnership?

It is important that you BOTH have a clear goal of what a partnership means. Just because you both use the word does not mean that you both have the same definition. You must talk through each side's ideas of what partnership means, and come to an agreement of what PARTNERSHIP means to you collectively. It is also imperative that you are able to come to a common agreement of what you are accomplishing through the partnership. We can all spend time working on the details and defining our partnership and yet never do anything regarding the actual partnership itself. So, as you define what partnership means and looks like to you both, decide what the goal of the partnership is you are focusing on.

Before your meeting, answer the following questions.

- What are the roles for each partner?
- Who is going to be responsible for what?
- How will we communicate?
- How often will the church visit (based on the goal)?
- How will the church provide resources (based on the goal)?

- Who in the church will be my main contact? (see Missionary Support Team training)

How do we maintain the partnership once the details have been established?

Many of us are really good at getting all the details of our new project and focus established. We love the thrill of planning what our partnerships should look like, what we are going to accomplish in it and how amazing it is going to be. But, many of us lack the follow through, which is the hard part. We lose the excitement when we have to put our plan into action. Here is where communication is put into action and will be a lifeline to your implementation and success of your plan.

Partnerships are not established between two strangers who have a great idea. They are formulated between two trusting people or groups of people who have established a relationship, and through that relationship have found a common goal they can accomplish together. RELATIONSHIP is what type of partnership you want to have...One that was based off of a good, healthy relationship.

- What type of communication allows me to build a relationship with my partner?
 - How often do we talk?
 - How do I focus on the person and not always just the partnership details?
 - Where does prayer fit into our conversations?

“O Lord, I pray, please let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who desire to fear Your name; and let Your servant prosper this day, I pray, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.” Nehemiah 1:11

Your final step in Communication in Partnership is prayer. Not only do you need to ask God for His details concerning your partnership, but also asking Him for favor as you approach your future partners.

Take some time to decide what partnership is to you and how you are going to go about asking your future partners to work hand in hand with you.

Contact H2T today to help establish a plan for communicating better with your partners.