

Sending Kingdom Professionals



A tool for churches' assessment process

A growing groundswell of Christians is leaving home and moving elsewhere to accept a job, launch a business, or study abroad. For many of these believers, their primary motive is to have an impact for Christ in their new context. Churches too are awakening to the strategic opportunity to proactively send their people as powerful witnesses in the global workforce.

Terminology

These workers are given various names—**tentmakers** (reflecting Paul's means of supporting himself listed in Acts 18:3), **businesspeople using BAM** (business as mission) or **B4T** (business for transformation), **marketplace influencers**, **Kingdom professionals**, etc. We will use the last of these titles in this article, but recognize that each term has limitations and carries a slightly different meaning depending on the speaker and context. We will include in this category not only those working in the marketplace but also retirees and others who go self-supported and students who choose to study abroad.

Who Needs to Be Sent?

Historically the missionary-sending process has often centered on finances. Therefore, if little or no financial support is needed, Kingdom professionals may not see any reason to involve their church in their relocation decisions. In fact, they may see the church as merely creating speed bumps at a time when they are eager to move ahead quickly with their

relocation. Churches, too, may fail to recognize the importance of their sending role if finances are largely removed from the equation.

In reality, financial support is only a small part of a local church's sending responsibility. Sending also involves (1) determining who God has called and gifted to go cross-culturally, (2) assisting with spiritual/professional development and other equipping, (3) offering ongoing encouragement and support to those who have been sent, and (4) providing an appropriate level of accountability. Churches are growing in their ability to provide these for their missionaries, but Kingdom professionals need them as much or more than missionaries do!

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“Going” vs. “Being Sent”

The possibility of seeking advice from their church before accepting an overseas assignment never enters the mind of many Kingdom professionals. They “just go”! Church leaders often aren't aware that someone is even contemplating a relocation until shortly before they leave.

“Being sent” with adequate preparation and support can make it so much easier for the worker and their family to successfully integrate into another culture and minister with

effectiveness. Too many who “just go,” fail to build influential relationships, accomplish little of eternal significance, and often return home prematurely. Those who go on their own and do become effective Kingdom professionals have often had to learn through trial and error what they could have been equipped with before they went. And sometimes families pay a high price if, for instance, children are not prepared for crossing cultures or the lack of language leaves spouses painfully isolated.

The process needs to begin with local church leaders intentionally educating their people about the crucial role that Kingdom professionals are playing around the world today. Stories of powerful witness by workplace believers can waken the congregation to the

fact that they could use their professional skills abroad. Seeing how they could have a global

impact for the gospel can challenge everyone from college students to retirees!

Church leaders also need to communicate that they want to walk alongside any member of the congregation heading into a cross-cultural situation for the purpose of missional impact. As church members get involved in helping to send Kingdom professionals, the model will become normative.

The Scope of This Article

There are many aspects to consider in effectively sending this new type of global influencer. We will focus here on some of the readiness and preparation factors for the senders as well as the sent ones.

Using These Tools

When someone expresses interest in taking their career skills into a cross-cultural setting, church missions leaders need to evaluate three aspects: (1) the opportunity, (2) the

individual, and (3) the church’s sending ability. The sets of questions on the following pages are designed to help you to determine readiness and match.

Resources

Here are a few other organizations and articles to help churches and Kingdom professionals to build ministry readiness and sending skills.

Kingdom Professionals

- [Global Opportunities](#) / Their intensive, one-week training builds Kingdom professionals’ ministry skills; resources on their website
- [Third Path](#) / Mentoring prepares young business entrepreneurs for Kingdom impact

- [NexusB4T](#) / Internships equip those with a vision to launch businesses for impacting the unreached

Sending Churches

- [Second-Career Workers](#) / Many Kingdom professionals are second-career workers; this *Postings* article addresses the special challenges in sending them
- [Engage the Professionals in Your Church](#) / A *Postings* focused on creatively engaging Kingdom professionals
- [Business as Missions](#) / A *Postings* on how churches and agencies can work together in the sending process

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Interchange Postings

Catalyst’s *Postings* e-newsletter is a free, monthly publication of practical articles highlighting what churches and agencies are doing to mobilize untapped potential for global impact.

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Sending Indicators

“Person” in the questions below refers to an individual, couple, or family unit.

In each category, check the concerns that are most important to your church. Then evaluate the prospective

Kingdom professional in these areas on the 1-5 scales. Some aspects can be evaluated by the missions team, others will require input from those closely acquainted with the prospective worker’s life and ministry.

Ministry Priority and Match

✓ if crucial	#	Evaluation Element	1. Very weak/ No match	2. Some weakness/ limited match	3. Neither strong nor weak	4. Strong/ Some match	5. Very strong/ Great match
	1.	This person will fill a strategic role in one of our church’s high-priority global initiatives.					
	2.	This person will serve a least-reached people, but not in one of our church’s priority initiatives.					
	3.	This person will serve in a role where their professional expertise is greatly needed.					
	4.	This person will serve in a setting where they will be mentored/disciplined appropriately and have needed fellowship and on-site support.					
	5.	This person will serve with the leadership/ support of a mission organization or national church entity.					
	6.	This person will serve in a context where a local church or other ministry leaders are committed to providing integration and continuity of ministry results.					
	7.	This person’s business or job assignment will create job opportunities for nationals, national ministry leaders, and/or other expat workers.					

Readiness for High Impact

Note that standards for students and people in internship-type environments may be less stringent than those in leadership roles.

✓ if crucial	#	Evaluation Element	1. Reconsider if this is God's will	2. Slow down—work needed!	3. Some real growth needed	4. Minimal added prep needed	5. Very ready for ministry
	1.	This person is a mature disciple who has discipled others, and has the passion and ability to share Christ both in deed and word.					
	2.	This person has a proven track record of strong spiritual influence in their current marketplace role here at home.					
	3.	This person has demonstrated the ability to work effectively in cross-cultural contexts.					
	4.	This person is clearly committed to this cross-cultural work assignment/venture for the purpose of spiritual impact.					
	5.	This person has demonstrated their commitment to active participation in, and service through, our local church.					

Preparation

To be most effective as a Kingdom professional, this person may need equipping in the following areas.

✓ if crucial	#	Evaluation Element	1. Questionable ministry match	2. Delay departure; growth essential	3. Some equipping needed	4. Minimal added prep needed	5. Very ready for ministry
	1.	Training/Experience in cross-cultural adjustment and communication					
	2.	Equipping in how to study the Bible for their own spiritual nurture					
	3.	Training/Experience in how to lead evangelistic Bible studies					
	4.	Mentoring in life-on-life discipling					
	5.	Further equipping in their professional specialty					

Church Readiness

✓ if crucial	#	Evaluation Element	1. We are not ready to send	2. Let's slow down & build strategy	3. Our plans need Major review	4. We have need work to do	5. We have a little to send workers	6. We are ready to send workers
	1.	Our church understands and appreciates the ways in which a Kingdom professional is the same as, and different from, someone in a traditional missionary role. We have developed guidelines for such personnel that balance adequate accountability with great freedom to minister within their unique context.						
	2.	Our church is ready to provide, or link to, training our Kingdom professional needs prior to relocating overseas.						
	3.	Our church is comfortable with sending this Kingdom professional without the involvement of a mission organization. Or if they are joining an agency, we are comfortable with the chosen organization's commitment to support this person in their anticipated sphere of marketplace service.						
	4.	Our church is ready to provide care for this person before, during, and after their overseas ministry/work assignment.						
	5.	Our church is prepared to invest financially, if needed, in funding preparation for ministry and underwriting approved ministry costs not covered by this person's employment.						
	6.	(Where relevant) Our church has a clear policy regarding the raising of capital funds by Kingdom professionals from members of our congregation. We are prepared to help prospective investors understand the rationale, risks, and position of our church in relation to what might be high-risk ventures.						

Areas to be Addressed

After you have completed the evaluations on the previous pages, you will want to summarize areas for further work. Check items below that you believe need to be addressed before sending this person.

<i>✓ if crucial</i>	#	Topics for Further Consideration
<input type="checkbox"/>	1.	The person's spiritual maturity and readiness for this assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	2.	The person's readiness for life and ministry in this particular cross-cultural setting.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3.	The readiness of spouse/family for this specific assignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	4.	Sufficient time/opportunity within this assignment for high spiritual impact
<input type="checkbox"/>	5.	The likelihood of success in this business venture or the stability of the job platform
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.	The provision of adequate local fellowship, coaching, and support
<input type="checkbox"/>	7.	Sufficient infrastructure provided by the on-site church and/or mission agency to help realize long-lasting results
<input type="checkbox"/>	8.	If church finances will be involved, the adequacy of accountability.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9.	Other: