

# Sending Churches: How to Identify Missionaries

**Q: What kind of character and ministry experience are most important for a church to identify in a potential candidate going into cross-cultural ministry? Who are you looking for?**

A: The way that mission work is done today is extremely varied. And it's usually done in teams. In fact, we're "team centered" as an organization. So it's hard for me to give you a list of particular attributes [because each ministry situation and assignment may be different].

However, identifying gifts and abilities is really important so that when we try to make a ministry match for them on the field we are able to do that accurately. If your church has a vision to go out and reach a particular people group, and you've raised up people in your congregation to do that, we may be looking for people who are more apostolic. They want to take new ground; those type of people. On the other hand, you may find people come up in your congregation who have the gift of helps and services. And helping us to see those things is very important.

I would also add that we are a church planting organization, and it doesn't really matter who you are in the organization, we want to see the connection to actual church planting. This doesn't necessarily mean that someone has to actually plant a church before they go overseas, but we want to make sure that they understand the gospel well [and] that they've got a theological grounding and are able to be a part of a church-planting team in some way.

We do require a one-year certificate in Bible or the equivalent, so churches could help us make sure that people get before they go out.

Probably another thing that would be a benchmark would be ability to work well with others, to be, again, on a team. You know if somebody has some major life issues... For example, let's say there's a divorce in their background. We have a special process in evaluating that. And we would want the church to be helping us make the assessment on people who are in [any] unique circumstances.

If you come to Pioneers and you have four teenage children and you want to go to a very difficult Muslim culture, we're going to have a lot of questions about whether or not that particular family is the

right one to put in that place, considering where their kids are. And so really it comes down to just knowing that family or individual really well and helping us evaluate, helping us assess them not just generically but hopefully in the context of where they're going to be working.