

# Sending Churches: Training Hand in Hand

**Q: What is Pioneers' role in determining pre-field training needs, and in what ways can the church train candidates to complement or supplement what Pioneers requires?**

A: Someone comes to Pioneers for one-week of candidate orientation. That's a week where we're getting to know them more in depth and they're getting to know us. We have collected all their references. They've gone through testing. They'll meet with a counselor while they're here. They will walk through a process where they're getting a good look at not only who we are but we're also assessing them as well. We'll have candidate committees that they'll meet with.

And out of those meetings will come recommendations and requirements. Those who receive appointment, which is the vast majority of people, will receive this recommendation and requirement list. These are things unique to that person, unique to the place that they're going to, unique to their background, training, skill set, character, all of those things. It's not a one-size-fits-all where we're just like "OK, you're going to China," we pull out the list for China, [and say], "Here's the 15 things that you need before you go to China." It really depends upon the individual.

Maybe they really lack deep biblical training that they're going to need, or even basic training that you ought to get before you go. Maybe there are counseling issues; the counselor will say "They're good to go, but I'd like to see them have five or six sessions over this issue in their marriage." All of those things are unique to that particular person.

The vast majority of the things that they're given [like cross-cultural training and language acquisition training] we really outsource. We don't do all that. We don't expect their church to do all that, either. But there might also be some practical things [like] mentoring, where we would say to a specific candidate, "You need some more mentoring. You need to really get more in-depth in a discipleship relationship before you go. We want that to happen in the context of your local church."

And they will take that before their local church and say, "Here's my list of requirements, things that I have to do." It might include a survey trip: "I need to make a trip to the field." A wide variety of different things. And then here are some things that are not requirements but are recommended.

And we'd really like the church to really look at that with the candidate. Maybe there are some things that would really be helpful [for the church to be part of]. And how churches can best help with that is really by being engaged in that and knowing what those things are. We hope that churches are not just [saying], "Well, whatever the agency wants, good enough for us. We're out of the loop." We want them to be engaged.

Some churches have a very definitive process, especially if they are going to send somebody to the unreached, [and that process] is very specific. We support that. That might actually be said in the recommendations if they've mentioned that, or there are requirements that they need to finish the process of real preparation. So, any way that we can work together [we want to do that].

One big piece in this that I should mention is that we coach people to the field. We have a training team that has coaches who are working with their candidates and those appointees. And when they become appointees, we really hope that the church will be proactively working with us in that process to coach these people and to help them in the process of getting there. For some of them, it may take a while, may be a real process to get there.