

## **The Reasoning Behind Ministry Building**

All fulltime staff at Mars Hill serve as Media Missionaries. In that role, they build ministry teams who share in the ministry of that staff member through prayer and giving. The financial participation of ministry team members goes directly to help fund the salary of the staff person. The value of prayer cannot be overstated!

Mars Hill Productions is what many know as a “para-Church” ministry. The purpose of a para-Church ministry is to come alongside the Church to help it fulfill its purpose in this world. In this case of Mars Hill, we do this specifically by providing media tools, with our present emphasis being, The HOPE.

Different para-Church ministries approach the matter of funding their staff in different ways. Some raise funds for the entire organization and then allocate funding to cover the cost associated with staff. Others look to their staff to build personal ministry teams to help provide funding for the cost associated with their position. As long as the methodology is Biblical, neither model is wrong or right. It is really a matter of which is right for a particular organization. It is significant to note that the two largest para-Church ministries in the world, Cru/Campus Crusade for Christ and Youth with a Mission, both use the ministry team building model.

There are several reasons Mars Hill has adopted this model. Here are three:

**1) Finding Support and Accountability through Community** - Those who serve on a Church staff engage regularly with those whom they serve, often on a weekly basis. Those who serve in para-Church ministry spend most of their time, “outside the gate” (Heb.13:12). This can become a place of isolation. Ministry teams provide a type of community through which para-Church workers can find support (relational and spiritual, as well as financial) and accountability. Ministry teams are vested in their missionaries through prayer and giving. Those who build ministry teams understand the powerful motivation to persevere when people they know well are personally vested in them doing so.

**2) Expanding the Base, Distributing the Load** - The Pareto principle (also known as the 80/20 rule) is often a reality in the funding of ministry. If an organization receives 80% of its funding from 20% of its givers (most of whom may be mostly connected to the ministry through development personnel), and if that 20% goes through a difficult economic season (as was the case of the downturned Houston oil economy, followed by Hurricane Harvey), then the financial health, and hence the essential activities of the organization can be at risk. However, when the giving is decentralized and spread out over a large number of people who make up ministry teams, then the ministry is less subject to extreme downturns. It is the same principle as crowd funding; significant funding comes from small amounts of money given by large amounts of people.

**3) Sharing the Blessing** - In the army, there is a ratio known as “tooth-to-toe.” Basically, it illustrates the large amount of support personnel in the rear and at home that are required to place a single soldier on the field of battle. In the Vietnam War, the average t-to-t ratio was 10 support personnel for every combat soldier. Even though support personnel might not carry weapons, they are nonetheless soldiers, worthy of honor, just as much as those on the front line. So it is in God’s

great global missionary enterprise. Not every Christian is called to be a goer. Some are called to support roles as funders, intercessors, mobilizers and more. Many have been fulfilled and blessed as they have answered God's call to the greater mission by serving on a Mars Hill ministry team. These people are missionaries just as much as the staff they support!

### **Building Ministry Teams - Training and Process**

Ministry Team building is a dynamic process of seeking and discovering those whom God is already calling to share in your ministry by joining your team. Some will be funders, some will be intercessors and others will be networkers and advocates. Those who have engaged in Ministry Team building have often said it is one of the activities in their life where they have most dramatically experienced the tangible evidence of God's invisible hand. If you are called to do this, and if you answer the call, you will experience God in amazing ways!

Mars Hill understands that many are unfamiliar with this process, and many do not pursue it in the same way we do. For this reason, we provide training for all who commit. The following is a summarization of this training.

#### **Week 1** \_\_\_\_\_

- a) Biblical Basis for ministry team support, including Biblical attitudes regarding this process.
- b) Principles of Ministry Letter writing
- c) Begin developing and writing the initial communication (launch letter) for the new staff person's potential –Ministry Team partners.
- d) Begin the process of developing the contact list of people you believe God would have you approach to share the ministry opportunity.

#### **Week 2** \_\_\_\_\_

- a) Principles of Successful Ministry Partner Development
- b) Finish the 'launch' letter and communication strategy.
- c) Prepare print packages including the most effective documents to cast vision.
- d) Prepare corresponding electronic mailing (Mail Chimp, email list etc.) and determine which vision casting videos/materials to use. If appropriate, include social media communication.

#### **Week 3** \_\_\_\_\_

- a) Develop your presentation of the ministry and your part in it.
- b) Practice the presentation including role play. Establish goals.
- c) Begin in-person follow up and telephone follow up where applicable.

#### **Week 4** \_\_\_\_\_

- a) Meet every week with trainer/mentor until your initial Ministry Team is complete: Monitor the progress of meeting the goals you've set. Make necessary adjustments. Discuss possible responses to feedback you encounter when sharing the ministry with your contact list of people.
- b) Develop Referral list and begin follow up.

\* Some of the above activities happen concurrently.