

Cross-Cultural Mission Training



Stage 2: **Prepare**

by Miles Jarvis and Karen Todd

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Excerpts from “Cross-Cultural Mission Training - Stages 1-5:
Explore | Prepare | Go | Thrive | Return” by Miles Jarvis and Karen Todd

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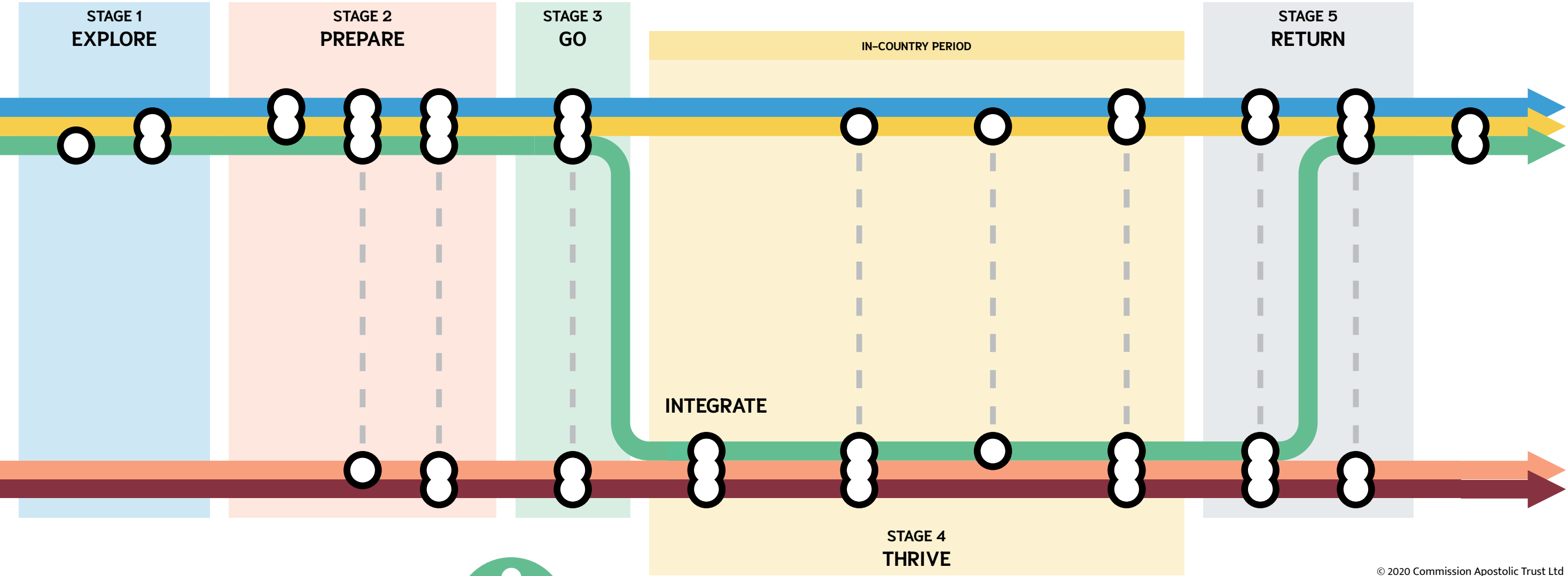
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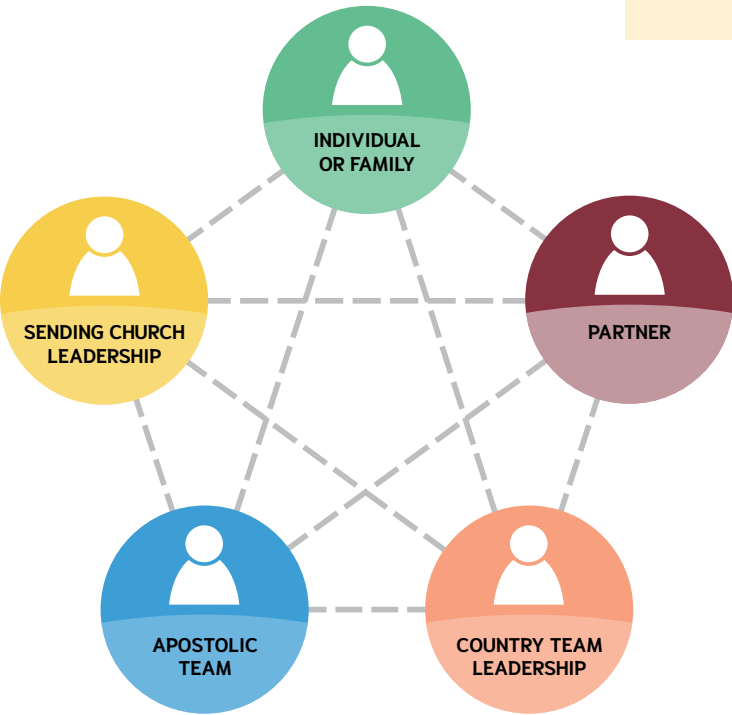
Your Journey



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Interaction
e.g. Visit, Meeting, Skype, Email, etc.

Points of Contact



Based on a City Transit Map design, this diagram illustrates the stages of the journey in sending and supporting overseas workers, from the perspective of all key groups of people involved.

Significant points of contact are shown to ensure clear communication and clarify expectations. It is not representative of the frequency of points of contact or the duration of each stage, as this will vary for each situation.



Stage 2: PREPARE



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Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you!
As the Father has sent me, I am sending
you.”

John 20: 21 (NIV)

Get set!

This stage has been created to support you to prepare to go on cross-cultural mission, helping you build authentic relationships with leaders in your sending church who will play a significant role in your journey.

Ready for a challenge?

Depending on where you are on your journey, taking the next steps into cross-cultural mission can seem scary. It can be overwhelming just considering all the elements and effort that go into getting to a new country.

The following questions are grouped into different subject areas, designed to challenge you to get to the heart of what God is asking of you. They can be used for current or future discussions, or to expand your understanding of how God can prepare you through a variety of different experiences, challenges and growth opportunities. By taking some time to consider the various areas, you may spare yourself some stumbling blocks or pain further down the line.

Spend some time chatting through the various areas for consideration and preparation. The questions are designed for the person or couple going on mission to answer about themselves but be prepared for the leader to contribute with their perspective. This material is packed full of questions, which you will ideally work through together over several sessions.

Don't worry

This is not a test; there are no right or wrong answers. It is much more important to be honest when answering.

How to use Stage 2

The sections in Stage 2 should be answered as follows:

Growing

Answer the questions by yourself or with your partner. Once you have completed these, arrange a time to meet and discuss your answers with your church leadership.

Culture

This section is to help you find out more about where you might serve. Answer these on your own and discuss with your leaders if any issues arise.

About you, Relationships, For couples & Trusting God

These sections are about 'going deeper' and you may find them challenging. However, it is helpful at this stage of your journey to be honest and reflect carefully as you answer the questions. You will need to meet with your church leadership again at this stage, to discuss your answers and address any issues raised.

Practical issues

During this stage, when both you and your church leadership are in agreement, it will be necessary for the church leadership to contact the apostolic team member responsible for the country you are interested in. Questions in this section are likely to be those raised by the apostolic team and will aid your preparation.

Growing

Answer the questions by yourself or with your partner. Once you have completed these, arrange a time to meet and discuss your answers with your church leadership.

Serving now

1. What are you doing currently to serve in your church?

2. How is your attitude towards this?

3. Are there any areas of need in your church in which you could help?

4. Are you serving and seeing fruit in the areas where you would like to serve cross-culturally?

Walking in faith and obedience

1. In what ways are you honouring God in your life now?
2. What situations are you involved in where you are demonstrating that you are trusting God?

3. Has there been anything recently that you feel God has asked you to do?

4. One step at a time... what do you need to do today to move forward with your call?

Building character

1. How is God developing you?
2. What are your weaknesses?

3. What areas of your character do you need to grow in?

4. What areas of your character have you seen growth in?

5. What fruits of the Spirit do you see in yourself or have been recognised in you by others?

Love
Joy
Peace

Patience
Kindness
Goodness

Faithfulness
Humility
Self control

6. What was the last act of encouragement that you delivered?

7. In what ways have you been able to demonstrate generosity?

8. What is the most recent experience you've had of practising forgiveness?

Growing in faith

1. In what ways are you being stretched in your faith?
2. Can you share examples of when you have trusted God for something that you couldn't be sure how it was going to turn out?

3. Can you give examples of relying on faith, not sight, when things aren't adding up, e.g. when you couldn't understand what God was doing in a situation?
4. How do you apply your faith in your everyday circumstances?

5. Can you describe a recent example of sharing your faith with someone who isn't a Christian?

Credibility

1. How do others view you?

Consider people from church and from other contexts, such as work colleagues, etc.

2. In what situations have you shown flexibility?

How did you respond to this?

3. How do you respond to different groups?

Consider those with different backgrounds, races, class, choices, interests, beliefs, etc.

4. In what ways have you demonstrated carrying responsibility?

5. Do you consider yourself to be teachable?

Can you give an example of responding well to authority?

6. How do you normally respond in stressful situations?

7. How would you describe your ability to be part of a team?

What aspects of your character would a) help and b) hinder your ability to be part of a team?

8. How would you describe your personality?

If not already known, consider finding out more about your personality type, such as Myers-Briggs. See the Resources section in the 'Commission Standard of Care for overseas workers' for more information.

9. How do you normally respond to ...

- a) conflict?
- b) difference of opinion?
- c) leadership decisions that you don't agree with?

10. Are you aware of how people in your destination culture differ from your home culture?

What aspects of these differences might you find difficult to adapt to?

Security

1. What things help you to feel secure?
2. In what ways has your sense of security previously been tested?

3. Where do you find your identity?

4. In which areas are you gifted?

5. How would you view yourself?

How would others view you?

- a) A pioneer.
- b) A leader.
- c) A team member.
- d) A follower.
- e) Something else.

Culture

This section is about finding out more about where you are feeling called. Answer these on your own and discuss with your leaders if any issues arise.

1. What do you know about the culture you are going to?

2. Have you visited the country before?

Is it possible to organise a visit as a taster?

3. What books can you read about the culture, people group and type of work you plan to get involved with?

Refer to the Resources section in the 'Commission Standard of Care manual'.

4. Do you know anyone here or overseas who could help you to learn about the culture?

5. What skills do you have that could be transferable to use in another culture?

6. Do you need to learn another language? If so, how and when can you do this?

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28: 19-20 (NIV)

7. Do you need to consider getting further training or qualifications?

8. What can you learn from the experiences of others?

9. How can you actively learn more about the culture and what practical ways can you start practising the culture?

10. Is your lifestyle compatible with the new culture?

Note: It may be worth looking at some potential scenarios that challenge any preconceptions you might have about the new culture, particularly concerning moral and ethical differences.

About You

Answer the following question honestly and then arrange to meet with your church leadership to discuss your answers.

Sacrifices

1. What changes will you need to make to follow this call?
2. What things might you lose or have to leave if following this call? (e.g. security, physical or emotional needs, familiarity, elements of comfort or convenience, etc.)

3. How do you think you will adapt to a different culture?

4. What things will you miss about your culture?

Grieving the losses

1. Who will you miss?
2. How do you think you will cope when things are difficult?

3. Who do you need to keep in contact with?

4. How often would you like to visit home?

Relationships

Answer the following question honestly and then arrange to meet with your church leadership to discuss your answers.

1. How do your family/friends feel about your call?

2. In what ways are you showing understanding of their feelings?

3. What do you need to talk about with them to help them understand or to offer reassurance?

4. To whom will you stay connected?

5. How good are you at making new relationships?

How might you go about doing this in the culture you are going to?

6. When times are tough, who will you turn to?

For couples

Answer the following question honestly and then arrange to meet with your church leadership to discuss your answers.

Protecting your marriage

1. Describe how your partner feels about the call.
2. In what ways are you showing support to their feelings and needs?

3. In what ways does this tie in with how you are developing as a couple?

4. What do you need to talk about in more depth concerning this call?

5. How will you resolve different views regarding your calling as a couple?

For example, if one of you feels a strong calling to a country and the other doesn't.

6. What areas of compromise do you need to consider?

7. What is the best plan regarding this call right now that will best serve your partner and your marriage?

Finding unity

1. What are your joint decisions for timing and practicalities of moving?
2. As a couple, how will you support one another when things change in an unexpected way?

3. As a couple, how will you support each other when doubt creeps in?

4. As a couple, how will you handle disappointment, both publicly and privately?

Families

1. In what ways does this affect your children, or your plans to have children?
2. How have you included them in your plans?

3. What personal sacrifices do they have to make to go with you?

4. What plans do you have for their education?

5. How do they feel about moving to a new culture?

6. What opportunities will this give them?

Trusting God

Answer the following question honestly and then arrange to meet with your church leadership to discuss your answers.

Giving it back to God

1. Honestly, in what ways are you currently taking time to listen to God?
2. What can you share that God has said to you recently?

2. What can you share that God has said to you recently?

3. In what ways are you putting God before your call?

4. If God asked someone else to do this instead of you, how would you feel?

Handling difficult situations and disappointments

Sometimes things don't work out the way we may have expected. It's important when things don't go to plan that we find a way to work through this in a way that honours God. We can't 'second guess' God, but we know He is full of grace and has a sovereign plan. When things don't go smoothly, this doesn't automatically mean God isn't in it. We can question whether we heard clearly or what we did wrong, but really it is best for us to focus on what God is teaching us through the situation.

Sometimes we will never know exactly why things didn't work out or whether He has spared us from something. When things change or plans aren't fulfilled, it doesn't always mean there was an error, disobedience or failure. God sees the whole picture and is constantly refining us. Our best solution is to give thanks in all situations, understanding that He works all things to the good of those who love Him.

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and
lean not on your own understanding; in all
your ways submit to Him and He will make
your paths straight.*

Proverbs 3: 5-6 (NIV)

Coping with challenges

1. What support measures will you put in place, for when situations become difficult?
2. Do you have any specific Bible verses or prophecies to stand on when the going gets tough?

3. How do you normally handle disappointment?

4. What can you put in place to help you work through any disappointment?

Looking at the positives

1. What excites you about moving to a new culture?
2. What relationships are you looking forward to growing?

Practical issues

During this stage, when both you and your church leadership are in agreement, it will be necessary for the church leadership to contact the apostolic team member responsible for the country you are interested in. Questions in this section are likely to be those raised by the apostolic team and will aid your preparation.

Practical steps

1. What skills do you have that could be transferable to use in another culture?
2. Do you need to learn another language? If so, how and when can you do this?
3. Do you need to consider getting further training or qualifications?
4. What can you learn from the experiences of others?
5. What books can you read about the culture, people group or type of work you plan to get involved with?
6. Is there further experience you would benefit from?
7. Is it possible to organise a trip to visit the place to get a taster?
8. How can you actively learn more about the culture and what practical ways can you start practising the culture?
9. Is your lifestyle compatible with the new culture?

Hurdles

1. Where do you envision yourself fitting in with any existing team or projects?
2. Can you define the ‘purpose’ that drives you to follow this call?

Team

1. Is there an existing team where you are going?
If yes, answer questions 2-5. If no, go onto questions 6-9 (answer the questions that you’re able to)
2. What contact have you already had with them?
3. What is the history of the team?
4. Who is the team leader that will be your field leader?
5. What do you know about their leadership style and the mix of your personalities?
6. Is there a team forming that will be sent and if so, who is leading that team?
7. Currently, how many people will make up the team?
8. How well do you know other team members and how regularly are you meeting?
9. On the field, what expectations have been expressed regarding regularity of meeting as a team?

Specific team dynamics

1. To what extent have you discussed expectations?
2. Has a date for leaving the UK been set that you're working towards?
3. Are there specific team values and can you explain them?
4. What are the specific preparations you've been asked to do (i.e. reading certain books, attending training, learning language)?
How are you progressing?
5. What financial and prayer support are you required to have? How is this progressing?
6. What is the team leader's vision?
Does your vision align with this?

My next steps

Having discussed this with my church leader, my next steps are going to be:

1.

2.

3.

Here are some suggestions:

- ▶ Organise a visit to the country you plan to move to.
- ▶ Speak to the Country Team Leader.
- ▶ Speak to the Apostolic Team.
- ▶ If married, explore taking part in Marriage Enrichment.
- ▶ Consider going on courses such as 'Freedom in Christ'.
- ▶ Attend a Father Heart Conference.
- ▶ Consider receiving external pastoral ministry support.

Notes

For more information or questions, please email:

office@commission.global

This interactive workbook will take you through five key stages in your journey in cross-cultural mission:

- ▶ **Stage 1: Explore** - Understand more whether God is calling you to cross cultural mission.
- ▶ **Stage 2: Prepare** - Go deeper with challenging questions examining character, faith and relationships.
- ▶ **Stage 3: Go** - Think through some of the practical questions as you prepare to leave the UK.
- ▶ **Stage 4: Thrive** - Assess how things are going and focus on positive steps to move forward.
- ▶ **Stage 5: Return** - A structured reflection on your experiences as you return to the UK.



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