



# THE GUILD

## Implementing Kingdom Apprenticeship



### BRUCE GRAHAM

Bruce Graham worked 15 years during the founding phase of the USCWM. He then worked 12 years in India among Muslim and Hindu communities training Indians how to disciple peoples of another culture through Biblical Story. He currently serves in the Office of the General Director of the Frontier Mission Fellowship. You may contact him at [BruceGraham@alum.MIT.edu](mailto:BruceGraham@alum.MIT.edu)

### DICK SCOGGINS

Dick Scoggins founded The Fellowship of Church Planters (1985) in RI: teams working with immigrant people groups starting small, organic home communities. He moved to England in 1995 where he worked for 16 years in the Frontiers, International Office training teams in the Muslim world. He is presently working with The Guild.

### BILL WAYNE

Bill Wayne was the founding director of the Intercultural Studies Program at Fuller Seminary. He has researched effective/ineffective workers and their methods in 73 countries and trained 20 teams and hundreds of cross-cultural workers for 32 years by having them live among their intended overseas community in Southern California.

### AN ANCIENT MODEL OF TRAINING IS NEEDED

**B**irthing kingdom communities (fellowships oriented around allegiance to Jesus and life in his kingdom) is much more a craft than the pursuit of an academic subject. Therefore a more suitable model for training is needed beyond the typical Bible school or seminary structure.

For millennia, craftsmen have been trained through a master–apprenticeship model. A master in a trade or skill trains apprentices to the competency level he has attained. For the purposes of this article we will call them “trained practitioners.” They have gained the experience needed from a master trainer to be able to help other apprentices and eventually rise to the level of a master trainer themselves.

This was the ancient pattern of training found in the New Testament. Jesus trained the twelve in this manner. Paul, a Pharisee, was trained in this manner under Gamaliel. Both Jesus and Paul trained their “craftsmen”: the Twelve and Timothy. It was an intentional training pattern for the first century apostles. Paul referred to himself as a “wise master builder,” using craftsmanship terminology.

This kind of training requires lifelong learning and upgrading in a rapidly changing world. Masters must continually keep up-to-date in their craft and skill or become irrelevant. Medical doctors have to constantly upgrade their knowledge and skills. Soldiers need training camps where they learn and practice using the latest equipment and warfare tactics. Airline pilots need enhanced manual flying skills and access to advanced simulators to learn the latest cockpit technology. The same should be true of apostolic practitioners and apprentices. The apostolic task is too complex to expect anything less.

### THE PROBLEM

Many who sense God’s calling might rightly question their own abilities. They have not been tested or trained in the environments they will face. They’ve sat in classrooms and learned how to read books, write papers, compete with classmates to achieve higher grades and pass exams. Some have become very skilled in how they’ve been trained. But training has focused mainly on the mind in an artificial environment. The spiritual challenges, the issues of the heart, the relational, linguistic, and ministry skills needed have not been learned or experienced.

No medical doctor feels confident in the operating room having studied surgery in a classroom alone. No soldier feels confident in warfare having studied its history from a book. He needs to get out in the field and experience battle, sweat, dirt, fear, and the blast of a gun. He needs to learn the tactics and strategies of warfare in relationship with other comrades in the face of an enemy. While there are tremendous resources available for understanding (cognitively) the dynamics involved in cross-cultural apostolic

ministry, few find the master trainer (field-experienced) workers or environments where they can learn what they need experientially. Because of this, many lack the capacity and sensitivity to face the challenges they will be confronted with long term on the field. It's more than mobilizing warm bodies to leave home and go to the field!

## DEVELOPMENT OF "THE GUILD"

For a number of months we've been developing a process within an environment where master-apprenticeship-type training can occur for the purpose of equipping apostolic workers. We've identified 18 areas of competency for equipping workers in birthing kingdom communities within the cultural traditions of the unreached peoples.

## FIRST—AN APPROPRIATE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In order to achieve these outcomes, which involve heart attitudes, character and skills as well as knowledge, specific conditions need to be met for developing an adequate learning environment, namely:

- A context where learning can be *experienced*
- An environment where the felt needs of an apprentice engaged in a task guide the selection of the information he is taught
- An environment or community that is initially safe for experimentation, failure, and practice
- An environment or community that is "unsettling" enough to test and try a person's character and skill
- A transactional learning environment where peer to peer, master-apprentice type relationships can develop
- An environment where models of incarnational ministry can be experienced

## SECOND—A PHASED APPRENTICESHIP APPROACH

Apprenticeships will vary in length based on the complexity of the craft being learned. Shorter ones might last three years, longer ones five years. Stimulating the birth of kingdom communities cross-culturally is a complex task that could take years to sufficiently learn

experientially. Even good field practitioners never finish learning and are always looking for ways to upgrade skills in more fruitful practices.

Apprenticeships for cross-cultural practitioners should involve experience in different locations and varying contexts over a period of time. The crafting of appropriate apprenticeships will vary depending on the trainee's past experience, age, and target people or culture. A phased apprenticeship approach will adapt to the needs of each apprentice.

This is similar to the apprenticeship model in the medical field. Following medical school, doctors usually move onto a three-year residency at a hospital where they gain experience under the watchful eye of trained doctors. Their final phase focuses on a specific

field of specialization with a personal doctor overseeing their work.

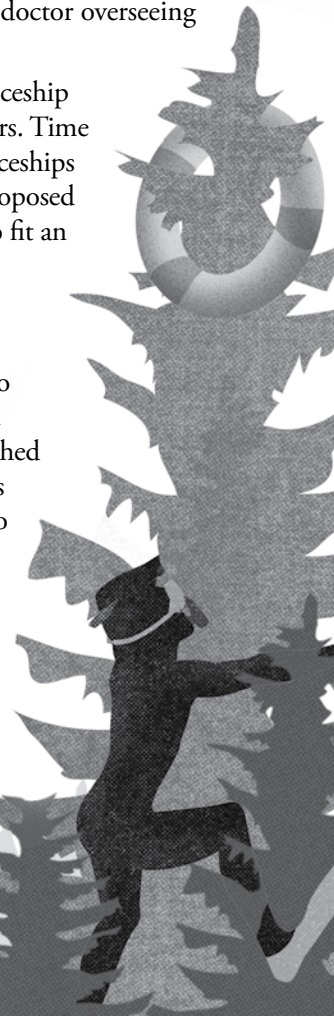
We envision a similar phased apprenticeship approach for training field practitioners. Time frames are approximate. Few apprenticeships will include all the phases. This is a proposed framework for designing a program to fit an apprentice's needs.

**A Phase 1 Apprenticeship:** Up to two years with an Apostolic Learning Community (ALC) in a culture near to the sending culture—probably located near an urban city with various unreached ethnic populations. The training teams will be led by experienced apostles who can train and evaluate apprentices in the following:

- apostolic calling (exploring and confirming)
- personal character (exploring and developing)
- models of kingdom community (exploring)
- apostolic team (experiencing)



While there are tremendous resources available for understanding the dynamics involved in cross-cultural apostolic ministry, few find the field-experienced workers, or environments where they can learn what they need experientially.



We envision at least four possible *outcomes* of a Phase 1 Apprenticeship:

1. The apprentice could be confirmed in his/her apostolic calling and move on to a field team or a Phase 2 apprenticeship.
2. The apprentice could be encouraged to move to some other aspect of the apostolic community such as a sending structure, new role in the training network, etc.
3. The apprentice could be evaluated by the master trainers as one not apostolically gifted, nor ready for a role in support work with the apostolic network, but rather encouraged to seek a role in a local church.
4. The apprentice could be denied any further confirmation due to uncovered sin or character issues and referred back to the sending community.

**A Phase 2 Apprenticeship:** A two to three year internship in a training network in a gateway city of a culture near to which the one the apprentice feels called. These training teams will be led by experienced cross-cultural workers who can evaluate and develop apprentices in:

- Language and cultural learning
- Cross-cultural adaptation
- Team-ship in challenging pioneering contexts
- Character issues that emerge in difficult cross-cultural adaptation situations
- Developing teams for specific fields and unreached people groups.

We envision at least six possible outcomes of a Phase 2 Apprenticeship:

1. Complete Phase 2 apprenticeship and take up a lifetime of practitioner work on a specific field team.
2. Complete the apprenticeship and be evaluated as one not gifted as a cross-cultural apostle (like Paul); encourage them to return as a Petrine apostle (like Peter) to their own culture.
3. Have the calling confirmed as a potential team leader of a specific field team and move to a Phase 3 Apprenticeship.
4. Encouraged to move to some other aspect of the apostolic community, such as the sending structure, or a role on a training team.
5. Confirmed that they are not an apostle, nor have a role in support work with the apostolic organisation, but encouraged to pursue a role in a local church or elsewhere.

6. Denied any further confirmation due to uncovered sin or character issues and referred back to the sending community.

**Phase 3 Apprenticeships:** A one to two year internship on a field apostolic team in the target culture or a culture close to the target culture. Phase 3 apprenticeships are suitable for potential team leaders going to isolated, pioneering situations among unreached people groups and who need specific training for leading a team. The mentor would be an experienced team leader with a proven track record for reproducing team leaders and equipping them in:

- The dynamics of a high performance team
- How to develop a high performance team
- Character issues that emerge in the challenges of leadership
- Recruiting a team and developing a plan to engage an unreached people group. Recruits might come from field training teams, sending agencies, or existing field teams.

### THIRD—THE NEED FOR EXPERIENCED MASTER TRAINERS

One of the most serious challenges we face in attempting to launch these types of apprenticeships will be finding appropriate leadership. Field-experienced workers who return home could be a huge untapped potential resource for this type of training. Bible schools, churches, and seminaries are often limited in their capacity to make use of these types of people. Many have more years of fruitful ministry and valuable experience to pass on to a younger generation. A Guild-type structure could harness their experience and provide ongoing fruitfulness for them.

Jesus looked upon the crowds and expressed deep dismay that they were like “sheep without a shepherd.” How many in the coming generation, stimulated by faith to pursue cross-cultural work among the unreached, will be like “sheep without a shepherd?” Many will be mobilized to go to the field, only to learn years down the road what they wished they had learned before going. Master trainers need to be harnessed to shepherd a new generation of cross-cultural workers.

Sending agency personnel often lack the time, resources, or master trainers to provide this type of training for new candidates. The Guild ([www.uscwm.org](http://www.uscwm.org)) as well as other groups can hopefully fill this gap. It is our prayer that the investment and time taken to provide a more adequate training process for potential apostolic workers will pay long-term dividends yielding sustained, life-long, apostolic practitioners. 