

The 7 Best Practices

From 2002 to 2004, the Mission Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance coordinated and sponsored a 22-nation study on missionary retention, the ability of a mission agency to keep its people. Based on a study of 65 mission agencies in the United States representing 14,000+ US missionaries, here are the seven best practices which high retention agencies are doing that have resulted in increased retention of their personnel in comparison with low and average retention agencies: *

- 1) Higher emphasis on firm and stable prayer support.
- 2) Importance of screening new applicants giving greater weight to calling, maturity, spiritual disciplines and psychological health.
- 3) More pre-field training & orientation.
- 4) Effective in communication of policies and plans, to and from leadership, and between sending base and the field.
- 5) Opportunities for the development of their personnel including continuous training and development of one's gifts and skills.
- 6) More emphasis on growth in one's personal spiritual life, rest, and sustained financial support that is adequate to the missionary's needs.
- 7) Good leadership practices including on-the-field supervision, integrity, feedback, support in problem solving and taking appropriate action.

Of the 7 Practices, "Good Leadership Practices", was identified as perhaps the most significant in relation to retention. Even secular studies show that personnel retention is directly related to the way people are treated by their supervisor. Supervision that follows through, proactively supports in problem solving and gives feedback is extremely important in keeping missionaries on the field.

[* - <http://www.paraclete.net/web/Para%20Perspective%205-06.pdf>]

SOLUTION NO.2 – Implement Good Leadership Practices, Support and Ongoing Development.