

Doctrine & Philosophy Alignment

Before deciding to form a church planting team, potential teammates should understand one another's theological convictions and philosophy of ministry.

1. Write down your thinking on these topics. This will help you to organize and clarify your own thinking, and help your potential teammates understand what you think about these important issues.

A. Theology.

If your church or mission agency has a statement of faith, share it with the others.

- What doctrines or theological principles are most important to you?
- Is there a key doctrinal issue not covered in your organization's statement of faith, or that you think is important to explain more fully?
- What core doctrines must we agree upon in order to serve in the same church?

B. Philosophy of ministry.

Every culture has distinctive traditions of practice in the church. We also bring our personal preferences and convictions. What are your convictions regarding the following:

- evangelism
- discipleship
- church leadership
- church styles (e.g., seeker-sensitive, missional, traditional, simple, etc.)
- roles of men and women in ministry
- practice of baptism (e.g., mode of baptism, who may perform baptism, etc.)
- practice of communion (e.g., open/closed, shared or individual cups, etc.)
- offerings
- standards regarding marriage & funerals (e.g., would you perform a wedding of a Christian marrying a non-Christian?)
- any other issues of church practice important to you
- any other issues of church practice important in the culture in which you work

2. Share the written statements with one another before you gather to talk about them. Take time to read and consider what your potential teammates are saying. Identify issues that need to be clarified or discussed more deeply.

3. Meet together to talk through key issues. Ask questions and seek clarification until you are satisfied you have identified and understood any areas of disagreement.

- Are there areas of disagreement that you **all** agree are minor enough **not** to impede teamwork?
- Are there areas of disagreement that might be significant enough that you should reconsider working together?