

Communication with Missionaries

How to Ask the Right Questions

Rules

1. Keep questions to a minimum with each e-mail or phone call.
2. Be sensitive to internet availability and costs.
3. Be sensitive to any security issues.
4. Check your emails for "tone" and "understandability" before you send them.
5. Understand that communication works both ways. Be patient as you wait on answers.
6. Try to quickly clarify or resolve any miscommunication.

Personal Questions

1. Can you tell me about your family? Do you have a spouse, children, pets, etc.?
2. How long have you been on the field?
3. What are your expectations for the project? What are you hoping for?
4. What are your strategy and goals for your work there?
5. Can you send me a picture of you?
6. Would you write a letter of commissioning to the team?
7. Do you need any personal items such as food, movies, toiletries, etc.?
8. How often would you like to hear from me?
9. Is there a way you can talk in person for free: IM, Skype, etc.?
10. Do you have any personal prayer requests for me to share with the team?

Logistical Questions

1. Can you confirm lodging and transportation details?
2. Can you give me a general itinerary for our project?
3. Will you provide information from your point of view about the country, the culture and the people you are trying to reach?
4. Do you suggest any sources for further reading? Do you have a volunteer orientation manual?
5. Can you send me digital pictures of where we will be staying and working, or of any other significant sights or people?
6. Can you tell me more about the use of phone, money exchange, cash vs. credit cards, the internet, and laundry facilities? (Try not to sound too spoiled when asking about these things.)
7. Can you tell me what to expect regarding the weather and climate?
8. Will you be specific about clothing necessities and what the appropriate attire is there?
9. Will you provide the necessary information for me to make emergency information cards, including your contact phone, email and directions to our lodging in-country?
10. Are there any specific words, phrases or praise songs that would be good for our team to learn in the language of the country?
11. Can you please clarify any security issues? Can Christian logos be worn? Can Christian material be brought into the country?
12. Do you have any helpful tips for getting through customs? Also, please confirm when, how, and who will pick our team up from the airport.

Other Ministry Topics

1. Is there a need to bring special equipment, gifts for nationals or hosts, giveaways, or any other donated goods or supplies?
2. What is the church/worship service like?
3. What do you consider to be the biggest mistake or misconception you have experienced working with a volunteer team, i.e. something that hurt the ministry, wasn't appropriate, or frustrated you personally?
4. Let them know the roster and profiles of your team members. Include a list of talents and skills that may open the door for other ministry opportunities.
5. Suggest any ideas for other ministry opportunities they may not have considered such as pick-up games, time at a park, time in a local school, etc.