

Why Did They Go?

Highlights from 2015 and 2016 Surveys

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POLL: THE NEED

Only about 1% of 'missionary decisions' results in actual career mission service.
 - Ralph Winter, founder of Perspectives & Frontier Ventures

Poll: What % are you seeing?
 Discuss: Why is this not higher?

FIRST SURVEY 2015

Email sent June 2015 to over 200 agencies associated with Missio Nexus and MissionNext:
 "Hello from Don Parrott with MissionNext, an association of agencies to recruit and mobilize many into missions-related service. I need your help with a survey to learn how to more effectively launch people into long-term international missions by identifying the positive factors as well as the hindrances. I anticipate the results will help recruiters and mobilizers recognize blind spots and be more effective."

Though the terms *launch* and *long-term* were not defined in the survey, the goal was to identify the factors which most helped people

- make a commitment
- and then follow-through to go their first time
- as the beginning of a missionary career

DESIGN

- A workgroup at In His Image Int'l in Tulsa developed an initial open-ended survey and received 20 responses. Then that workgroup took those open-ended responses and created a Likert-scale draft survey. This draft survey was tested and revised using responses of an additional 12 current or recent long-term missionaries.
- Revised again after reviewing 253 answers from the survey of healthcare missionaries which included "When this survey is adapted for long-termers are not in healthcare, are there any survey changes you suggest to make it more effective?"
- Further revised after counsel from MissionNext and The Traveling Team

EXAMPLE

"When you were first deciding about going into long-term service internationally, there were likely factors that helped or hindered your journey. Please rate the following 18 factors as not significantly helpful or definitely significantly helpful for you launching long-term, e.g.

Mentor(s)

None	Did not help	Helped a little	Helped some	Helpful	Very helpful
()	()	()	()	()	()

Supportive spouse (or potential spouse)

None	Did not help	Helped a little	Helped some	Helpful	Very helpful
()	()	()	()	()	()

DISTRIBUTION

- Sent June 2015 to agencies who are members of MissionNext and Missio Nexus with request they send to all their missionaries
- Invited responses from readers of *Brigada* and *Ask a Missionary* e-newsletters
- Closed survey after receiving 466 responses over two months

DEMOGRAPHICS

- 299 Responses
- Male 53%, Female 47%
- 46 Agencies Represented
- Passport country USA 85%, all others less than 5% each
- Destination Region First Launch
 - Western Europe 18%
 - Sub-Saharan Africa 17%
 - South Asia 12%
 - East Asia 11%
 - Rest less than 10%
- Currently a long-termer: yes 77%, no 23%

RESPONSES NOT ANALYZED

- Only anticipated going one or two years when they launched
- Launched first to North America
- Duplicates (identified by email or IP address)
- Those over age 70 (23 respondents). But their comments were retained.

LIMITATIONS

- Participants
 - Missed those in restricted access countries who did not want to risk being identified with survey
 - Different people and different generations understand terms like mentoring or coaching differently
- Recall bias
 - Difficult to remember accurately years later
- Analysis
 - Only did simple percentage comparisons of subsets
 - Potential for future: ANOVA comparisons, data mining

POSITIVE DRAWS

DRAW #1

Guidance or call from God



98% Guidance or call from God
i.e. 98% of responses analyzed were Helpful or Very Helpful.

Comments:

“The only thing to overcome all the obstacles is a deep conviction of God’s leading plus the opportunity to see real needs and practical ways to meet them. A half-hearted conviction is not enough.”
“Does deep conviction come through prayer and/or other means?”

FOUR PREDICTABLE DRAWS

- 98% Guidance or call from God
- 91% Desire to share the good news
- 80% Supportive friend(s)
- 68% Supportive spouse (or potential spouse)
which closely reflects the % married when first went

**POLL: WHICH IS FACTOR #5
that is, "THE SWING VOTE"?**

Consider these seven factors and check your estimate of the next factor respondents found most helpful ...

- Conference(s) about international opportunities
- Mentor(s)
- Personal interaction with long-term worker(s)
- Reading biographies of long-termers
- Sermon(s) or worship or other with my church
- Short-term trips two months or less
- Supportive agency, leader or team to join

FACTORS #5-11

The factor in below list respondents found most helpful...

- 39% Conference(s) about international opportunities
- 51% Mentor(s)
- 64% Personal interaction with long-term worker(s)
- 46% Reading biographies of long-termers
- 52% Sermon(s) or worship or other with my church
- 51% Short-term trips two months or less
- ✓ 69% Supportive agency, leader or team to join

FACTORS #5-6

- 69% Supportive agency, leader or team to join
- 64% Personal interaction with long-term worker(s)

Suggested applications:

1. Missionaries on home assignment may be more effective at mobilizing than stateside based mobilizers.
2. Missionaries who host short-term teams should build in small group or one-on-one time with those willing to explore long-term
3. Missionaries who meet an aspiring long-termer should continue that relationship via long-distance mentoring

HOW DISCOVERED AGENCY?

Consider these seven connection points and check your estimate of the one that *millennial* respondents checked most often about how they discovered the agency they joined...

- Conference(s) about international opportunities
- Friend or family member
- Pastor, mentor, leader or teacher
- Personal interaction with long-term workers with that agency
- Short-term international trip with that agency
- Social media
- Web browsing

HOW DISCOVERED AGENCY?

Consider these seven connection points and check your estimate of the one that *millennial* respondents checked most often about how they discovered the agency they joined...

- 13% Conference(s) about international opportunities
- 29% Friend or family member
- 21% Pastor, mentor, leader or teacher
- ✓ 39% Personal interaction w/ long-term workers that agency
- 23% Short-term international trip with that agency
- 2% Social media
- 11% Web browsing

MOBILIZER EFFECTIVENESS

For those who joined an agency when first launched, estimate how many respondents considered the mobilizer-recruiter helpful in the decision process to go:

- A. 0-25%
- B. 25-50%
- C. 50-75%
- D. 75-100%

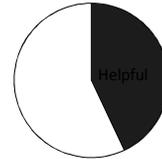
MOBILIZER EFFECTIVENESS

For those who joined an agency when first launched, estimate how many respondents considered the mobilizer-recruiter helpful or very helpful in the decision process to go:

- A. 0-25%
- B. 25-50%
- C. 50-75%
- D. 75-100%

Answer B: 41%

36% Millennials
33% Gen Xers
45% Boomers



MOBILIZERS AND MILLENIALS

Possible reasons some mobilizers are less effective

1. Many mobilizers are Boomers and may not relate well with Millennials who are not drawn to long-term commitments or to serving many years with little obvious spiritual fruit.
2. Mobilizers who are Millennials may not be equipped to serve as a mentor to their peers.
3. A numbers emphasis or a list of contacts so large that most only get occasional contact is not relational. In contrast, the survey results indicate fewer and deeper contacts result in more recruits. Email and social media is not enough. In person meetings and live phone calls are important to build relationship.

MOBILIZER HELPED

Survey Comments

"I was very impacted by the humility and approachability of several of the career missionaries I met with my organization, as well as their genuine interest in what God was doing in my life at the time. It was a large factor in my choosing to join this organization."

"The recruiter was very patient and walked with us over the course of several years of discernment."

MOBILIZER DID NOT HELP

Survey Comments

"I contacted workers from two agencies, one didn't have time to answer my questions and the other did. I ended up with the one who had the worker who fielded my questions. I would strongly suggest that all workers be ready to help people interested in missions."

"Had contacts with multiple mobilizers, they were more obstructive than helpful."

"Our mission has definitely improved in their recruiting process."

MULTIPLE MOBILIZERS

Survey: If you joined an agency, did you have previous contact with a mobilizer/recruiter from a different agency before you had contact with the agency you later joined?

- A. 0-25%
- B. 25-50%
- C. 50-75%
- D. 75-100%

MULTIPLE MOBILIZERS

Survey: If you joined an agency, did you have previous contact with a mobilizer/recruiter from a different agency before you had contact with the agency you later joined?

- A. 0-25%
- B. 25-50%
- C. 50-75%
- D. 75-100%

Answer B: 42%
 48% Millennials
 31% Gen Xers
 44% Boomers

PERSONAL CONNECTION

What percentage of respondents indicated they had personal connection to long-term workers before they launched themselves e.g. parents, relative, close friend...

- A. 0-25%
- B. 25-50%
- C. 50-75%
- D. 75-100%

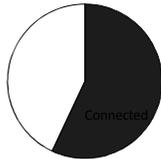
PERSONAL CONNECTION

What percentage of respondents indicated they had personal connection to long-term workers before they launched themselves e.g. parents, relative, close friend...

- A. 0-25%
- B. 25-50%
- C. 50-75%
- D. 75-100%

Answer C: 57%

- 10% Parents
- 17% Other Relatives
- 14% Close Friends & Went to Join Them
- 41% Close Friends Somewhere Else



SURVEY CONCLUSION #1

Effective launching is more relational than informational



FACTORS #7-16

- 62% Practical service for the underserved
- 61% Supportive parents
- 52% Sermon(s) or worship or other with my church
- 51% Short-term trips two months or less
- 51% Mentor(s)
- 46% Reading biographies of long-termers
- 39% Short-term trips two months or more
- 39% Conference(s) about international opportunities
- 37% Perspectives course or other m. course
- 26% Sermon(s) or worship or other with a campus ministry

PRACTICAL SERVICE

- 62% Desire for practical service to underserved
- 83% Millennials
- 54% Gen Xers
- 58% Boomers

MENTORS

51% Mentor Helpful/Very Helpful
 70% Millennials
 37% Gen Xers
 50% Boomers

17% No Mentor
 5% Millennials
 19% Gen Xers
 20% Boomers

MENTORING/COACHING

Recommendations:
 Assuming that any experienced missionary can mentor is like assuming anyone who speaks English can teach it effectively.
 Much of this can be coaching - may need more than one coach for different areas.
 Mentoring: Follow mentee's agenda
 Good match of mentor and mentee so expectations are in harmony
 Long distance: start with practical topics. Later deeper issues.
 In person: frequent, listen well, find a book to work through together, discuss heart issues, be available by phone, text, social media

Short-term trips two months or less

51% Helpful/Very Helpful
 63% Millennials
 64% Gen Xers
 41% Boomers

Average number of these trips 2.2 / 28 % did zero trips
 3.4 Millennials / 7% did zero trips
 2.6 Gen Xers / 21% did zero trips
 1.7 Boomers / 39% did zero trips

Decision Stages

DECISION STAGES

58. Which stage(s) of your life were most significant in making the decision to go long-term? (check all stages that were significant)

56% Undergraduate
 42% Teenage Years
 32% Career
 27% Childhood
 15% Grad school
 14% Zero to 2 Years Before Launching
 4% Postgraduate Training e.g. Medical Residency
 2% Retirement

Average number of stages checked 1.9

SURVEY CONCLUSION #2

Launching is like a marathon



SECOND SURVEY 2016

Email from Don Parrott sent June 2016 to 5,546 MissionNext contacts. 998 opened the email and 162 took the survey.

"MissionNext and others want to learn how people explore moving forward into ministry or missions. We know you're busy, but can you please share 5-10 minutes of your time for an online survey?"

If you're considering short or long-term missions, we encourage you to grab a journal and see what stands out to you as you take this short survey. Once you're done, we'll give you two free ebooks, Claude Hickman's *Live Life on Purpose* and the book *Ask a Missionary: Time-Tested Answers from 100 Missionaries*

DESIGN

- A workgroup at In His Image developed an open-ended survey and received 13 responses from attendees to a MissionNext Forum and 29 from attendees to Global Missions Health Conference.
- Then that workgroup took those open-ended responses and created a multiple choice survey.
- The survey was tested and revised using responses from 14 additional respondents.
- Deployed via Survey Monkey, where appropriate questions were presented in random order.

RESPONSES

Responses not analyzed

- Duplicates (identified by email or IP address)
- Had previously relocated for the gospel
- Not a citizen of USA or Canada
- Did not select an age bracket

Responses analyzed

- 26 Millennials
- 34 GenXers
- 54 Boomers

LIMITATIONS

- Respondents had previous missions interest
- Insights apply most directly to the e-list subscribers
- Analysis
 - Simple comparisons of percentages from subsets
 - Potential for future: chi-squared analysis and also look for which concerns go together
- Sad news: response rate low with significant margin of error
- Good news: key findings consistent across all three groups analyzed

Strong Concerns

CONCERN #1

If I would have to raise financial support to live in a new place for the sake of the gospel, that would be...



Out of 18 concerns, the #1 strong concern was having to raise financial support. This was #1 for all three generations and the percent that selected strong concern was:

- 35% Millennials
- 53% Gen Xers
- 38% Boomers

CONCERN #2

Concerns about my lack of experience and/or training in ministry

NA or Not a concern Some concern Strong concern



For millennials, the #2 strong concern was lack of experience and/or training in ministry. Out of 18 concerns this was the following # by generation:

- # 2 Millennials
- #10 Gen Xers
- #13 Boomers

POLL: WHICH IS THE NEXT STRONGEST CONCERN?

If this is your first time with this survey, from following factors check your estimate of the top concern millennials selected:

- Concerns for my children or future children
- Difficult to find where my talents would make a difference
- Fear of burnout
- If I would have to learn a new language
- If I would relocate where I may be lonely or isolated
- Parental objections
- Somewhere that is less safe

NEXT STRONGEST CONCERNS #3-#4

Concerns selected most by millennials from the list:

- #13 Concerns for my children or future children
- ✓ #3 Difficult to find where my talents make a difference
- #18 Fear of burnout
- ✓ #4 If I would have to learn a new language
- #12 If I would relocate where I may be lonely or isolated
- #10 Parental objections
- #14 Somewhere that is less safe

SURVEY CONCLUSION #3

Help aspiring missionaries understand they *can* raise financial support and learn language in spite of previous experiences or misunderstandings



The Journey Deepens

The weekend discusses many concerns including financial support and language learning. The retreat includes worship, large-group teaching sessions, small-group sessions, mission agency interaction with prospective missionaries, quiet time breakouts. One-on-one appointments cover personal questions such as singles concern about not finding a spouse if they go. Attendance is intentionally limited to create personal interaction between individuals, coaches and fellow sojourners with the Holy Spirit's guidance. For more: www.thejourneydeepens.com

ASKAMISSIONARY.com

175+ questions
 600+ answers to those questions
 8,000 unique web visitors per month
 2,000 subscribers to quarterly e-newsletter

Answers from experienced missionaries about:

 Guidance <small>calling, country choice, fear, obstacles, parental opinions</small>	 Funding <small>support training, financial need, retirement, debt, options</small>	 Mission Agencies <small>how to select, denominations, going independently, why join</small>
 Singles/Families <small>spouse differences, children, dating, single on the field</small>	 Training <small>preparation, degrees, bible, language, cultural, mentors</small>	 Professional Skills <small>healthcare, education, business, engineering</small>

ASKAMMISSIONARY SAMPLE QUESTIONS

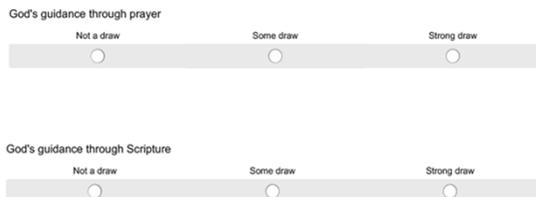
- What perspective should I take towards raising prayer and financial support?
- What is it like to learn another language?
- How do I select an agency?
- What do missionaries wish they had known before they first went?
- How do I handle my debts and still go into missions?
- How can I know if God is leading me to become a missionary?

MILLENNIAL CONCERNS #1-18

GEN XER concerns #1-18

Boomer concerns #1-18

EXAMPLE DRAWS



POLL: WHICH IS THE STRONGEST DRAW?

If this is your first time with this survey, consider the following factors and your estimate of what millennials consider their biggest draw:

- Desire to share Christ (but no specific group or country)
- Desire to share Christ specific unreached group or country
- Encouragement from a pastor, mentor, leader or teacher
- Encouragement from friend or sibling
- God's guidance through circumstances
- If someone I know relocated and I would join them there
- Passion for justice

STRONGEST DRAWS #1-#2

Two draws selected most by millennials from the list:

- #7 Desire to share Christ (but no specific group or country)
- #2 Desire to share Christ specific unreached group/country
- #13 Encouragement from pastor, mentor, leader or teacher
- #14 Encouragement from friend or sibling
- #1 God's guidance through circumstances
- #10 If someone I know relocated and I would join them there
- #8 Passion for justice

Millennial DRAWS #1-15

SURVEY CONCLUSION #4

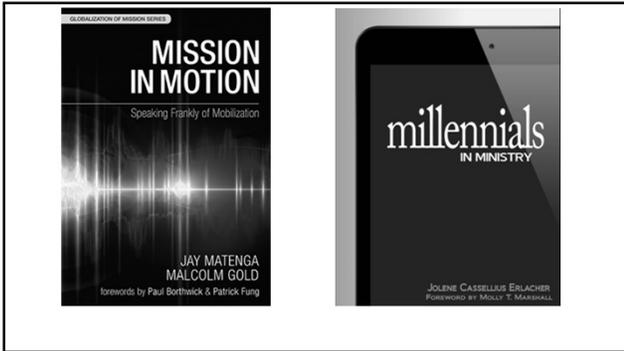
Design more short-term vision trips
to bring long-term opportunities into focus



**MILLENNIAL DRAWS:
ASPIRING vs. MISSIONARIES**

GEN X-ER DRAWS #1-15

BOOMER DRAWS #1-15



Connecting

- HOW TO CONNECT?**
- Consider these connection points and check your estimate of the two main ways that *millennials* would like to learn about opportunities to relocate for the gospel:
- Conference
 - Email
 - Friend or family member
 - Meeting at church
 - Campus Ministry Meeting
 - Pastor, mentor, leader or teacher
 - Personal interaction with someone already serving there
 - Short-term visit to that location
 - Social media
 - Web browsing

- TOP TWO RESPONSES**
- Here are the main ways that millennial respondents would like to learn about opportunities to relocate for the gospel:
- 38% Conference
 - 62% Email
 - 31% Friend or family member
 - 31% Meeting at church
 - 19% Campus Ministry Meeting
 - 54% Pastor, mentor, leader or teacher
 - 65% Personal interaction w/ someone already serving there
 - 77% Short-term visit to that location
 - 23% Social media
 - 42% Web browsing

- MILLENIALS CONNECTING**
- In order, here are the ways that *Millennial* respondents would like to learn about opportunities to relocate for the gospel:
- 77% Short-term visit to that location
 - 65% Personal interaction with someone already serving there
 - 62% E-mail
 - 54% Pastor, mentor, leader or teacher
 - 42% Web browsing
 - 38% Conference
 - 31% Friend or family member
 - 31% Meeting at church
 - 23% Social media
 - 19% Meeting of a campus ministry

- GEN XERS CONNECTING**
- In order, here are the ways that *Gen Xer* respondents would like to learn about opportunities to relocate for the gospel:
- 59% Short-term visit to that location
 - 56% E-mail
 - 47% Personal interaction with someone already serving there
 - 32% Conference
 - 29% Pastor, mentor, leader or teacher
 - 24% Web browsing
 - 15% Social media
 - 12% Friend or family member
 - 12% Meeting at church
 - 6% Meeting of a campus ministry

BOOMERS CONNECTING

In order, here are the ways that *Boomer* respondents would like to learn about opportunities to relocate for the gospel:

- 72% Short-term visit to that location
- 59% E-mail
- 48% Personal interaction with someone already serving there
- 30% Conference
- 30% Web browsing
- 26% Pastor, mentor, leader or teacher
- 19% Meeting at church
- 19% Social media
- 11% Friend or family member
- 2% Meeting of a campus ministry

CONNECTING SUMMARY

For all generations the top three (out of ten) ways that respondents would like to learn about opportunities to relocate for the gospel:

- Short-term visit to that location
- Personal interaction with someone already serving there
- E-mail

Note: Web browsing and social media ranked much lower. The strength of e-mail in these results may be due to the survey done by e-mail to those who already subscribe to an e-mail newsletter.

MILLENNIAL EXPERIENCES

Which stage(s) of your life or experiences have most significantly impacted your willingness to explore relocating for the sake of the gospel? (check one or more that were significant)

- 46% Short-term mission trip(s)
- 31% Sermon(s) or worship or other with my church
- 23% Perspectives or other missions course
- 23% Mentoring relationships
- 15% Reading biographies
- 15% Sermon(s) or worship or other with a campus ministry
- 8% Conference

GEN XER EXPERIENCES

Which stage(s) of your life or experiences have most significantly impacted your willingness to explore relocating for the sake of the gospel? (check one or more that were significant)

- 62% Short-term mission trip(s)
- 35% Sermon(s) or worship or other with my church
- 21% Mentoring relationships
- 12% Perspectives or other missions course
- 6% Reading biographies
- 3% Sermon(s) or worship or other with a campus ministry
- 9% Conference

BOOMER EXPERIENCES

Which stage(s) of your life or experiences have most significantly impacted your willingness to explore relocating for the sake of the gospel? (check one or more that were significant)

- 59% Short-term mission trip(s)
- 37% Sermon(s) or worship or other with my church
- 17% Reading biographies
- 13% Mentoring relationships
- 11% Conference
- 6% Perspectives or other missions course
- 2% Sermon(s) or worship or other with a campus ministry

EXPERIENCES SUMMARY

Which stage(s) of your life or experiences have most significantly impacted your willingness to explore relocating for the sake of the gospel? (check one or more that were significant)

For all generations the top two (out of seven) most significant experiences were:

- Short-term mission trip(s)
- Sermon(s) or worship or other with my church

WRAP UP

CONCLUSIONS

1. Effective launching is more relational than informational



2. Launching is like a marathon
3. Help aspiring m's learn they *can* raise finances and learn language
4. Design short-term trips that bring long-term opportunities into focus

POLL

What is your main takeaway from our time together?

FOR MORE ON THE SURVEYS

Articles

Launch survey: Evangelical Missions Quarterly published October 2016
Relocating survey: 2018 publication TBA

www.launchsurvey.wordpress.com

Slides and executive summary, webinars, video, audio

References Cited

Acknowledgements

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