

17a Team Building Basics – Walkthrough

(White board; Personalities and Team Development document; slide deck or the 17a Key Images Document – 45 min.) (**Note:** If the group is large, have them sit in smaller groups for this session.)

Optional Series Intro: To build a translation team, leaders need to select a variety of people, so that the translation will be of high quality and will communicate effectively to all people in the community. God has created a variety of people to be in His body, so how do leaders find the right combinations of different people for a translation team? And how do leaders get such different people to work together well?

God has designed His people to work as one Body, with each different person playing their own important part well. In Romans 12:4–5 [▶] we read, “For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.” Your translation team can be a model of this design to your community: both to believers and to unbelievers.

During these conversations, we are going to discuss how you can build this kind of team, and how to work well with the team once it is built.

Intro: In this session, we are going to talk about the basics of team building. We will do this by talking about personality types, 5 values, and Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs.

1. First, let’s talk about needs. [▶]

Explain: Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs may sound complicated, but it is simply a way of arranging human needs, starting from the most basic ones. We have based our diagram on his, but we have focused on needs you might encounter when leading Bible translation.

Ask: Can you think of a time when you were so distracted by thirst [▶] or some other physical need that you couldn’t think about anything else? Or have you ever found that a relational problem in your family is keeping you from functioning well at work?

Explain: This is because our brain orders which needs are most urgent in any given situation. As this picture shows, the most basic needs are at the bottom of the triangle—things like water, food, and sleep. The next level [▶] is safety—feeling protected and having a place to call home. Level 3 [▶] is being part of a group, a sense of belonging. Level 4 [▶] is feeling respected: that what one has to contribute to the group is valued. Level 5 is the highest level where people function at the peak of their ability [▶]; for Christians, this is ministry and service to God.

Ask: What do you notice about this picture?

Explain: If lower-level needs aren't being met, people may not even be aware of other needs. *(For example, a person in a war-torn country may go to great personal risk to obtain water because without water they won't survive—the need for water overrides the need for safety.)* For the brain to function at a high level, basic needs must be met. This may seem obvious for physical needs, and it is also true of emotional needs.

Explain: Translators need to function at the highest level of thought, so if they don't feel safe, or if they don't feel that they belong—that they are loved not only by Christ but also by His people, and have value—they will be less able to think well about translation. When leaders plan workshops, planning for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the translators is part of planning for success and is part of loving our brother, just as Scripture tells us. [►]

Read: James 2:15–16

Ask: For your events, what are some ways you could provide for your team members' basic needs?

2. Going on to some higher levels of the triangle, we have found that a way to provide for the emotional needs of love and belonging is with [►] values-based learning.

Explain: Students will achieve more if they are in a learning environment where they feel valued. It is our responsibility as God's children to treat others with His love, which includes respect and value for others as our brothers and sisters.

When Bible translation leaders do this in a learning environment, they can also build teams that are strong and can faithfully achieve translation. Leaders and trainers must purpose to treat translators in a way that expresses value and thus expresses Jesus' love to them.

Although these expressions may be different in different cultures, the following five qualities or values [►] are universally felt. In other words, they might be expressed differently, but all people feel valued by being treated according to these qualities. *(Take time to explain the five values with examples and discussion. The slides have icons for association. After discussing the 5 values, work on the short exercise that follows.)*

1. [►] **Honesty**—speaking the truth, being faithful to commitments. *(The tree represents honesty for us Americans because it reminds us of the story of George Washington cutting down the cherry tree.)*
2. [►] **Common Interest**—finding mutual interests, likes, or experiences. *(To us, the triangle represents coming together by showing different parts coming to shared points.)*
3. [►] **Praise**—verbalizing appreciation for hard work, special skills, and efforts. *(The English word Wow! reminds us to praise others.)*
4. [►] **Protection**—not asking more of the learner than he is capable of; providing a barrier between him and distractions or harm. *(A shield represents protection because it was used to protect the body in our history.)*

5. [►] **Service**—finding ways to serve the learner and share his burden. (*The smiley with heart represents service to us because it shows a cheerful attitude to help others.*)

Short Exercise: [►] Assign each small group one or more of the values. Take some time for each group to work together and create a culturally meaningful icon for each value they've been assigned. Once they finish, ask each small group to show the larger group the symbol or icon they created and to explain its meaning. Ask if they can think of any ways that Scripture reinforces these values. (*Some possibilities:* [►] **Honesty**—Ephesians 4:25, **Common Interest**—Philippians 2:1–2, **Praise**—1 Thessalonians 5:11, **Protection**—Acts 20:35, **Service**—Matthew 20:26–28.)

Ask: [►] Now that you have considered these values, can you think of when have you had an experience where feeling valued helped you? [►] How have you expressed value to others in one or more of these ways? How did it make you feel?

3. ZPD and Scaffolding—Understanding how humans learn and interact is also important in building teams, so now let's talk about two different ways to help people learn.

Explain: [►] This picture shows different levels of what a person can do. Because its title is difficult, we call this the ZPD model for short. The dark purple circle represents what a person can do on his own. The second circle represents what he can do with the guidance of someone just one step ahead of him. The outer circle represents what he cannot do, even if he has lots of help. *Example: a child learning to walk. With someone holding his hands and providing one step of support, he can walk farther and not lose his balance. He could not run in a footrace, even with help.*

Ask: Can you think of areas in your culture or experience where a person learns a new skill from someone who has just learned the process or is just “one step” ahead?

Explain: [►] The next idea is represented by scaffolding. On a building, a scaffolding structure is used to support parts of the building and allow people to reach high places on the building to work on them. The scaffold is removed once the work is complete. In learning, scaffolding refers to the process of training students by providing necessary supports to allow them to reach higher. The scaffold is eventually removed once learning has taken place. [►] *Example: In America, children are often given a pencil grip to help them learn to hold a pencil correctly when they are first starting to write. After they have mastered the fine motor skills for writing, the “scaffold” of a pencil grip is removed.*

Ask: Can you think of areas in your culture or experience where temporary helps are given until a person masters a skill?

Explain: These two learning theories we have discussed help us to understand a few key elements when [►] assessing translators for placement within a group.

1. Place translators of similar skill levels in teams together. This helps both the advanced person and the less-advanced translator. If leaders place people together who have very different skill levels, they put too much pressure [►] on the highly skilled and easily intimidate [►] the less-skilled translators.
2. Instead, group less-skilled translators [►] with others who are only slightly more advanced than they are. This will provide the support they need to move into working on their own—the “center circle” of the purple ZPD model we saw.
3. Provide “scaffold” for those who need help. For example, [►] choose a shorter, easier passage for them to begin translating.

Be ready to reassess groups [►] and make adjustments to teams as difficulties arise and the project progresses.

4. Now let's try a fun activity: [►] Personality Shapes

Explain: We all have different personalities that affect the way we relate to people, think, and learn. **Try this fun activity to determine your “shape.”** (*Do not explain the shapes before the participants try this.*)

[►] **Draw a square** (*pause for them to do each drawing*), **a triangle, a circle, and a squiggle.**

Put a 1 under the shape that best represents you. Put a 2, 3, and 4 under each of the remaining shapes in descending order as they represent you. It's fine if you feel confused. Just pick an order on any criteria that makes sense to you.

Explain: You may know someone who is very good at details and facts and finding out more information. Is anyone like that here? (*Have people share about themselves or others.*) This is the kind of personality that would be called a “**square**.”

You may know someone who we would call the “life of the party”: who loves being around other people and always thinks of fun, creative ideas. Is anyone like that here? This is the kind of personality that would be called a “**squiggle**.”

Someone who is focused on getting things done and who is very direct in communication and actions would be called a “**triangle**.” Anyone here like that?

Someone who is very focused on the whole group of people, on making sure everyone has a chance to speak and that everyone works together would be called a “**circle**.” Anyone here like that? (**Note:** *Be sure to read the document **Personalities and Team Development** before you lead this activity.*)

[►] Ask students if they'd like to renumber their shapes. Did they intuitively match any of these shapes to people who fit the descriptions? Discuss what they learned about themselves and each other. (*If you feel comfortable, try to guess some of the participants' shapes.*)

Ask: What shape do you think would be most suited to be a translator? Actually, people with any of these shapes or personalities can be very effective translators! *(Historically, squares have had the primary responsibility for translation.)*

Ask: Why do personalities matter when building translation teams?

Explain: All personalities have something important to contribute to the work of translation. God created each personality with a specific focus, thinking style, and objective.

1. Squares provide focus on quality, detail, and precision.
2. Triangles provide focus on achievement, hard work, and success.
3. Circles provide focus on community, respect for others, and opportunities to contribute.
4. Squiggles provide focus on creativity, beauty, fresh ideas, and enthusiasm.

When building a team, look for different personalities instead of all similar ones. A team approach invites all personalities to be involved.

Ask: Do you know the people within your small group here a little better after the Values-Based Learning exercise and the Personality Shapes activity? What advantages do you see in taking some time for your translation team members to interact in some of these ways?

Confirm: Leaders understand how to evaluate and appreciate team members' different personalities, and how each personality can contribute to a team. They understand the importance of values-based learning. They see how appreciating each other can help in team building and can help the team function as a healthy example of Christ's Body. They understand that, as leaders, they need to plan for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs at events.