

The Sending Church Elements

Thank you for downloading the Sending Church Elements Guide. To become a great sending church we have identified 4 phases divided into 17 elements. We call them the Sending Church Elements:



At Upstream we desire to see churches become great sending churches. From cultivating the awareness in Scripture of God's heart for the nations, to specifically identifying and developing future missionaries. We believe that the church is not to relegate global missions to the experts,

but to become a vital player in the movement of the Gospel amongst the nations. We want to help your church get "Upstream" in the process of sending missionaries. To be vitally involved in their discipleship and sending process way before they go to a missions agency and to the field.

The Sending Church Elements have, from our beginning, been our guide to helping churches become great sending churches. Like the periodic table identifies the building blocks of all of life, the Sending Church Elements identify the key aspects of being a great sending church. They can serve as a map to your church as you develop your sending culture and a North star to help you re-evaluate your programs and strategies as a sending church. All Upstream resources, training, and strategy are organized according to the Sending Church Elements. This allows us to quickly identify where churches are in the process of becoming sending churches, and to guide them toward concrete next steps.

The following is a list of the Sending Church Elements with their corresponding phases. To learn more about each sending church element and how to apply them in your church, visit: www.theupstreamcollective.org/resources.

The Sending Church Elements

Phase 1 - Establishing

The church lays a biblical foundation for sending by:

1. **Cultivating Missions Awareness:** The church becomes progressively aware of the lost world around them, both locally and globally.
2. **Establishing Missions Conviction:** The church is convinced of their need to personally engage this lostness through the truth of the Scriptures and the conviction of the Holy Spirit.
3. **Developing a Vision:** The church prayerfully discerns and narrows the specific place(s) and people(s) that the Holy Spirit is leading them to engage both locally and globally.
4. **Building a Strategy:** The church builds a strategy that employs a variety of ways to strategically and incarnationally fulfill the vision.
5. **Involving the Entire Church:** The church embodies sentness by cultivating the involvement of every member in the sending vision and strategy through education, prayer, and onramps.

Phase 2 - Developing

The church moves toward sending by:

6. **Evaluating Sending Pathways and Partners:** The church discerns the most effective pathway and partner organization for a missionary based on the church's vision and strategy, the missionary's gifts and vocation, and the context to which they are going.
7. **Identifying Missionaries:** The church proactively pursues members who exhibit local sentness and global conviction, inviting them into the global strategy by being assessed.
8. **Assessing Missionaries:** The church takes the lead with the assistance of a missions organization to assess the character, calling, and competency of candidates through a

relational, communal process.

9. Developing Missionaries: The church prepares healthy candidates by investing in their knowledge, formation, and skills through coaching, equipping, and ongoing evaluation.

Phase 3 - Engaging

The church grows in sending by:

10. Commissioning Missionaries: The church affirms missionaries by publicly commissioning them to go, while also commissioning the church to support them.
11. Getting Missionaries Established: The church helps missionaries remain healthy during their first term by supporting them through the transition and acquisition of a new language and culture.
12. Providing Ongoing Care: The church strengthens their structure and process for the nurture, care, and accountability of their missionaries.
13. Maintaining Strategic Focus: The church ensures that maintenance and changes to the vision and strategy remain aligned with the work of their missionaries.

Phase 4 - Multiplying

The church matures in sending by:

14. Inviting missionaries Influence: The church maintains deep relationships with their missionaries, initiating ways for them to encourage and exhort the church in an ongoing manner.
15. Receiving Missionaries During Re-Entry: The church receives missionaries who are returning from the field indefinitely through planning, presence, and provision.
16. Innovating as Sending Churches: The church takes time to reassess their sending strategies and systems through honest evaluation and missions research, leading to streamlined practices and new ventures.
17. Influencing Other Churches: The church influences other churches in sending by sharing experiences, resources, and/or opportunities for partnership.