

Leader as Admin and Organizer

by George Verwer

George Verwer's sermon emphasizes the critical role of leaders as effective administrators and organizers in ministry, highlighting the need for planning, prioritization, and prayer.

Duration: 1:02:00

Scripture: Acts 6:1

Topics: "Leadership"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of effective communication and organization in spreading the word of God. He shares personal anecdotes about his struggles with writing and using chopsticks, highlighting the significance of finding alternative methods to convey messages. The speaker emphasizes the need for proper organization within a team and the importance of adhering to cultural norms, such as covering one's head in certain religious assemblies. He also warns against presuming things and encourages individuals to be mindful of time constraints and the impact of their actions on the overall flow of a meeting.

Transcript

It's good that God is very merciful, because if he was more strict in dealing with us, I think many of us would have been slayed by the Lord himself for our flippancy of praying and lack of heart that often goes with it. So let's take a moment of silent prayer and really search our hearts that we may be prepared in the Spirit. This is serious business.

We know that when leaders in physical armies are given briefings, that if they make one mistake, it can cost lives. I think even as the ship was coming up the river, just one mistake up on that bridge and this ship can be finished. As far as generally ships and rivers like this don't sink, but they usually get on sandbars and they don't get off.

We're in a spiritual warfare guiding the ship of God and this is serious business. So let's have a moment of silent prayer and searching our hearts. We're going to speak this morning on the leader as an administrator and an organizer.

We want God's guidance. Lord, help us to understand the seriousness of what we are doing, to be diligent as your word commands, give our minds the alertness, help us to grapple with the language, and to also ask the right questions. We ask in Jesus' name.

Amen. This morning we're going to be speaking on the leader as an administrator and an organizer. Many of you have only joined this course midway, so that makes it a little complicated as you miss some of the foundation.

But I think we'll overcome that somehow. In Acts, I'd like us to look at a couple of verses. Chapter 6, Acts chapter 6. And in those days when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there was a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily administration.

Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them and said, It is not fitting that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look among you for seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business, that we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude.

And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicholas, across the lot of Antioch. When they sat before the apostles and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God increased, and the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly, and a great company of priests were obedient to the faith.

And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. And I always say in the very, very beginning of the church that immediately they were faced with organizational problems. And so they assigned certain leaders to give themselves to the practical work.

The amazing thing is one of the first men given to this practical work ends up out preaching in an open air meeting and gets stoned to death. So that is a beautiful example that the person who is given the practical work, it does not mean he no longer preaches in the open air, he no longer witnesses. That is the mistake we have made in the 20th century.

We categorize people and we say, well, this is my job, this is my ministry. I serve cups of tea to visiting pastors. I don't give out tracts, I don't go house to house, I don't preach.

I sing in the choir only, that's my ministry. And this kind of categorizing and professionalizing is absolutely a deathblow to spiritual reality because it means that basically we do things because it's our job rather than we do things because of compassion and love. The thing that determines a person's reality on this ship is what he or she does in their free time.

That is a very big factor. Everybody in the world is working an eight-hour day. Most of them are working close to double that just to get food in their stomach.

Maybe not in the fluent countries that some come from. And what we do in our free time is a very, very big thing. Very, very big thing.

Of course, on the ship we don't get as much free time. Some certainly don't as they would like. But as little or as much as there is, it is a very big thing.

Well, I have to be careful, I don't want to get sidetracked. I want to get right into the heart of this subject, of the leader as an organizer and as an administrator. We live in a very complicated world.

Unfortunately, much more complicated than this world that these people lived in. That was complicated enough. They immediately had problems.

Have you ever tried to think of the administrative and organizational problems that Moses faced? That was the first big operation mobilization. And he had more than a million, more than one million people to organize, to feed. They lived in little tents.

Talk about crowded accommodation, I tell you. It must have been an incredible thing. And just getting water supply.

I have read a scientific book written by a general entitled The Exodus, explaining, in fact, that what Moses did in the area of organization is a total miracle. That book was a great challenge to me, actually, when I was playing about this ship project. A lot of people want OM to expand.

We have unlimited opportunities to expand. One of the biggest reasons that OM finds it difficult to expand more at present is we don't have leaders with a gift of organization and administration. And, of course, we're all out here on the ship, right out in the middle of the front lines.

And believe me, as we sail into Sarawak, we are sailing into a front line area. But, you know, if it wasn't for faithful organizers in the New Jersey office, in Manchester, in Singapore, in Bombay, you know, we wouldn't be here. We wouldn't be here.

And some of you, of course, in the future may end up in strategic positions of organization. But even if you don't, you need to learn something of organizing. Organizing yourself.

Organizing your day. Organizing your time. There's already been a couple of lectures, I believe, on this, at least organizing your time.

And, of course, only a few of you were able to attend those. A good organizer can save hundreds of people hours. A poor organizer can cost hundreds of people time and effort.

We've seen how with the ship, all of us, to some degree, our whole life, when we come into one of these ports, hinges on what that line-up man has done in the area of organization and planning. His lack of planning and organization can cost every one of us time. Suppose it costs all of us one hour.

That's 140 hours. Gone. Gone.

When you lose time, you don't get it back. You can't get it back. And a poor team leader, disorganized, not planning ahead, his whole team suffers.

Often he suffers less than the team for the fact that he maybe has a little more freedom. As the man who's planning it, he suffers less than the team, which is sometimes in a more rigid situation. I can't stress enough the need for us to learn something of organization.

Most of us here eventually will be married, and your whole and how it functions will greatly depend on your ability to plan, to organize, to administrate. What if you have seven children? I mean, getting married and raising the children is much more difficult than functioning for a few years on an on-team. And I know brothers that think on-team life is difficult, and this trial, and that problem.

When they get married, their brains are going to burn. They're just going to fail. Because marriage can get so complicated.

Suddenly you find the government wants you to pay taxes, and you discover that you've got to live in a house. How do you get a house? You've got to rent it. You discover nobody rents houses in this area without black money.

Then you have a decision. And in five minutes, all you learn in five years can go down the drain under the pressure of just trying to organize and provide for your family. And so learning how to organize, learning how to do things right, do things decently and in order as much as possible, is not something just for a few of us, you know, or the big Christian leaders with hundreds of people somehow under us, but it's for all of us, women included.

Because some of you women will probably marry some scatterbrained man, and if you don't help him organize, you'll probably flush him down the toilet in the dark. It's an exaggeration, of course. But believe me, there are quite a few scatterbrained people around, and it's all right if you have one in the marriage, but if you have two, boy, I tell you, you're entering an interesting time.

Now, let's get right to the issue. First of all, organizers, if we can use the term, I don't like the term actually, administrators, are not born. They are made.

They're not born. Somebody says, oh, he's a born leader. That is not true.

He's a born organizer. You're a born baby. And then, of course, there are hereditary factors, and some people say we have no brain power, and the hierarchy, you know, this is people are always arguing over, the much bigger factor is our upbringing.

Our upbringing. And then, even if we have poor upbringing, and we never learn anything about organization, maybe we never learn to think properly, we have a lot of different disadvantages, this still can be overcome. This still can be overcome.

So there are many factors. There are many factors that determine one's ability when he arrives to the ripe age of 18 or 20, as to whether he can organize or not. And even then, if he has everything against him, he can overcome those obstacles.

God has given all of us a mind. That mind can be trained. That mind can be trained.

There's no such thing as an inferior race, or inferior people. There are individuals that have disabilities, but there have been hundreds, thousands of examples of people with terrific disabilities who bypassed the people with the natural ability. And this is, I think, very, very important to keep in mind.

The second thing, for the sake of your notes, is let's talk about the administrative task connected with our day's activities. We all have to live day by day. There are simple things, and I want to keep this lecture simple, that will help you.

One is to learn to write things down. I cannot emphasize the importance of this. I'm still learning it myself.

Now, different people have different, what should I say, potential in the area of memory. Some people have very good memory. I have a fairly good memory in certain things, but find in other areas very poor.

For example, I continually lose my Bible. I'm sure that is a psychological problem. I read something in a book about that.

But it is amazing how all of us have different struggles in the area of memory. But learn to write things down. When possible, at the beginning of the week, write things down that you have to keep in mind for that week.

Before the next day, write things down the evening before, that you have to remember the next day. That can be such a help, because in tackling a day's work, we have to continually battle the problem of priorities. There's always so many things to do.

So many things to do. And when you get married, you get a whole new range of things that you have to do. Connect with your family.

I never dreamed. Maybe I did dream, but I never realized very much how many things would come to me now that I have children. Going to parents' night.

Now I have three children in school. That's three parents' nights a couple of times a year. Going to sports day.

Your children expect you to come to sports day. That's a big thing in most schools. And at times, Christians have made the mistake of, because they're not disciplined and not organized, not doing this kind of thing.

And the children suffer for it. I'm bringing this in because I don't think we want to think of organization just as something we do for the OM team or the OM office. It's something we need for marriage.

It's something we need for total life. So planning your next day. Have a diary.

A diary, as we think of it in England, is not a book where you write down what's happening after it happened. That is the American idea, I think, of a diary, and I'm not against that. The diary of David Boehner.

He wrote his spiritual experiences as they happened. That's okay, but that's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about a little book that has all the days of the year listed in, and you can write in there key dates.

Very important. I already have the dates for OM4 conferences. I'm already booked to speak the 31st of January 1976 at Oxford University.

That is entered in my diary. I can't carry all this around in my head. And if I just have the letters, I have a double-check, and I like to use as much as possible a double-check system in case one system falls through.

If I lose my diary, what do I do? So I have the letters dealing with those meetings, inviting me to those meetings, in a file. So if I lose my diary, I have the file. If I lose the file, I have the diary.

I also, when I was in Singapore one year ago, took my entire address book and had the whole thing photocopied so that I have a complete photocopy of all my major addresses in a file in England. How many people, scattered brain-alarms, have lost their address book with contacts, new converts, and they could never write them again. It's gone.

Finished. Why didn't they make a copy? Wouldn't take that much time. And have that somewhere at home.

If people mean anything to you, other than two eyes, two ears, a nose and a mouth, that you talk to or look at, you will want to keep track of their address. And believe me, when people lose their shit and no one writes to them, it can be a very devastating experience. Because they think that when I was here, you know, a few people used to talk to me.

Now I'm gone. But one of the reasons sometimes they don't get a letter is no one knows their address. Or they gave the wrong address.

Little practical things can make all the difference in the world. All the difference in the world. In the area of your own life.

So planning ahead the day before, beginning of the week, having a diary is very important for just your daily schedule. Determine your priorities. You have to decide what you're doing now.

Those of you from India IT, your priorities now on the ship are different from your priorities in the UP campaign. You must surely understand that. If you didn't, you'd be certainly having a lot of difficulty.

So determine your priorities. Priority means what things should come first, what things are the most important. And I recommend you put people as the number one priority in your life.

Now, that may be a little bit balanced. When you are in a period of training, you now are in intensive study, especially those of you from India who have been more than involved with people up to your neck for the past few years. And so in a sense you're a little bit withdrawn now.

That's understandable. And you're giving yourself to study. You cannot run around all day witnessing everybody and encouraging everybody and counseling with everybody and still do the course.

You have to do it. But that doesn't mean people are still not your priority. They are.

But you have to limit yourself and you have to discipline your time. And that's not easy, of course. Another thing that I believe should be priority is our prayer and worship.

One of the deadly dichotomies of many people or that gets into the minds of many people is that the administrator and the man who's organizing things, he's not a man of prayer. Tell me, was Stephen a man of prayer? The fact of the matter is men who are holding positions of organization, they must also give themselves to prayer to get the mind of God. We do not organize by human wisdom.

We need the mind of God. We need the discernment of God. So don't think someday because you're in a practical job or in an organizational job that you don't need prayer and worship.

So always keep that as a top priority. As a top priority. Next thing is to have a system of files.

It can be very simple. My first file system, as far as I remember, were cornflake boxes that I cut in half and folded over backward and roll on the top. Any thin piece of cardboard can be used as a file.

In the beginning stages of organizing, you're probably not going to have 100 files. If you want to come into my little office, you can see about 140 files. I realize you're not going to get into that.

But here are just a few basic suggestions. Have a file of things you need to read. Call it to read.

Man and life in general, you're always being given things to read. Isn't it simple if you're in one place for everything, and I'm not talking about books now, but clippings, magazines, memos that are not yet read, like the second ship memo you've just been given. So have a file to read.

If you get a lot of correspondence, you may want to have that in a separate file. Correspondence to be read, but probably you'll be able to put it together in the beginning. And then have a file to answer.

Here are people who've written you, or sometimes it may be just a name and address. Now, when I get a small name and address, I staple it to a bigger piece of paper. Do everything you can to avoid little bits of paper, because they're so easily lost.

You can get scrap paper, and you can staple that address, or you can put a paper clip on it. I also find something very, very, very simple has helped me. I have a big envelope, usually in my briefcase, called miscellaneous.

Any little bits and pieces, cards, papers, put it all in that envelope. Never let it loose. Loosely, they just go.

And I find that as a great help. Just a simple envelope, miscellaneous, and then you can, when you get a chance, you can go through that, people's pictures, people's business cards, different things that you, you don't know what to do with them. Put them all in that envelope, and later on you can go through and decide.

So I prefer an envelope for that, rather than a file, because a file, of course, can slip out. Those little things that slip out the ends, and you lose them. Plus, you know, we're often traveling, and you may find that an envelope system, actually, for all of your things is better.

These big envelopes, often they're being thrown away on the ship, oftentimes. I run around and pull them out of the scrap can. And you can keep your things in there, especially if you're traveling.

So you've got a file for it to read, you've got a file for it to answer. You've got, preferably, a big envelope where you just put your miscellaneous things in. I would also suggest a file called pending projects.

These are things that you want to do. You're working on. You don't necessarily need to read them.

You don't necessarily need to answer anything. But it's something that you want to do. It may be, and what I put into that, is here's a letter that I've answered, and it involves a particular project.

What am I going to do with that letter? Throw it away. It may be my only reference to that particular project. So I put in pending project.

If it's purely a personal letter, I probably will not want to keep it. Again, it depends how many letters you write. Some of you may want to keep a list of the letters you write.

I don't do that because it's too many letters and just more duplication. I can't keep up as it is, much less making a list. But I keep a carbon copy of every letter I write, and then about four or five weeks later, I go through that.

And I keep letters that are relevant because it's dealing with something specific, and when that person writes me back, I need to be able to see what I wrote to them. And I throw their letters that are strictly personal. I have the person's address.

Basically, I know I wrote them a letter of encouragement, and I can throw it away. So I suggest you have a file called pending projects. I used to separate.

I have a file called to hear from. Again, I'm only giving this out as a suggestion. But there are quite a few people I was waiting to hear from, and the matters were somewhat urgent.

Actually, it was a little bit too similar to pending projects, so it may not work. Don't get too many files. Don't subdivide and subdivide and subdivide.

When it comes to trying to find something, you haven't got a clue what file you put it in. Most of you don't have that many things, that many letters. Some of you, of course, probably keep a lot of these memos and all this in a notebook, and that's all right.

You have to find the system that works for you. Moving on from there, because we're short on time, keeping track, keeping track of the things God has committed to you. Now, here again, if you don't have a good memo, memory, why don't you make a list? Why don't you make an inventory of the things God has committed to you? Maybe you're going to leave this ship a few months from now.

You can look over this inventory and see how much junk you have lost or left behind, and it can be very, very helpful. So I suggest, one way or the other, keeping track of what belongs to you. Why is there so much junk left behind in the boys' dormitory? People don't even know what they're, what they have.

They don't even know what they own. Now, this happens especially when you start getting on Charlie. You've got shirts with different people's names in them, and you've got, you don't even know what clothing you use.

I get very confused on this. What clothing? I fortunately have a wife who can look after me. That in itself is a great value of marriage, if you're a bit of a scatterbrain.

But I think we need to be faithful stewards of all the equipment God has given to us. And again, another little thing, but very important, put your name on the things that are committed to you. It's amazing how that can help.

Even when people find it, you lose it, someone finds it, your name is on it. They bring it back to you. But put your name.

You can use a little tag. Maybe it's a tape recorder you're just using for a month. Put a little tag on it.

Temporary stewardship for the next months of so-and-so. Because there's so many cassette recorders floating around the ship, somebody can easily pick yours up thinking it's theirs. So putting your name on things.

And you will discover in the area of laundry, if your clothes don't have a marking or an initial, you're going to have trouble sometimes getting them back. Maybe you're all on the line and a big storm comes and you're all taken and dumped into a bucket. So all these little things add up to either save time or lose time.

And with the time you save, you can be dealing with people and doing the things that are really on your heart. If you're an organizational scatterbrain, you will continue losing time and then you won't get to the people, you won't get to the priority that you want to get to. So keep that in mind.

You've dealt with various areas, at least some of you, on how to save time and how to use time. Let's just insert a word here that will help in this just organizing of your everyday life. And I think it's one of the most important things to constantly keep in mind is avoid being selfish.

Avoid being selfish. You know, when we get going and we have goals, we want to study, we want to do this, we want to evangelize, without knowing it we can become selfish. And not being thoughtful.

And this is especially important living in crowded conditions. Here you are living on a ship. Are you really being thoughtful about your roommate? You may want to type or you may want to listen to a tape.

He may want to sleep. He may be exhausted. I realize now these cabins are packed.

We've had a little discussion about this and it serves as a good example of what I'm talking about. To really be considerate of the needs of that roommate. Some like to get up very early on the ship.

But are they being considerate of people who just can't bear getting up at that hour, especially with their particular work schedule? And this is where, as we're organizing ourselves, as we're moving toward our target, we must always remember everything we do affects other people. We must be considerate. One of the sins on this ship is people being inconsiderate and none of us are free from it.

I know I'm not. It's so easy to think of myself first. Where am I going to sit? Where am I going to eat? Where am I going to study? Where am I going to sleep? What am I going to do today? When am I going to get free time? A whole world can begin to revolve around ourselves.

There's a tremendous book. I don't know how many copies are on the ship. I saw one yesterday, especially for the girls.

It's written by two girls called *Have We No Rights?* by two missionaries. And I tell you, if you want a spiritual tonic, you read that little book, *Have We No Rights?* Every deeper life speaker I've ever read, men of God, Andrew Murray, Tozer, the ladies who wrote this book, all of them insist that to know the victorious life, we have to get to that place where we yield our rights. We yield our rights.

And it's not an easy thing. It's not an easy thing. We don't want to become carnal in our desire to become good organizers, in our desire to become good students, in our desire to get ahead.

We have a lot of this in some countries I've been in, in the West, where in order to get ahead in your spiritual life, you walk on people in the process, in order for you to become a so-called spiritual leader. I mean, this is, of course, ridiculous. So in all this, we want to be unselfish.

This at times may mean even giving away something that you feel is very useful to you. But maybe it could be useful to that other brother, if he doesn't have one. So, I think this kind of revolution is necessary, because above all else, our burden is not to be great organizers or administrators, but to be Christ-like.

And I feel the West, the Western world tends to inflict upon the East its mechanical and technological way of doing things, and robs us oftentimes of the spiritual, and all that's connected with that. So we need to balance. We need to balance.

Let me move on to another area because of the time. Organizing our literature. Organizing our literature.

You know what we're doing with literature. It makes everything we do twice as complicated. I would think how simple it would be just to go out and take meetings.

Oftentimes. I mean, I just have to go there. Just sit, stand up, speak, and sit down.

Maybe talk to a few people after. But we believe in the printed page. We believe in literature.

We believe in Bibles. We all have our own Bibles. Why don't we have more desire that other people can have Bibles? It's an example of our selfishness.

The big itch people have to get their expensive Bibles. And yet, the lack of concern that a man will even get a five rupee Bible from the five Singapore dollar bond. So, this causes a lot of complication.

Just think of, in Singapore, how we had to get the literature out to the gate, and some people showed up at the wrong gate, and the people picking you up, they see these big boxes of literature, and they wonder, you got to get tables when you get to the church, and sometimes there's no room in the church, and sometimes it's Sunday in England, and some churches don't like to have any book sales on Sunday, and endless little complications. And so, this is an area where we have to learn. We have to learn.

Preparing our literature ahead. Finding out from the church, and letting them know ahead that we're bringing a book table. Now, I have the advantage.

My reputation has gone ahead of me in most places. People know that I will not be arriving without any book table. But, plus with my sort of authority, most people don't stop me from doing what I want to do, because they've been, in many cases, begging me to come to their church.

I have a choice of churches to go to. But, that was not always my situation, and it's probably not yours. So, you need to be a little more tactful, and in some places, of course, I am far more careful than others.

I don't like to presume. I've made enough mistakes. But, letting them know, and I still do this, don't get me wrong.

I generally ask the pastor, look, do you mind if we have a book table? If it's a ticklish situation on Sunday, I say, do you mind if we display even a few books? What I do in churches that don't like book sales, I say, we don't want to sell these. We're going to give them on a donation basis. Now, some countries, that doesn't work very well in, because the people don't have hardly any money, and if you offer everything, just come and take on a donation basis, you're likely to find yourself liquidated.

But, this is where you need wisdom, and you may just put a few books out. Our first burden is to get the literature out, not to get the money in, and I think we've got to get that into our heads. It's to get the word out.

We gave away thousands of books in Singapore and Malaysia. Why? To get money in? How much money came in from books we gave away? I think sometimes people are critical. They think through the whole situation.

For example, how many organizations in the world, you tell me, will be having meetings on a ship like we've been having for businessmen, and never taking an offering? I say this because some people think,

oh, well, the main thing then is that we get books our money, and that we get money in general. Some people are upset by the fact that we announce our sales figures. But we've done that because other people were upset that we didn't announce each day the sales figures.

You can't win. But our burden, and it's very important to understand this, is not money. We know we have things taken in these meetings, or in the church meetings.

Our burden is to get the word out. Of course, I don't think it's wrong to have some kind of measuring rod. Money is a good measuring rod to know how many books went out.

Maybe we should just count the books as we go out. We can have somebody at the table counting them as we go out or count the money. This is just as ridiculous.

So keep that in mind. We want to get the word out. Try to bring with you, whenever possible, things that you can give away.

We're getting more and more giveaway material. Power Through Prayer, 30,000 copies on the ship, to give away and use as premiums. New Testaments that we can often give away.

You have to check, of course, with the people in charge. But they may be open to your suggestion. A lot hinges on how much you're willing to carry down the gangway.

In general, we need to make sure we have the different kinds of literature. What are the different kinds of literature generally you have to think about when you're organizing? One, facts for the unconverted. Two, booklets for the unconverted.

Three, a low-selling item, like a gospel packet, generally again for the unconverted. Four, some kind of books for the unconverted. Even in meetings with Christians, we can be challenging them to take these materials and use them in reaching the unconverted.

Last minute in Singapore we had this idea selling 10 New Testaments or 12 New Testaments for \$10. And we sold quite a few. They will now go out to the unconverted.

We want to use the Christians to get literature to the non-Christians. They're the main channel. And when they start doing this, there's a possibility they'll continue doing it.

And so you have started a work going that is going to carry on. But that will never happen unless you organize, unless you get the right materials. Then you have the books for Christians and you have scriptures for Christians and non-Christians.

Now, there's two kinds of books to me on the book table in one sense. Firstly, the books I'm going to push. The books I'm going to push.

If I'm going to push a book to have anything less than 10 copies is a bit ridiculous. And so usually you get 5 to 10 titles that you have a good quantity. To me that's the priority.

That's the priority. 5 or 10 good titles, powerful titles, ministry titles you believe in that you can recommend. The second type of book is the display.

Just a variation of books for people that are looking for a particular book. Books that are valuable. They may not be as valuable as some of the others, but they're good books.

Bibles and books, etc. So I always think, and if you have two boxes, as we did last Sunday, one box, 10, 15, 20 of one title. If it's a big meeting, you need to think in terms of 25 and 50 of one book.

So many times we sell out completely of the books we recommend. Time and time again, people have taken books from me. We sold out of the book that had the most copies of.

People were asking, do you have any more? Do you have any more? So many times. And other books were sitting at a table, no one was even interested in looking at them. So this is where we need to organize.

And little organizational things that you do make the difference whether people ever get the word of God or not. When I first went to Mexico, we had this goal of distributing a million tracts. We were just a small team.

I think there were 15 of us. The idea of distributing a million tracts was completely impossible. Completely impossible.

40, 50 words a minute, and what a valuable weapon that has proven to be. Especially when, if any of you are in my state, I don't know how to write very well. I grab a pen like it was a knife, and within 10 minutes my hand is tense.

I don't know if any of you are tense writers. The art of writing, you're supposed to be very relaxed. Now, the people from Singapore probably are good because you're used to the chopsticks.

I tried to learn how to use the chopsticks. I was grabbing them. My hand was getting all sweaty and tense.

Finally I went back to the spoon. But that's the same problem I have in writing. So learning to type was a great breakthrough for me and helped me, especially when I went to college.

Some of you may want to take that on as a challenge. So there has to be communication, and there has to be at times copies made, and just this whole area of organization. We need to know the prices.

What problem? There often is at a book table, nobody knows the prices. We sell a Bible, I think this was probably 20 rupees, 400 rupee Bible, leather Bible, there it goes, 20 rupees. We need to know the prices.

And don't presume that Joe Blow in charge of organization is going to provide you with anything but a headache. Don't presume. In leadership, don't presume.

We trust people, yes, but we don't presume. The wise leader in any movement has a little bit of distrust underneath. But maybe this fellow got ill today, maybe this is the wrong phone number, maybe it's the wrong address, maybe it's not gate 2 after all, maybe... You know, how many mistakes are made, even in every port we go into, because of presumption.

Presumption. And I tell you, it's a miracle things go as good as they do, considering some of the mistakes that are made. So double check.

Look for this thing of literature on meetings. Don't have a poor attitude toward meetings. Every meeting is a potential encounter.

I don't even like the word meetings. We're going out to encounter people. If it's a small meeting, a big meeting, a house meeting, there's a chance to encounter people and people are our business.

People are our concern to see them blessed, to see them helped, to see them edified, to see them encouraged, to get good books into their hands. Don't despise the smallest meeting. I have taken more small meetings, I'm sure, than anybody in this room.

Very small meetings. Four people in a meeting. After being advertised.

So don't despise small meetings. And I remember coming to Singapore last year and they had organized a prayer meeting. Now, prayer meetings are not popular in Singapore, I can tell you.

If I'm wrong on that, you can let me know. But we called a prayer meeting, we sent the letters out. I think we had six people show up at that prayer meeting.

This was my triumphal entry into Singapore. George Burr arrives, come pray with George Burr. Six people.

The brother of the literature did not want to carry the boxes up two flights of steps. He sent no books to those six people after the prayer meeting. Normally we sell to 30 or 40 people.

I don't know how it happened. One lady especially really got excited. She had an awful lot of money with her.

And she went to town on a book table. Don't think because it's a small meeting she didn't bring any books. I started book selling house to house.

And sometimes in one house I'd sell a hundred dollars worth of books, Singapore dollars worth of books. One house. So don't be deceived on that.

But in this area of meetings it's always good to contact the contact man the day before. We were on the ship. We had a whole group that didn't even turn up.

All the tables set, speakers ready, didn't even turn up. Why our little department operating out of this room doesn't call these people maybe the day before and say look, you know, is everything set? Are you coming? Look at all the problems that could have been solved. Now maybe they did that.

So when we have a meeting even though the latter man or somebody else comes in and says this meeting here it is, if you possibly can phone the pastor the day before. We always do this in Europe. We're weak on this on the ship.

I guess because sometimes we don't have a phone. And say look, I'm coming to your church. And suddenly he says, Oh Allah, no, no Allah.

We're not expecting you. No, that's next week. So make contact.

Plan ahead. Think ahead. Presume on nothing.

If you presume on anything, presume that something is going to go wrong every time. Something is going to go wrong every time. You're supposed to have special music.

Nobody told you. I had a meeting in Singapore this last time. I was supposed to have special music.

I was supposed to have this. I didn't know anything about it. Except I had been told a week before that I had that meeting.

So don't presume. Don't presume. In your whole area of organizing literature and organizing meetings.

And also, don't presume that this brother is going to get up to give his testimony. He's going to keep to the time. Presume that he will not keep to his time.

He is going to ruin the meeting. If you as a leader don't get into his thick head that we only have five minutes. That the pastor here is a bit sticky.

He already is skeptical about LRM. He already is skeptical about Logos. He's told us the total meeting is 22 and a half minutes.

And if you don't get a piece of string on this guy's toe and pull it at the end of the five minutes, he is going to ruin the meeting. So if you presume anything, presume that. So you say, well, what do we do? You get this brother ahead.

And you say, look brother, you have a watch. And would you mind, because of the time, if I stood in front of you, sat in front of you, and let you know in the time. Would that be an offense to you, brother? And, of course, you probably will.

But you've got to do something to get that guy to shut up at the right time. And you yourself have to be careful. One thing with LRM, and it's our own group.

Now LRM, they're my own people. I have a lot more freedom. But when I go into a church, an Anglican church, and I've got 20 minutes, as I was this Sunday morning, I basically stood to 20 minutes.

I believe that's ethical. And that's something you're going to have to wrestle with. Don't presume this brother even knows how to give his testimony.

Why not ask him to write it out? Why not have a little training? Why not ask him to give it to the LRM team? If he can't give it to the LRM team, will he be able to give it to the 400 people in the church and write it down? So as a leader, you're responsible for organizing that. There's a lot more involved in organizing a meeting than we think. The time element, the books.

And as you go toward that meeting, or if possible, the day before, find out what kind of church it is. If it's a charismatic church, you don't want to go bombing in there with a brethren line. If it's a brethren assembly, you don't want to go bombing in with a charismatic line and your symbols.

And we need to be realized, knowing where we're going. And Paul said, I became all things to all men to win self. And here we need a lot of wisdom.

And if we find out over time that basically it's a church that is basically skeptical about OM, our approach would be different than a church that is enthusiastic about OM. It can make all the difference in the world.

And I can tell you in a fair number of places, after one OM team has gone in, they never wanted to speak.

It was him. Because the meeting was so poor, because the content was weak, and people were offended. Here's some little brother who's just been converted one and a half years.

He's had two lessons on discipleship, and he tries to pretend that he's William MacDonald, or he tries to pretend he's Jordan Palm, or he tries to pretend that he's Hudson Taylor, or somebody else, and it doesn't work. Well, you'll have more instruction on that, perhaps in some other course. But it is linked with organization.

It's linked with letting your team know. For example, girls all go into brethren assemblies with their heads uncovered. It really upsets people.

People cannot hear the message. The people in the assembly cannot hear the message because all they're seeing are all these girls with their heads uncovered. When I take girls to a brethren assembly, I ask them to cover their heads.

That's a big thing to them. It's just like walking into a boxing assembly with a pair of hiking boots. When you go into a boxing assembly, you take your shoes off.

You go into a brethren assembly, you cover your head. When you go into some other assemblies, whatever you do, don't let your feet touch your Bible. I was in a church, and we Westmen were very, very crude in the handling of the Bible.

In the East, people are not that way. Not generally. If a Muslim saw you touching what you feel is a holy book with your foot, it would shatter it.

Completely shatter it. And if you touch the Quran with your foot, he's liable to punch you in the nose because they believe that's a holy book. Little things count.

You are responsible to let your team know. You are responsible to organize properly. And it can save the day many, many times.

Another area of organization... What time is it? Another area of organization is... It just popped out of my mind. I forgot what I was going to say. I think I have such a great memory to remember the points.

What was I going to say? Who remembers what I was going to say? Oh, communication. Communication. Put that down as your next main point.

The whole problem of communication. This is becoming again more and more difficult. And I cannot tell you how many times we suffer for lack of communication.

We've already touched on this. What are some forms of communication? Number one, letters. Have anybody shown you hospitality in Singapore? Have you written a letter yet? Even before I sailed out of Singapore, I was writing letters to people who showed hospitality, who were kind to me, who did this or did that.

I call it thank you communication. Appreciation communication. We are very weak on this.

We offend many, many people. And they get the feeling that Lagos uses people. We use them and discard them.

We come to the airport, all of a sudden the traffic manager is the most important man in the whole wide world. And we're playing up to him. Why? We want to get a berth.

We sail away and he never hears from us. We used him. We used him.

OM, Lagos by nature, uses people. Don't you do it. Thank them.

I'm still writing to the people who sold us this ship. That was five years ago. I write them, I thank them.

I tell them how the ship is going. I had no reason to do this whatsoever. The Danish trading company is unlikely to ever have any business with them again.

But they're people. And God put a burden on my heart to deal with them as people. I've never done that before.

Deal with them as people. And I feel it's very, very important one of them is an atheist. I'm still writing letters to the people who helped us repair this ship in Rotterdam.

I'm sure they were convinced we used them. They'd discount. We were giving them cups of tea.

When they walked on the ship, we bowed down. And when we sailed away, yeah. And for the next year, they realized again they'd been used.

People in the commercial world are used to this. Sometimes it doesn't bother them. They don't think much about it.

But when they do get a letter and a photograph of the ship or a ship calendar and a word of appreciation, it shatters them. And maybe they begin to realize well, these people actually do practice what they preach. People actually get converted through this kind of communication.

And I can't tell you how strongly I believe in letter writing. Your letter may be very short. And I would challenge you, whether you're in the encounter program or the IT program, to set a goal right now the number of letters you write every week.

If you're already writing 10, increase it to 20. If you're writing 20, make it 40. It doesn't take long to write a letter.

When God puts a burden on your heart to write a letter to someone, write their name down. You can have a page in your notebook, people I'm going to write. Or you can have a file, letters to answer.

And you can put in there on any other piece of paper that says I'm going to write this letter. And I think it's very, very important. Thank you letters especially.

Letters of appreciation. Why do people write some of these letters? Some of them seem to be very appreciative. He usually brought in a little other ministry after that.

Communication. Two, phone calls. When you get back to Singapore, many people in Singapore have telephones.

Keep people's phone numbers. You get back, call people up. Give a word of greeting.

Express your interest. Ask them how they're doing. Because in an organization, in evangelism, oftentimes phone calls save us a lot of money.

Sometimes we call London on the ship. In the long run it saves money. We call the line up there.

We find out what's happening. Organization involves communication. Communication involves letters.

Involves phone calls. Involves telegrams. You're going to arrive three days from now.

You're expecting hospitality. Don't just land on their doorstep. Many OM teams have been criticized for that.

Now you can do that more in some countries than other countries. But how about a telegram saying, look, expecting you to arrive with a team of five. Do you know any place we can stay? Rather than presuming we will stay with you.

Telegrams. Method of communication. Sending someone on ahead.

That's another method of communication. We've already talked in this leader session about advanced planning. We've brought out how many of the mistakes we made in OM are lack of planning ahead.

Lack of sending someone in advance. And at the end of this meeting we're going to pass out these notes that touch some degree on this advanced planning. That is a method of communication.

It's using someone between you and the people you're going to. That way your parents will appreciate communication. Try to like your parents every week.

And that's one of the things you should be doing within the next two days if you haven't already done so. And that will mean so much to them. Some of your parents are worried.

Now once you're the leader, you have the responsibility of reminding your team members about these things. We have our announcements. Do you think we could run this ship without announcements? We could not.

One of the biggest problems we had in the early days of this ship was announcements. I came on the ship late. The ship had already come from Denmark.

So I didn't want to bother giving the announcements. I let another brother who was inexperienced give the announcements. He almost blew the ship up.

He would make announcements without the right authority. People stood up right in the middle of the announcements and protested. We can't do that.

That's not the way a ship is run. You can't tell us to do that. That has to come to the head of our department.

You wouldn't believe the displays of carnality here in this dining room. And then we realized announcements are top priority. And the only people who are going to make announcements are people who have wisdom, who know what they're doing, who will know the rules of checking with the right people

and coordinating it.

And very few mistakes were made in the area of announcements.

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