

Called, not recruited



One of the most challenging aspects about the **rēp** program is getting citizens of the Kingdom of God to pick up their passports and go. I believe that the enemy knows that once you are mobile you're a double danger to the kingdom of darkness. So satan will do all he can to keep you local. One of our jobs is to mobilize people, not just in the sense of getting them to do a token "missions trip" but to get them into a lifestyle of going, nurtured by a culture of mobility. Serving your neighbor is just as valuable as serving someone across the globe provided you are not making it an either-or scenario. God is the God of AND, not or. "AND you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, AND in Judea, AND Samaria, AND to the ends of the earth."ⁱ We prefer "or" to "and" because it leaves us with choices. We do have free will, but movement is implicit in the notion of following Jesus. There is a huge difference between an observer and a follower. You are reading this booklet because you have perhaps been exposed to the **rēp** program and have some level of interest in following, not just observing from a distance. We are passionate about helping those whom God has called to be part of **rēp** to make an informed decision, understanding the dynamics of what it may mean to follow Jesus in this way.

By way of a caveat, not everyone who comes through the **rēp** program becomes a long term part of our household. We believe in the principle of "flow through" and understand that we are sometimes just one leg of the relay race of someone's journey. At the core, we are a community of friends who are in relationship choosing to do God's business together. Of course there are things that we call "tracks" and "products" and "assets" or "tools"—but at the core, we are people in relationship pursuing a common purpose: Repurposing Business—Transforming Society.^{®ii}

"God is constantly calling. Responding to the call takes a step of faith, and this has to be translated into action."
Gareth Seeto (ex Oracle)

Mobilizing people can sometimes be a challenge. One day I asked myself, "How did Jesus recruit?" I found myself looking at two answers. The first was that he did not do a sales job and try to convince people in the conventional sense. He had no telemarketing campaign. In fact, I am not convinced that he actually recruited people. When I look at his modus operandi what I see is him *calling people out*. He had a keen sense for who the Father was calling, and he challenged them to follow him.

This understanding changed things for me. I know for a fact that there are hundreds of thousands—make that millions—of working people who love Jesus and want their lives to matter for eternity. The challenge is this: they have little clue about how to connect the dots between their work and their ministry. My job, and the work of those in the **rēp** family, is to call out those who are stuck in cubes, offices, jobs, careers and point them to someone worth following. Beyond that, our teams at The Institute are here not just to say, "There is a good road you should travel, and here is a roadmap. Have a nice trip." Our job is to say, "I have been on a journey, it had easy parts and hard parts, and I have come back changed. Let me equip you for the same journey and take you with me." Before we get to the

specifics of what we will do with people in equipping them to go we have to address a few basic, yet little understood matters.

Business is a Calling

Since the early 1980's Lyn and I have been helping businesspeople discover and walk out their callings. Some have become pastors, church planters and traditional missionaries. Most have stayed in business. There are all sorts of reasons why the link does not get made between faith and work, and happily, this is changing. People now know that faith and work, God and business, go together. In fact, in my book titled Convergence I cover how to integrate your Career, Community, Creativity and Calling. In helping people open their minds to the possibility of integrating business and missions we often need to remind them of some key truths which are unpacked more in our training:

- Business and ministry are the same thing – both stem from the same Hebrew word
- Work and worship are also the same
- Every facet of life is God's—he made it all, and he redeemed it all
- God is in business
- Business is a calling
- God wants business reconciled to his original design and to be used for his deliberate purposes which go way beyond traditional evangelism and/or funding traditional missions
- We are all ministers, and Jesus abolished any “clergy-laity” split
- The majority of people are called to work, be it in business, government, education, etc.

*God told me, “Do this now. You don’t need to know where it is going, or what is next.” Later I could see that **rēp** established core things, such as obeying God no matter what, and stopping the slippery slope of pouring more into work life to do well... this slope is infinite.
Bart Munro, Spring 2003*

These may seem like big themes, but they are the basics.

Getting God in your business is not the issue

The whole swell of marketplace ministry or ‘business as missions’ (or ‘business ministry’ or whatever you wish to call it) is here to stay. There are books, blogs, groups to join and conferences that will consume all of your spare time. But if you are just trying to get God into your business you are missing the bigger opportunity. If you are just trying to reconcile God and your career you are likely going to aim low and shoot short of the target.

Dennis Peacocke, author of many books including Doing Business God's Way, asks businesspeople, “How many of you would like God in your business?” They all raise their hands. Then he goes on to say, “This is the wrong question. The real question is, ‘How many of you want to be in God's business?’” Getting into God's business is an altogether different proposition. It is not as easy, it takes work, it takes an unwavering dependence on God, and it requires a dogged determination to not put Christian business gimmicks in place of the deeper foundational principles of business.

The rēp Venture model

There are many ways to expand the kingdom through business. Our approach is but one of them. It is what it is, and I suspect that God gave it to us because of my particular wiring and our combined gifts. I admire those who start product or service businesses, make strategic investments, and facilitate kingdom-focused trade. Our approach complements other approaches and involves taking everyday people, imparting biblical truth as it pertains to work and business, mobilizing them to go to other nations, giving them opportunities for short term service, and for some, offering a way to make a living doing this type of service. (The latter is still under development and has a long way to go from an implementation perspective. See the Box #2 discussion that pops up later.)

Every now and then we get people coming along who say, “I love your model, but...” They want to change it even before they have experienced it. To them it looks too rigid, too set, too rusty. We encourage them to experience it before they try to change it.

By way of background, sometimes we have no idea why God instructs us to do things in a certain way. In concept we agree with the notion that his ways are far above our ways, but in practice, we don’t always like his ways. Let’s be real. If we were God would we tell people to:

- Stretch out a stick in front of an ocean while thousands of soldiers were storming towards your exposed back?
- Throw another stick on water to see if an ax head would float?
- Strike a rock with a stick to get water?
- Throw a piece of wood in bitter water to make it sweet?

“We value events and programs. Lifestyles of relationship are different...rēp is a community of people bound together in relationship.”

Kevin Patterson, Fall 2009

These are just the stick stories. What about spitting in mud, lying on a dead body, getting naked in the marketplace...does God not want us to have dignity?

So we might suggest that he make a few changes. Let’s face it: if we were God we would:

- Get a GPS and navigate around the Red Sea
- Scuba dive for the ax head
- Take our own water
- Create a water purification system... or at least take those water purification tablets with us.

Then there is God’s sales plan, which is not the most appealing to the Western mind. His catch phrases that he uses to woo people include:

- Take up your cross
- Hold family and friends in relative disregard
- Lose your life
- Give up your rights and become a slave of Jesus Christ

*WHAT WERE YOUR HOPES
COMING INTO **rēp**?*

“God will use me more than he is using me now.”

“My evangelism at work has fallen flat—there must be something else I can do.”

“I want to reconnect with my purpose—I lost my idealism after college, I have accumulated life commitments, and these have dulled my sense of purpose.”

“I want a clearer vision of Christianity in the workplace, something more than ‘bring them to a Bible Study’.”

“Breaking the mold of being fully committed, but meaningless.”

“It just made a lot of sense as to how to serve in the marketplace.”

“People are yearning for adventure...”

“This is something I can relate to; I was a horrible carpenter...kept bending the nails.”

*“Like others, I wanted a ‘direct road to significance’ and wondered whether **rēp** could help.”*

“Often we get offered low cost, get what you can now, ‘do not deny yourself’ options. But I want more purpose, more adventure, more challenge.”

“Being involved in God's plan in business is something that I could use immediately to bear more fruit my current career.”

I believe this is going to be a catalyst for much spiritual growth in my life.

“I want to experience God's love and how to reconcile faith in the workplace.”

- Obey
- Go wherever I tell you to go, give whenever I tell you to give, say whatever I tell you to say.

I am sure we could make some improvements, talk about benefits, sell the upside, sweeten the pill, soften the pitch for those considering **rēp** Ventures. Maybe we could have slogans like:

- Meet new friends
- Go to exciting places
- Improve your business skills
- Get a life not a living
- Choose the rugged path
- Get new friends and family
- Ditch your boring career...

Since we started **rēp** we have had any number of people come up with ways to make what we do seem more appealing to the not-so-convinced. I had dinner with friends in Jakarta recently and was reminded afresh of a prophetic picture that Seemun Adijanto gave to me some years ago. It came at a time when one of our US leaders wanted to change the basic **rēp** model. The rationale presented was, “In our area people are different...things are different...we are unique. We have a better way of doing things.” The picture Seemun shared was of a large box, almost like a container. It was rusty, unappealing, dusty and tattered. A person stood on the edge of the box looking in, wondering whether to take a leap into the unappealing place; but as soon as they committed and were in the box a door opened into a second box. It was green, lush and verdant. When they walked into that second box a door opened into a third box. This time the box had a golden hue and light shone from it. When the person went into the third box doors began to open on every side of the third box, and the boxes themselves began to multiply. She also saw that the boxes were sitting on top of the globe, beginning to cover the earth.

The instant Seemun shared this with me I understood the first two boxes. The first box represents the model that God has given us: 10x10x10

- 10 consultants doing training for 10 weeks
 - Not six weeks, not six days, not 5-Ps
- 10 clients being transformed in 10 days

- The core models, namely, The 10-P Model[®] and The 10-F Model[®]
- 10 Ventures to a city
- That city reaching 10 other cities.

I am not saying that we have not evolved over time, or that our understanding isn't enriched as we go. Clearly we have learned a lot since we started **rēp** and we have made improvements every year. We have also learned that we need to stick to the basics, even if they are challenging. When Seemun shared the picture she did not know that I was wrestling with how to tackle the gifted leader who had a different plan for how things should be done. I understood immediately that we were not to change the basic model. God had given it to us for a purpose, and we were not to dilute it, make it overly easy, or appeal to the lesser instincts of future **rēp** people. So what is the model?

Unpacking the **rēp** Model

Transformation happens in an environment of formation. It takes time for truth to form in our spirits. It takes a process for our mind to be renewed. It takes a community to highlight what we don't know, and to learn from what we do know. "Till Christ be formed in you..." We know Jesus lives in us by his Spirit. We also know that there is generally a time-elapsing process whereby the infinite God seeps into our finite being until we begin to look more like him.ⁱⁱⁱ Discipleship includes discipline and the author of Hebrews says, "no discipline seems pleasant at the time" but it does produce a return. We are totally convinced that when you have completed the 10 weeks of **rēp** training you will be ready to be launched into a new phase of ministry. You will have as many tools as you need to get started, and you will be supported by experienced leaders who will help you do the job. More important, God will come through for you in ways you cannot predict at the outset. This is one of his ways: he puts us in water that is deeper than our comfort zone, and he is with us in the water. But we need to "study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen who need not be ashamed."^{iv}

There is a second reason why we need lots of training. When it comes to business many people who have experienced a genuine spiritual renewal at a personal level do not realize that they have been living in a totally different world when it comes to business. The environments in which they have studied, worked and done business have been foreign to the kingdom. Consequently the majority of Christians in business cannot articulate a Biblical worldview for business. Begin to speak about how Scripture informs the product development process and they look at you like you are speaking about a galaxy within a black hole 2 billion miles away.

You think that's an obstacle!?

We have seen **rēp** people overcome:

- Illness—hernia, back pain, more
- Flight difficulties—no flights, engines on fire, rerouting
- Family—parental pressure, funerals, misunderstanding
- Job loss—threats to fire, fired, no job, lay offs, "reorganization"
- New jobs—and asking for time off before starting
- Allergies—and God healing them
- Pregnancy—before, during Ventures
- Ministry – if I go who will be here to do what I usually do?
- New businesses—left in God's hands, critical deals in limbo
- Finances—too many to count

There are distinct stages that people go through as they get immersed in the Venture cycle.

<p>1. My friends get changed, and I get curious. I want my career or business to count for God, and rēp is offering me a chance to use my business skills for God. But I am not sure that this rēp way is worth the investment.</p>	<p>2. I make the decision to train but am uncertain... about finances, leave, travel...and whether the advertising is really true. Is God really in business?</p>	<p>3. I go through the training, experiencing truth at multiple levels, often intellectually first, but the community experience makes it all the more real.</p>	<p>4. I go on a Venture (not telling the leaders that I started training without a heart conviction to travel).</p>	<p>5. I come back with dissatisfaction for life as usual. I have become more a “kingdom citizen” than a local Christian.</p>
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Lyn and I shared at a church one evening about the opportunity to go to Africa on a trip; afterwards we sat in the pew next to Larry, and when I leaned over and asked, “Want to go to Africa?” he said, “Sure.” The next week he started training and since then he has traveled with us more than once. Recently another young man said to me, “Most of the radical kingdom people I know have been through **rēp**.” He came because he loves God and the people he encountered who were serious about God had also been through the **rēp** program. Others have come to us because God has prepared them without our help at all.

One of our funniest experiences was when we attended a wedding and the videographer happened to be on a bus with us that was driving us to our cars. I got chatting to a woman next to me and she asked where I was from. “South Africa,” I replied. “Oh, he is going to South Africa” she said, pointing to the video guy at the back of the hotel bus. I turned to him, curious, and asked, “Where are you going?” He excitedly told me that he was going to Cape Town. “Great... when are you going?” “I am going in September,” he said, his eyes sparkling. So I said, “I am also going in September. Who are you going with?” He told me, “I am going with **rēp**!”

“Oh, that’s great. I am also going with **rēp**!” It turns out that Jeremy Milford had been to a missions conference the night before, sat next to Marcie Simms, one of our alumni, and she shared her story. So he decided he was going. He didn’t know there was an application process, or any details really: he just decided to go. He went on a Venture, and later put the training videos together.

Networking—friends bringing friends—is the way to go. In fact, Jesus, as you will see in [LEMON Leadership](#), recruited his first batch of disciples through a relational network that started with his cousin John. His next batch of followers all were friends and family.

Dodging the “follow me” bullet

People could look the Son of Man in the eye and say, “No. Sorry. Not today. I am busy. Got a few things to do. Just got a wife. Have a family crisis. Sounds too costly.” In one of my devotionals, *Who said go?*, I

cover five reasons that people gave to Jesus for not following him. The Gospel of Luke has these statements:

But the man replied, "First let me bury my father."
"I will follow you, Lord, but first let me go and say
goodbye to my family."
"I have just bought a field and must go see it."
"I have just bought five yoke of oxen"
"I just got married, so I can't..."
Luke 9:57-62, and 14:15-20

I quote from that devotional.

What would you do if Jesus walked up to you, in the flesh, and said, "Follow me."? If you and I were like the general religious population in Israel at the time of Christ, we might have followed, or we might have been tempted to use these familiar excuses. Jesus still calls us to follow him. While we have these excuses, and a few more, we must get back to the question, "Who told us to go?" Let's unpack these statements, starting with one I have not listed here, but which I have noticed creeping around recently.

1. I don't have the money to go

I have recently seen people use finances as a fleece to determine whether to go on a mission venture. I am wracking my brain to find a time in Scripture where Jesus, or Paul or God said, 'Go, if the money comes through.' What I see instead is Scripture saying, in effect, 'Obey, and trust me for the provision.' In Luke 22:53 we read, "Then Jesus asked them, 'When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?'" "Nothing," they answered.

Gideon's fleece approach is a pre-Holy Spirit, "did God really say" approach that should not, in my view, be used as a litmus test for whether God is calling us to go on a faith venture. If God tells you us to go, then we have to stand in faith, trust and obedience and ask him to provide what is needed for the journey. We have to model the miraculous if we are to impart it.

2. Burying the dead

Larry Allhands was a quick sign-up for his first Venture. We sat next to him at church one evening and said, "Want to go to Africa?" He immediately replied, "Sure." He started training the next week. God had already been speaking with him about taking a missions trip, so his heart was prepared. He felt God tell him to put a fund raising letter in the mail slot of each person at the Police Department where he worked. This took courage. He did it, and after initially avoiding him, soon policemen began meeting with him at a Bible Study.

Six months later when he felt God nudging him to go again he had a good excuse. "Brett, I don't think I can go as I have to spend the money to put a new roof on a rental house I own in Florida." I responded, "You are a creative man—have you asked God for a fund raising strategy?" A week later he returned with the now famous www.givelarryadollar.com, and he soon had the funds to go. He also put that new roof on his rental property.

While in South Africa he received a call that a hurricane past by his house in Florida. Both neighboring houses were destroyed—his was essentially fine. God is faithful.

Staying for a family (make that your father's) funeral sounds like a plausible excuse. But Jesus told the man, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God." The man had a genuine case, a family responsibility that was the accepted thing to do, but Jesus had a higher claim: the Father's business.

3. Delay of game

"No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God." We aren't doing God any favors when we sign up to do his will. He has the right to call us, and to sift us. Those who are willing to delay obedience might well be pulled off course, and never obey again. So Jesus cautions him to not "look back" even for a short while. I remember when I had the opportunity to do a second **rēp** trip into Ukraine back in 1993, but I was in the midst of a job change, so did not go. The opportunity has not returned. Perhaps **rēp** would have been a lot further along if I had not delayed the game. Are you delaying going to that which God has called you?

4. Business opportunities

The caution here is to not let a business opportunity get in the way of following Jesus. I know the command to "do business until I come." But this was a new business venture, an add-on to income producing capacity, a choice to get deeper into the business rather than follow Jesus. The man in Luke 14 just had to give that 5-pack ox yoke a spin. "Jesus, I can't follow you because I just got a new toy!" "Jesus, I can't follow you because I have just got a new tractor, a new factory, a new product, a new whatever." Some man gave up the unique opportunity to walk with the Creator of the universe on a journey that would change him forever, so that he could tromp around in the dust behind 10 smelly oxen that would make some short term money, but potentially cost him his eternal purpose. The man made a margin choice: he gained financial margin, perhaps, but lost the time to follow Jesus. Sad.

5. I just got married

You might be saying, "I just got married, God ordained marriage. He said it was not good to be alone, that a man shouldn't leave his wife to go to war in the first year..." Yes he does encourage marriage, but his Book also says (in Joel 2:16) "Let the bridegroom leave his room and the bride her chamber." We are talking about interrupting a honeymoon if God says, "Now is the time." He gets to decide.

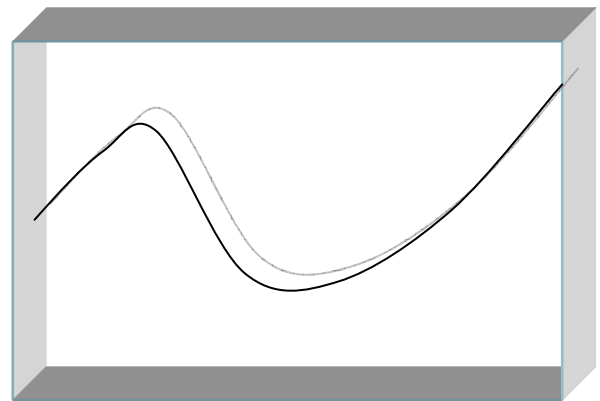
So the big question is, "Did God really say..." or, "Who said 'Go'?" If it was just your idea to follow Jesus into some faith venture, then sort that out. But if he told you to go and you have leaned into any of these five excuses, then beware, because you don't know when the window of opportunity will open again. We know God is gracious, but we must recognize that for some of these people, Jesus never passed by physically again, and they never heard him say again in person, "Follow me." How much better to have it written of us, "They left everything to follow him!"

Here is a word of caution: if God gives you a window of opportunity and you say “no thanks” he is under no obligation to present you with that same opportunity again. This should sober us. On the other hand, when he wafts a small opportunity in front of us—almost like the scent of a passing perfume—and we follow it, then he rewards us with a bigger opportunity. I remember being in Brussels once. Walking around the city I could smell the chocolate. So I followed the smell for quite a while until I finally found the chocolate factory. When Simon, James and Andrew got a smell that this was no ordinary carpenter, they left their nets and followed Him. God woos, but he does not force. “But how do I know he wants me to go to Indonesia (or wherever)?” You don’t. But you do know that he wants you to go to the nations, so start with one that is in front of you, even if it is not your first choice. Then God will open other windows of opportunity. And remember that two or three weeks is not exactly a lifetime commitment. “Go into all the world” means go. I tell people that God’s default switch is set to “Go.”

Abandoning Box #1

The vast majority of **rēp** trainees go all the way through the training. Every now and then people drop out, and they tend to do so just before the point of breakthrough. They get behind on homework and reading—which is common—and they decide to postpone, or give up completely. We caution Consultants in Training (CITs) that they will go through a dip around week three or four of the training, and to press through. A small number of those who go all the way through training decide to abandon their efforts before going on a Venture. They reason that they have learned a lot already, and for a variety of reasons decide to stay home and not travel. They never get to experience the earlier mentioned verdancy of the second box.

Once I was facilitating a series of discussions on Convergence. Most of the attendees were alumni, but there were a few guests who joined us. The non-**rēp** folks were welcomed and were just as vocal in their participation. I was struck, however, by the relative depth at which the consultants who had returned from Ventures were processing the truth compared to those who had not been on Ventures. Jesus likened the kingdom of God to something that was costly, a pearl of great price. We have set the bar high on purpose. We are not doing Christian tourism but inviting people to be radical followers of Jesus while remaining fully engaged in business. We are not asking people to add a few Bible verses to their knowledge base. We are not asking people to learn a few God-in-business techniques. We are challenging people to do what they are born to do: work with God as a friend of God getting his business done.



Jesus understands the challenge to get out of the game. He was deliberately tempted in this regard at the beginning and the end of his work on earth. I believe that one of the most significant temptations we are facing today is to drop out of the race, to get out of the game, to drop back from the front lines. Of course we are too spiritual to tell our friends, “I have had enough; this is too hard.” And we are smart enough to not say, “I am giving up on God” because we know the truth. So instead we see the narrow road and we see the broad road. The broad road is not the one with neon signs from bars, night clubs

and corrupt business schemes. The broad path today is the one with lots of soft Christian edutainment options. It is the paved street of podcasts and Bible Studies and cozy discussion groups about things that will not require too much of me, but will make me look respectably busy. That way, when kingdom folks say “Come with us” we can say, “I am already committed to these important things already.”

If you have already started to train with **rēp** you may be tempted to say, “I really want to do this well, and I am struggling, so when I get more time I will try again.” Occasionally this is true: most often the next time never comes.

Avoiding Box #2—The Venture

Greg Bennett is one of our committed alumni who has trained, traveled, and is now applying the principles in the business he manages. Actually, it is more accurate to say that Greg trained three times. Every time he had a good reason to not travel, and most of the issues pertained to challenges at his workplace. Someone got cancer, a few people died, a salesperson quit...the list went on and on. One day God said to him, “Greg, if you don’t go now you will have to wait another five years.” He went, and wants to go again.

This is not a new phenomenon. We trained 10 people in our very first team. One we knew in advance could not travel right away and so Steve Yencho went on the second cycle. That left us with nine and we needed all of them because I had told the South Africans that we were bringing 10 consultants to repurpose 10 companies. A third were committed, so one day I said to Rebecca Muir, “Book their tickets.” So she booked all of their tickets and at the next training day we told them that their tickets were booked, and they all went.

Still today I overhear Consultants in Training saying, “I haven’t decided whether I am going to travel yet” even though we specifically tell them that we do not train people who are not committed to travel. Why is it that we are not really willing to train people who will not travel?

- First, there is a huge investment in training someone. Sometimes there are two trainer hours for every trainee hour. The return on investment is greatly reduced when people do not go on a Venture. It is not good stewardship for us to invest about five months of recruiting, preparation and training for someone to have a half-baked experience.
- Second, you the trainee only receive a fraction of the benefits when you do not apply what you have learned. We have a study→do→teach model which follows a great Old Testament teacher,

Greg Bennett is a well trained consultant, mainly because he trained three times before travelling. Was he in need of more training? Not at all. He always had a good excuse to stay at home as he manages a business that requires constant attention, and often before a Venture came around something would happen that “forced” him to stay.

Then one day God said to him, “Greg, if you don’t go now it will be another five years before you can go.” So he committed to go no matter what happened at work. Things did go wrong before he left, of course, but Greg went anyway. “I used to hear other people’s stories about God doing miracles in business, but now I have my own.”

God took care of Greg’s business while Greg took care of God’s business. When he came back he had excellent opportunities to share his experience with suppliers, customers, and employees, and this opened up opportunities to minister to them.

Ezra. “For Ezra had prepared his heart to study the law of the Lord, to do it, and to teach it in all Israel.” Ezra 7:10 You will grow the most when you study, internalize and then teach.

- A third reason is this: Revelation without implementation leads to religion. There are already far too many religious Christians around who know more than they do, me included. Information without application promotes head knowledge, and then there is a growing gap between what one knows in theory and sees in practice. We can tell you, “God does miracles in business.” Then you go back to your job, never see a miracle, and there is a cognitive dissonance between the theory you espouse and your life practice. Greg Bennett says, “I used to hear people come back from Ventures and share their stories. Now I have my own.”

One of the things that keeps CITs from traveling is a fear that they are not ready to do all that God wants them to do. There is a paradox here: on the one hand you will never be quite ready, and on the other hand you can “do all things through Christ who strengthens you.” I remember well how relaxed Corey Cleek was on the first Venture and he said, “My client is hearing all of this for the first time. I am hearing it for the second time. I just have to be five minutes ahead of my client.” If you have gone through the training (even if you skimmed a few of the key elements) you will be ready.

Some time ago I read an article on best practices in preparing long term missionaries. Those who were successful in keeping missionaries in the field did twice as much training as others. How long did they train their people for in the best practices group? Three months. How long is our training? Three months.

I like what Bill Johnson says in his book, Face to Face with God, when speaking to the parable of the talents.

“Faithful servants don’t get hung up about *how* they are going to fulfill the Master’s command before they have even tried or even after they’ve tried a few times and been unsuccessful. They trust the Master. If he said it, then apparently he thinks they are up to the task—if they use the talents he’s given them.”

Don’t knock it before you try it. Get in the game, jump in the box, go on a Venture. You may be asking, “But what will I get out of it personally?”

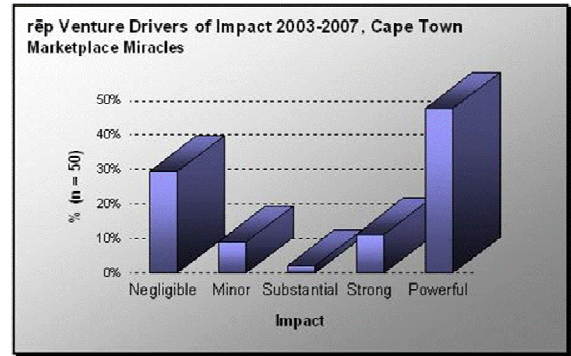
Benefits of the Venture

Box # 2 is the green box. It is the hothouse where a lot of growth happens quickly. Consultants and clients are challenged by each other’s faith and love. Truth is affirmed by miracles. Businesses and marriages and careers are intersected by a God who is in business. A lot of growth happens quickly. There is a payoff for all of the investment in training. The second box is where God often gives a reward for all of the training, funding, vacation time and inconvenience of trekking half the way around the world.

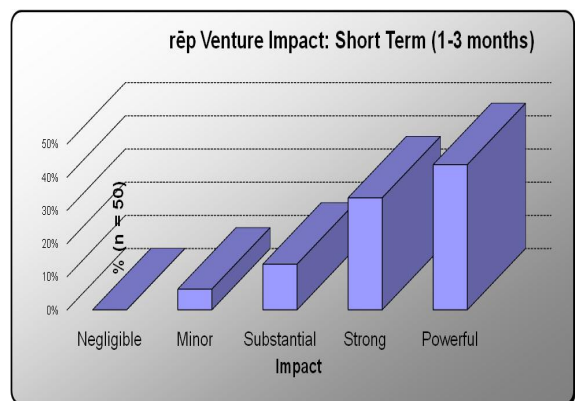
Consultants generally go to give, but the Kingdom of God involves giving and receiving and so they often come home changed people.

We regularly hear consultants say, “This has been the most authentic experience of Christian community that I have ever had.” One of the distinct benefits of going through the **rēp** training and on a Venture comes in the form of relationships built with your fellow trainees, alumni, co-consultants and clients. Many **rēp** folks are blessed by input into their lives from leaders from other countries who take a special interest in them when they travel.

The same is true for clients. Taking two weeks off work is generally not an appealing prospect for a business owner. His or her mind floods with thoughts of “Who is going to take care of things while I am gone?” We have many stories about how God took care of businesses while leaders were away at **rēp** – God did what the leaders had been trying to do for years, in some cases, and without their help.



A case in point is Power Developments, a division of the Power Group in South Africa. The Chairman of the Power Group, Graham Power, had sent three of his directors to the **rēp** Venture. On the first day they were seldom all in the room at the same time as they were popping in and out to make and take phone calls. On the second day of the Venture, as is our custom, we pray for Marketplace Miracles. The consultants, John Noble and Nicole Dickens, prayed with Henrie Jonck, Mark Julie, Gerhard Nel and Marlene Cronje concerning two major items. The first was a tax bill of R8 million (over \$1million US) that resulted from an error by their auditors, and the second was the need to sell lots in a 400-lot property where only four lots had been sold in three years. Shortly after praying they received word that a debt they had written off many years prior had unexpectedly been paid: R4million. A day later a property they had marketed unsuccessfully for many years was sold for R4 million and the money was there to pay the tax bill. Within the year all of the remaining lots in the business park were sold out... with no change in the marketing strategy. God simply did what they had not been able to do themselves, and this transformed the way they as directors did business.



Another benefit of the Venture is rising to a new level of faith. In our research of Cape Town clients, 61% experienced a significant miracle during the course of the Venture. When you see God come through for others, it raises your own level of faith for what he can do for you.

Box #3 – the gold box

The second box in Seemun’s picture was like a hothouse, and the Venture is that hothouse. There is a good environment of faith, intercession, prophetic consulting, and daily miracles. It is the place where seed is planted and sprouts. But not all that sprouts remains. I do not think that God plans to keep us in the green house permanently. Beyond the greenhouse box Seemun saw a very different box. It was gold, a light radiated from it. Remember the doors? When the person took the leap of faith into the first

box a door immediately opened into a second box. (We generally don't open a door to the Venture box to those who have not gone through the training box.) When the person went into box #2 a door then opened into box # 3. Then when the person went into the radiant box doors opened on all sides of the box...front, left right. Another thing happened. Other boxes began to multiply off that third box. Eventually they were spreading out everywhere and she saw that the boxes were appearing over the nations.

At this juncture I do not fully understand the third box. No doubt it will become clear over time. I have discussed it with many people, however, and some ideas have included:

- The favor of God
- The gold reflects the glory of God
- Gold represents capital, and as we build a greater capital base so the work will expand exponentially
- Doors signifying unending opportunities for those dedicated to serving the King
- Perhaps it signifies an eternal return.

I like some things to happen easily. Wouldn't it be cool if we hit the third box and things were blessed, they took off, and we didn't have to work so hard? One of the paradoxes in Scripture is that salvation and grace are free, but that those who pursue God seem to experience more of him. I have a sense that the third box for both consultants and clients is one to be entered as deliberately as the first two boxes. We have a tendency to forget, to go back to business as usual. Many of the Israelites wanted to go back to Egypt. Sadly, some consultants go back to their careers and when the favor, the glory, the radiance, and the exponential growth of the third box doesn't happen effortlessly they slip back into sub-normal Christianity. This has nothing to do with whether or not they stay actively involved in **rēp**. We believe in the principle of "flow through" as it applies to people as well as other resources. We are delighted when people start new organizations, such as Vocari, or new businesses, such as Uloop.

To understand the third box you must remember that we are here to help you discover and walk out your calling. You are being called, not recruited. If you have been a consultant I believe that a commitment to continuing to walk in relationship with us will open new doors for you, that your path will be marked by the miraculous, and that the preciousness of community with like-minded people will be priceless. Here are some examples of how **rēp** people have a new scope of ministry:

- Kim – went from never having prayed in public to leading our India team

Just wanted to update you that I started working full-time as a stock analyst at First Investors in NYC and am very happy to have a job. Thanks to God! The industry they've given me to cover is Consumer Discretionary (clothing, restaurants, hotels, retail stores, housing, etc), which I enjoy since the products are very tangible. My experience with rep has been a huge blessing and has encouraged me to be a blessing in my workplace.

Philip Lee, September 2009

- Errol – closed his business in Cape Town, spent time with us in India and then became a mentor to many businesspeople in Indonesia, leading The Institute there.
- Eric Aiyathurai – resigned from his career at Intel and went to South Africa on a Venture. He was soon back for four more months, and has since led teams to Johannesburg, been on many Ventures, and has a long term heart for South Africa. He has lived there on and off since his first trip.
- Wayne Cerullo felt a call to his back yard. So he and others started a group called Vocari, stimulating many faith/work conversations in Northern California.
- Dena Andrews – left a career track in Seattle, relocated to San Francisco, deepened a love for intercession, and now travels the globe inspiring/infusing faith and joy.
- Jodene Blackshaw – came for three months from Cape Town, spent three years in the Bay Area, helped start our work in Vancouver WA, and also ministers back into South Africa.
- Vivian Gee – went to Cape Town and then asked, “Do you need anyone for six months?” She was a pioneer in our work in Indonesia, training the first teams, laying a foundation, recruiting clients. She then did an MBA at Insead, and later joined the Schwab Foundation in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Joey Chao– Ventured in Indonesia, moved to Shanghai
- Brandon and Karen Dube—they came to us from Hawaii, then moved to Canada.
- Jessica Hastings – now Dean of Students in South African private college
- Many have gone on to business school after their **rēp** training: Michelle Gervais, Michelle Proehl, Keon Saber, Philip Lee, Spencer Peng, Scott Haahr, Nancy Lai, Elisabeth Wadsworth, etc.
- George Hsia quit his high tech job and followed a call God placed on his life to do photo journalism. We commissioned him at the same site, in the same room, where God had called him 12 years before... this time he was able to say “Yes.” He is now in Peru tracking the stories of kids in the drug/sex/people trafficking arena.

Kim Wilson is someone whose career track was radically altered. She first joined us for training in the Bay Area, driving two hours each way every week from Modesto, CA. Now she routinely flies to India as she leads our US team in pioneering in that nation.

Where do you go from here?

This booklet is intended for people at various stages of their journey. For people considering joining a **rēp** Venture it is aimed at helping you identify the opportunities and obstacles so that you can seize the window of opportunity. It is also intended to paint a picture of there being more ahead than just on Venture. There is a lifetime of opportunity. Your stint with **rēp** may be a springboard to something more, as we saw in George’s story, or it may lead you to do more with us, like Jodene, Kim, Dena, Gareth, Errol and others.

“I keep my Consultant Manual and my Bible on my desk at work... I use them almost daily in my job.”
Brandon Dube, Envision Financial

For alumni who have already returned there are still decisions to be made, and always the temptation to go back to doing things in old ways. This is a call to alumni to go further with God, to seek his face more, and to not rest until you see his glory routinely evident in your life. We are encouraging a culture of mobility where we are all asking, “Lord, where do I go next? Who do you want me to bless with my business and other skills?” Our goal is to help you transition from green to gold, from organic growth to systematic experiencing of the favor of God. It is also a challenge to not abandon the tools God has given you to align yourself and your career with him. This is what leads to favor.

Recommended pre- and post-Venture reading

1. Business as a Calling, Michael Novak
2. Doing Business God’s Way, Dennis Peacocke
3. God is at Work, Ken Eldred
4. Face to Face with God, Bill Johnson

ⁱ Acts 1:8 Emphasis added

ⁱⁱ The full purpose statement of The Institute, of which **rēp** is line of business, is “Repurposing leaders and corporations to discover and implement personal and corporate callings, thereby transforming communities and nations.”

ⁱⁱⁱ Sometimes people have an encounter with God where they learn in a short time what otherwise might take years. So there are exceptions to the mode of learning over time.

^{iv} 2 Timothy 2:15 “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” New King James Version

^v <http://repurposing.biz/devotions/2006/4/15/who-said-go.html>