

MISSIONTRUE™

Mission True Assessment Indicators for Nonprofits

Revised: August 2020

The following are the core indicators evaluated in a Mission True Assessment (MTA). The MTA is a process HOPE International created following the publication of *Mission Drift*. The goal of this process is to encourage organizations to remain Mission True, with Christ at the center of operations, and to identify areas of potential drift.



The indicators provided below were developed based on the book, *Mission Drift*, along with research and experience collected by HOPE staff since 2014. The practices proposed may not be possible in all operating contexts. In those cases, we encourage teams to find alternative approaches to reinforce the heart of the practice, as possible.

These indicators are made publicly available to those inside and outside the HOPE network. Individuals and organizations may share and use in part or in whole in their work as we collectively seek to promote practices that will advance the Kingdom across the globe. To learn more about HOPE's Mission True work, contact info@hopeinternational.org.

MISSION & STRATEGY

1. **MISSION STATEMENT:** The organization has a mission statement that explicitly describes its Christ-centered intent.
2. **CHANGES TO MISSION:** Past or planned changes to the mission statement reflect a refinement in articulating its Christ-centered intent, rather than a departure from it.
3. **STATEMENT OF BELIEF:** The organization has a statement of faith/belief, as context allows.
4. **MISSION STORY/INTENT:** The organization has a documented mission story (or founder's intent) articulating the past or present leader(s)'s convictions that led to the organization's Christ-centered objectives.
5. **AUDITABLE STRATEGIC PLAN:** The organization has an auditable strategic plan that outlines how it will achieve all aspects of its mission, including its Christ-centered objectives.
6. **CORE VALUES:** The organization has clearly articulated core values or a culture statement which reinforce its Christ-centered objectives.

GOVERNANCE

1. **GOVERNANCE GUARDRAILS:** Governing by-laws and other board documents include "guard rail" provisions that prevent any one set of board members from modifying the mission away from its Christ-centered objectives.

2. **BOARD STRUCTURE:** The structure of the board reinforces the organization's commitment to its Christ-centered objectives (e.g. the board has at least one active board committee that focuses on guarding the Christ-centered objectives and culture of the organization, alignment of board recruiting with Christ-centered objectives, etc.).
3. **PROSPECTIVE BOARD MEMBERS:** Prospective board members are interviewed by multiple board members and are formally assessed for their alignment with the organization's Christ-centered objectives.
4. **STATEMENT OF FAITH SIGNED BY BOARD:** Board members sign a statement of faith/belief before joining the board.
5. **MISSION STORY SHARED WITH BOARD:** During on-boarding and prior to every board meeting, board members review the mission story -- the past or present leader(s)'s convictions that led to the organization's Christ-centered objectives.
6. **HOLISTIC BOARD AGENDA:** Board agendas include time for spiritual disciplines (prayer, devotions, solitude to seek the Lord's direction, etc.) in addition to topics related to protecting the organization's Christ-centered objectives and culture.
7. **HOLISTIC, DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING:** Board members receive and use holistic reporting (metrics, data, etc.), which includes information on how the organization is performing on its Christ-centered objectives, to inform its decision making.
8. **BOARD IS AWARE OF OBSTACLES:** The board is aware of obstacles that limit the organization's ability to fulfill its Christ-centered objectives.
9. **BOARD COMMITMENT:** Board members are committed to the organization's Christ-centered objectives.
10. **GUARDIANS OF THE MISSION:** Board members are aware of their role as guardians of the organization's Christ-centered objectives. They actively provide accountability to protect and preserve the organization's Christ-centered objectives.
11. **BOARD CAPACITY:** Board members demonstrate the capacity (time, effort, etc.) and competency (skills, experience, etc.) to effectively govern the organization as it seeks to fulfill its Christ-centered and operational objectives.

LEADERSHIP

12. **LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT TO THE MISSION:** All leadership team members are committed to the organization's Christ-centered objectives.
13. **KEY LEADER RISK:** If the senior leader were to leave the organization, the organization would continue to pursue its Christ-centered objectives.
14. **AWARENESS OF OBSTACLES:** Leaders are aware of obstacles that limit their organization's ability to fulfill its Christ-centered objectives.
15. **LEADERSHIP CAPACITY:** Leaders demonstrate the capacity (time, effort, etc.) and competency (skills, experience, etc.) to effectively lead the organization to fulfill its Christ-centered and operational objectives.
16. **HOLISTIC, DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING:** Leadership regularly consults and uses the holistic reporting (metrics, information, etc.) to inform its decision making.
17. **LEADERS' SPIRITUAL RHYTHMS:** Senior leaders maintain regular spiritual rhythms to connect with the Lord in order to be equipped to lead the organization (e.g. prayer, time in the Bible, biblical community, and accountability).
18. **LEADERS GROWING IN FAITH:** Senior leaders feel that they are growing in their faith.

HUMAN RESOURCES (INPUTS – Policies & Practices)

1. **HIRING FOR MISSION FIT:** Hiring practices go beyond technical competencies to assess candidates' alignment and commitment to the organization's Christ-centered objectives and mission.
2. **STAFF STATEMENT OF FAITH:** During the hiring process and annually thereafter, staff sign a statement of belief/faith.
3. **HOLISTIC ON-BOARDING:** New staff receive training on the mission, vision, and core values.
4. **MISSION STORY SHARED WITH STAFF:** During on-boarding and at least annually, leaders share with staff the organization's founding story (or mission story) including the past or present leader(s)'s convictions that led to the organization's Christ-centered objectives.
5. **STAFF MANAGEMENT PRACTICES:** The organization's Christ-centered objectives and values are effectively reinforced through on-going staff management practices (e.g. goal setting, recognition, discipline, on-going training, promotion, etc.)
6. **SUCCESSION PLANNING:** The organization has succession plans (including nominations for potential successors) in place for senior leadership roles to ensure that future leaders will be competent champions of the Christ-centered mission.
7. **STAFF CARE:** The personal health and wellbeing of staff members is discussed regularly with their manager or with another leader.
8. **SABBATH:** The organization demonstrates in practice that it desires its staff to have at least one day of rest from work each week.

PEOPLE

1. **CONSISTENT UNDERSTANDING OF THE MISSION:** There is a consistent articulation of the Christ-centered objectives and mission across the organization: among staff, management, and the board.
2. **STAFF COMMITMENT TO THE MISSION:** All staff members are committed to the organization's Christ-centered objectives.
3. **STAFF CONTRIBUTION TO MISSION:** Staff members see how their work contributes to the fulfillment of the organization's Christ-centered objectives.
4. **STAFF EQUIPPED TO ADVANCE MISSION:** Staff feel equipped to contribute to the Christ-centered objectives of the organization.
5. **STAFF GROWING IN FAITH:** Staff feel that they have grown in their faith during the last year.
6. **STAFF MEMBERS' SPIRITUAL RHYTHMS:** Staff maintain regular spiritual rhythms to connect with the Lord in order to be equipped to lead the organization (e.g., prayer, time in the Bible, biblical community, and accountability).
7. **PRAYER:** Staff regularly pray their work including specific work decisions.
8. **FEEDBACK CHANNELS:** Staff are able to raise concerns about the organization to leadership directly or through in-direct channels.
9. **STAFF REACTION TO DRIFT:** Staff would consider leaving the organization if it showed signs that it was drifting away from its Christ-centered objectives.

10. **WORK-LIFE RESPONSIBILITIES:** Since joining the organization, staff members feel that they are able to fulfill their responsibilities outside of work (for example, they are able to fulfill their responsibilities to family, church, community, etc.)

ORGANIZATION

1. **REGULAR ACTIVITIES REINFORCE MISSION:** The organization has daily, weekly, monthly, and annual activities that reinforce its Christ-centered culture (e.g., prayer, devotions, sharing about core values, retreats, etc.).
2. **DISCUSSING MISSION DRIFT:** At least annually, the organization discusses the risk of mission drift.
3. **STAFF OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW IN FAITH:** The organization offers opportunities for staff to grow in their faith, either directly or through another organization, including the church.
4. **DEPARTMENTAL DOCUMENTATION:** Core departmental or team-level job aids (e.g., manuals, handbooks, policies, etc.) reinforce the organization's Christ-centered objectives.
5. **INTEGRATED OPERATIONS:** The organization's methodology (e.g., practices, operations, services, delivery, etc.) supports its Christ-centered objectives.
6. **END BENEFICIARY OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW IN FAITH:** The organization offers opportunities for its end beneficiaries to grow in their faith, either directly or through another organization, including the church (e.g., bible study, prayer, discipleship, etc.).
7. **ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE METRICS:** The organization regularly captures holistic metrics (e.g., key performance indicators) to track the organization's activities, including its Christ-centered activities.
8. **OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT:** The organization measures the outcomes of its work to discern how well they are doing in achieving their Christ-centered and operational objectives.
9. **PARTNER EVALUTION FOR ALIGNMENT:** Partners are evaluated upfront and on an on-going basis (at least annually) for alignment with the organization's Christ-centered objectives.
10. **MISSIONALLY-ALIGNED ACCOUNTABILITY- PARTNERS:** Partners support the Christ-centered objectives of the organization and are appropriately engaged in providing missionally-aligned reinforcement and accountability to the organization.

FUNDING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS

1. **CONSISTENT COMMUNICATION:** The organization's communication of its Christ-centered objectives is consistent across stakeholders (i.e., what is communicated among end beneficiaries/clients, staff, donors, board members, is consistent).
2. **ALIGNMENT OF FUNDERS:** Funders are aligned with the organization's Christ-centered objectives.
3. **MISSIONALLY ALIGNED ACCOUNTABILITY- FUNDERS:** Funders are appropriately engaged in the mission, not just giving financially but with missionally-aligned accountability and prayer.
4. **FUNDING DIVERSIFICATION:** Funding sources are diverse. Relationships with financial supporters are not concentrated in a few staff members to ensure stability in future funding.
5. **SAYING "NO" TO FUNDING:** The organization declines funding and feedback from funders if it would potentially limit their ability to do its Christ-centered objectives.