



MBF AXIOMS

MBF'S SEVEN AXIOMS

FOR CREATING
LASTING CHANGE
THROUGH MEDICAL MISSION

MBF



CEO STATEMENT



I AM A GREAT BELIEVER IN LUCK AND I FIND THE HARDER I
WORK THE MORE I HAVE OF IT

Building an excellent, successful and high-quality organization requires constant improvement by learning from other professionals' advances in your industry. For example, Evidence-Based Best Practice is a basic, underlying foundation of the U.S. medical industry today. The simple concept behind it is that medical practices are continually refined based on published, reliable evidence showing a new idea, practice, protocol, or tool achieved demonstrably improved outcomes. Why? One doesn't just hope that a heart surgeon knows what he/she is doing; one wants someone who knows the proven techniques to obtain the best outcomes and the lowest risk.

Similarly, we cannot successfully do medical missions in the context of international development in a vacuum. Instead, it is essential to see examine successes in other relevant areas and even other industries to determine what proven, best practices can be applied. When we do, medical missions become stronger.

Collected and applied from a broad array of industries and professional expertise, we view these axioms as foundational to the work of medical missions. All of them address how we do things at MBF, not just what we do.



HANDS AND HEARTS UNITED

LOCAL AND MBF WORKER IN PARTNERSHIP

MBF AXIOMS PAGE | 03



AXIOM #1

Local culture and systems eclipse change

“High impact interventions can only be sustained at scale if they are integrated into existing health systems structures and process”
- USAID Maternal and Child Survival Program

We believe that all projects must fit into the pre-existing systems and culture of an international partner. It doesn't matter if the medical mission project itself is compelling or well-intentioned: it must fit into the environment it intends to serve in order to work. The Harvard Business Review published a report that in the U.S., over 70% of all corporate change initiatives failed to achieve their established objectives. With millions of dollars to spend and some of the most well-trained professionals in the world, even the best and brightest in the U.S. business world learned that existing

corporate culture and existing systems are hard to change. Another established fact is that personal relationships and group culture have an even higher value and play a more important day-to-day role to individuals and organizations in other countries than in the U.S. This creates an even steeper barrier to change than that experienced by the aforementioned business organizations in the U.S. This is why the international landscape is littered with failed good ideas in the form of well-intentioned international development projects that did not consider local culture and existing systems.

Best Practice Principle: Every project must be adapted to achieve its objectives within the existing culture and systems of the international partner - not in place or in spite of them.

AXIOM #2

Local ownership and control are mandatory – autocratic design is not

In *The Tyranny of the Experts*, William Easterly establishes the fundamental thesis that authoritarian, technocratic, one-size-fits-all development has failed repeatedly. He demonstrates that the individual rights of the ostensible beneficiaries of development must be paramount. People usually know what's best for themselves. Even proven, effective development interventions fail to have lasting effects in the context of oppressive governments or any other autocratic structure.

The primary, important concept is that when markets and technology are allowed to amplify the ideas of people who are given voices and choices, the best development will bubble up from below.

Best Practice Principle: From the start, every project and effort must have clear, local ownership and leadership. The structure and concept of everything we do must be that we enable the international partner to achieve their advancement – not do it ourselves.



AXIOM #3

Systems heal (and harm too)

U.S. industry has spent billions on understanding the principles of creating and implementing Quality programs. Out of these, a key learning is that even well-trained individuals fail if they are placed back into a broken system. Often the individual conforms to the dysfunctional system and regresses to others' levels rather than becoming the catalyst for the desired change.

Effective development in low-resourced settings requires recognizing and analyzing the system of care and analyzing systemic impact. When we improve the skills of individuals, we must do so for everyone within the system, and help everyone fully understand how their part helps to improve the system itself.

Best Practice Principle: You can't change the actions of people without changing the system within which they function.

AXIOM #4

Design sustainability from the start

In his second Law of Thermodynamics, Newton identified the physics principle that any system left to itself will degenerate into a more disordered state.

The same is true in international development. If you initiate a program or project and then walk away too soon, leaving it on its own, it will almost always descend into chaos. A different approach is needed to prevent that from happening.

Best Practice Principle: Projects must have local ownership and a written plan for sustainability built in from the start. All must be aware of and committed to this. Sustainability is not something that will self-generate or spontaneously occur over time.



AXIOM #5

You can't serve someone out of poverty

"It is beginning to dawn on the world of compassion that the causes of poverty can be addressed effectively only through development, not through one-way giving."

- Robert D. Lupton, *Charity Detox: What Charity Would Look Like if We Cared About Results*

We have seen that many charity efforts in developing countries and societies end up making those helped even more impoverished or entirely dependent. Giveaway programs tend to be more for the givers' senses than for those who are being helped. The paradigm is "doing for the poor" rather than "doing with the poor."

It is crucial to distinguish between, 'crisis' and 'chronic need'. While crises like natural disasters need intervention, charity needs to shift focus once the immediate crisis is over. At this point, we must concentrate on rebuilding lives and not on cultivating dependents. Unfortunately, this is a long and involved process that attracts relatively few donors and even fewer volunteers.

Best Practice Principle: Our goal is to train people so they can help themselves and, in the process, become the individuals they were created to be as God's image-bearers.

AXIOM #6

Collaboration and Partnership are Essential

As pressures on medical ministries increase and the issues we face become more complex, the idea of partnerships holds much promise. Through partnerships, we are more than the sum of our parts: we can leverage our small contributions and reap the benefits of everyone's effort; we can accelerate learning and distribute skills and knowledge; and, we can add depth and breadth to our community impact.

The growing organization will regularly innovate through collaboration with other organizations to secure resources and increase the ability to achieve each collaborator's mission.

Best Practice Principle: Networking with organizations, each with a strategic specialization and expertise, will make a more robust approach with lasting results. A single organization cannot accomplish this alone. The solution requires coordination throughout a network of specialties.

AXIOM #7

Translation requires relationship

Years of international development experience have shown that the introduction or “translation” of any initiative, project, concept, or protocol is generally only effective when it is done in the context of an existing long-term personal relationship.

Much like Bible translators go and live within a local culture for years to effectively translate the Bible into a new language, the same process applies to any mission endeavor.

Best Practice Principle: Relationships are the foundational requirement of any development initiative. A visitor or “consultant” simply dropping in from the outside will never be able to adequately introduce and engage individuals on a new project or process.



MBF CEO ANDY MAYO, SECOND FROM RIGHT, FRONT
ROW WITH THE LOCAL TEAM AT KANYAMA



GET IN TOUCH WITH US



Phone : 281-201-2043



Email: hello@mbf.net

Web: www.mbf.org



Address
9555 W. Sam Houston Parkway, Ste170
Houston, TX, 77099

