



STEP 4: STARTUP LOGISTICS & PREPARATION - SUPPORT RAISING

Leading Your Students Through the Support Raising Process

An important part of Startup Logistics & Preparation in the OneLink Project Cycle is training and getting your students started in the process of raising financial support for their summer project. It is best to begin this as soon as possible after your students have been accepted to a team.

Support Raising Training Tips:

- **Schedule a Support Raising Training Early**
 - Raising financial support can be an overwhelming prospect for students. Set up a meeting and walk them through how to make and send support letters, make direct phone calls, and etc. It may be helpful for you to look over their student's support letter and mailing list to give counsel. OneLink U will have some information about support raising (also included below) but this does not replace direct help from you to walk them through the process.

- **Set Goals & Deadlines for Team Members**
 - Helping to set specific goals and deadlines, and keeping them accountable to it, is helpful for students. You and/or the team leader should be in weekly contact with team members to see how they are doing with support raising. Examples would be to ask them to personally talk with or call 50 people, to send out at least 100 letters by February 1st, and/or to have half of their funds raised by a certain date.

- **Ask for Advice & Input**
 - Many campus ministries, as well as OneLink, have been sending student teams for years and have excellent insight on what works effectively for support raising. Ask the OneLink office to connect you and/or talk with someone who does it well.

- **Encourage Creativity**
 - You or your students may have ideas to design and sell t-shirts, host a support raising event, or raise funds in many different ways. Encouraging these ideas (and speaking wisdom to ideas that may not be worth the time) will also help cast a broader vision in your ministry and community for God's heart for the nations and partnering together to send a team. This can also cast vision for students who may be interested in going next year.

Raising Financial Support for Your Overseas Project

Adapted from OneLink training content

We are excited that you are seeking the heart of God in regard to the Great Commission! For you, it is one short summer. For someone God may touch through you, it is eternity. Of course, first, you have to get there!

Start Here:

Attitude Check

This is an incredible opportunity for you to trust God! For some of you this will be the biggest step of faith you have taken since the day you decided to follow Jesus. Believe it or not, raising support will be a blessing in your life because your faith will be strengthened as you see how God provides. Take time to thank God that you get the privilege of raising your personal support for this project.

Then:

Ask yourself a question

How do I feel about asking other people for monetary support? (Come on, be honest!) Do you feel like you are asking for handouts? Maybe you don't feel worthy of receiving the generosity of others? The need to raise support will often uncover pride in a person's heart. In others it will raise issues of insecurity or fear. Don't ignore these feelings. Whatever God shows you about yourself, face it and talk with Him about it.

After that:

Go to God's Word

Take some time to study and reflect on the following verses:

- Luke 8:1-3

- Luke 16:10-12
- 2 Corinthians 8:1-5
- Philippians 4:10-20
- 1 Thessalonians 5:24
- 3 John 5-8
- Exodus 25:1-2
- 1 Kings 17:1-16

What do they say to you about raising support? What do they say about God's faithfulness? About your attitude?

Now you're ready to begin

Step 1:

Name Storm

Create a list of names of people who might be interested in what you are doing. Think of those who have had significant roles in your life. Your list could include:

- **Family:** parents, relatives
- **Friends:** from high school, college, family friends
- **People to whom you have ministered in some way:** Sunday school teachers, people in your current church, small group, people in your home church, etc.
- **Anyone who has invested in your life:** coaches, youth ministers, mentors, neighbors, former high school teachers, former or current professors, employers, etc.

Don't Censor Your list!

You will always be able to think of a reason why you shouldn't ask any of these individuals to consider contributing to your overseas trip: "He doesn't have much money"... "I haven't talked to them in a long time"... "They already give a lot to the church"...etc. Just write the names down. It is tempting to want to make decisions for others. Even someone who doesn't have much might truly enjoy having a small part in what you are doing.

Step 2:

Pray

Pray for the People on Your List: What do you know about their lives and needs? Would God put it on their hearts to give? (If some of the individuals on your list are friends of your

parents you might want to ask your parents' permission before approaching them. This is especially true if your parents are not Christians.)

***What if someone is not a Christian?** That's okay! (See Acts 10:1-2) Even though they would not be that interested in the spiritual part of your trip, they care about you and might want to show their support. Who knows? Maybe hearing what you are doing will create an interest in their own relationship with God. Pray for them and pray for an opportunity to share your testimony with them.

Asking Your Church

If at all possible, make an appointment to see the pastor of your home church so you can visit with him personally and explain what you are doing. Ask him if the church would consider including you in their missions giving.

Step 3:

Write

Write your letter: Explain what you are doing, why you want to do it, and what you are asking them to do. Be specific: "Would you please consider making a contribution in order to help cover my expenses for this trip? I need to raise \$5,000." Be sure to include information such as where to send checks, who to make them out to, and the date you need them. Talk with your campus minister about the possibility of the checks coming through the ministry account or through your church. That way the contributors can receive receipts for tax purposes. Please be sure that contributors **DO NOT** send money to OneLink International. Mail your support letters out as soon as possible once you are accepted for a project. Suggest a deadline so people know when you need the money. Set the deadline no later than 30 days prior to your departure date (check with your Team Leader about this date). This gives them ample time to reply and you won't have to wonder up to the last minute if you are going to have enough funds. We have included a sample letter and response card for reference.

Security Guidelines: PLEASE OBSERVE ALL OF THESE GUIDELINES unless you have been otherwise instructed by someone on the OneLink staff or your campus minister.

- Do NOT print the name of the city or country to which you are going. Please only refer to a region such as North Africa, Middle East, Central Asia, East Asia, South Asia or Southeast Asia.
- Do NOT print the names of the people on the field with whom you will be working.
- When speaking in front of churches, student ministries or other large groups please do NOT mention the names of the city, country or people on the field you will be working with.

- You may want to use caution when mentioning the name of the people group you will be focusing on as well. Please check with your campus minister to see what is appropriate.
- In most cases, it will be okay for you to verbally share with close friends and family exactly where you are going, but check with your campus minister or the OneLink staff before sharing anything.
- When speaking or writing about your overseas project, please do not use the phrase “mission trip” on public platforms such as social media. Feel free to talk about traveling as a teacher or language learner, and invite people to pray with you for opportunities for you to share your faith.

Personal Invitations

There might be two or three people to whom you would want to write a personal letter (like grandma!), but a form letter is sufficient for most.

Be Specific

Include in your letter specific things you would like to ask them to pray for while you are gone. Some may not be able to give but would love to pray.

Make it easy to give

Enclose a pre-addressed envelope for their convenience. It is not necessary to put a stamp on it. If someone wants to contribute, they will not mind providing their own postage.

Keep Records

Keep a record of who gives and promptly send a thank you note to each one.

Say "Thank You!"

At the end of the summer, write to people you wrote to originally and thank them for praying. Share something about your experience overseas, what you learned, how you saw God at work, etc. It is perfectly okay for this to be a form letter. Choose one of your favorite photographs from your trip to copy in the letter. You might want to jot a personal note at the end of the letters sent to individuals that contributed financially.

Ultimately, you are depending on God, not on people. Someone you are counting on to give may not. On the other hand, you may receive a gift from someone you never dreamed would give. May God bless you and use your life in His eternal plan to see all nations worship Him (Revelation 7:9-10).