

Mi

Capacity-Building Programs

Helping Ministries Grow their Capacity
for Fruitful Grant-Seeking

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Organization and Program Overview

OUR PURPOSE

Mission Increase (MI) exists to equip givers and Christian nonprofits to transform their communities together. MI's program teaches nonprofits to embrace and deploy a biblical approach to fundraising so that they more fully achieve their God-given missions and engage more people in their work.

OUR MODEL

Area directors in twenty communities nationwide deliver the MI program at no cost to Christian nonprofits. Whether in workshops, group coaching, or one-to-one consulting with nonprofit leaders, MI helps nonprofits understand that biblical fundraising is an opportunity to minister to givers inviting them to connect with the work God is doing and be transformed in the process.

We do this through:

TEACHING

Through quarterly workshops and webinars, MI offers a practical, biblically-based fundraising curriculum covering topics such as acquisition, major gifts, ministry communications and ministry leadership.

COACHING

Through group and individual coaching, MI area directors work directly with ministry leaders, addressing particular organizational needs or concerns related to MI's teaching topics.

CONSULTING

Each MI area director provides one-to-one consulting to a select group of nonprofits, offering a more comprehensive and in-depth look at ministry and fundraising operations. Consulting is done by invitation from the area director and is offered free-of-charge.

GRANTING

MI uses matching grants as a tool in consulting. With matching grants, MI invites nonprofits to continue building their fundraising capacity by providing a matching grant based on skills learned through consulting.

A Transformational Mindset

Key Insight: *Our research reveals that when leaders personally adopt the Transformational Giving mindset, they are more prepared and positioned to positively experience all aspects of fundraising, including grant-seeking.*

At the heart of MI's work with Christian nonprofits is a biblical view of giving summarized in our Ten Transformational Giving Principles (Transformational Giving). These principles guide nonprofit leaders toward a genuine understanding of fundraising as the building of a biblical community, and away from simply asking for money to support their work. Our research reveals that as leaders personally adopt the mindset of Transformational Giving, they are more likely to have a positive experience with grant-seeking in addition to all other aspects of fundraising, which then extends throughout the whole organization. One leader shared, "The model of Transformational Giving has shaped our organization, and helped us understand how to steward other people's stewardship."

Transformational Giving Principle 1 states, "Transformational Giving is based on the abundance and trustworthiness of God, not a theology of scarcity." Leaders share that they are more prayerful about grant applications, and trust God to provide needed funds through grant-makers. One leader indicated this mindset leads them to pray more during the process. They said they, "Feel the Lord's leading," and are trusting God to speak to them. Another leader said, **"Every time money has been given to our organization, the money doesn't belong to us, it belongs to God. It's purpose is to create impact."** Leaders shared that having this mindset helps them to rely on God to open the doors, rather than chasing down the funds.

Transformational Giving Principle 5 says, "Ministry leaders have a dual calling to steward the mission and grow the

people God brings." **Our research shows that when leaders have the mindset that their work with grant-makers is a relationship worth fostering, the effort required is more likely and more gratifying.** One leader acknowledged that this was not their initial mindset, yet because of their work with MI they have, "Learned biblical fundraising and that has changed our mindset toward grantors. We want to be more relational."

Developing a Transformational Giving mindset toward relationships with foundations provides dimension and shapes the granting process. One leader shared, "If we have a strong relationship, grant-makers see our application in color." Another leader shared that because of their work with MI they now see grant-makers as people too, often comparing these relationships with those that they have with individual major givers.

SIGNIFICANCE

*This finding is encouraging because it affirms that the adoption and application of a Transformational Giving mindset is pervasive to all facets of fundraising. **When a leader has personally adopted this perspective, they are able to experience fundraising as a joyful calling which extends to the more formal environment of grant-seeking.***

Finally, this finding provides evidence that personal transformation precedes corporate transformation.

FINDING 2

Grant-Seeking is Like a Treasure Hunt

Key Insight: The data show that a leader's willingness to uncover shared impact with funders changes the path of grant-seeking and makes the work required more rewarding and fruitful.

Finding shared impact is like a treasure hunt because while it can be difficult to uncover, when you find the treasure of an aligned mission, it is highly valuable. Some leaders are surprised to discover that shared impact, rather than grant dollars alone, is a real treasure. One leader said, "We don't see foundations as groups with money, but as groups who have a mission just like us."

Leaders shared that investing time in discovering shared impact results in the grant-making process feeling less self-serving. One leader shared that at one point they "Had a big grant possibility, and after a week of working on it, through prayerful listening, they realized it would result in mission drift," and ended up not applying. Another leader even said that because they've "Said 'no' to certain foundations where there was a lack of cause alignment, [and they] can more easily receive a no from foundations." Yet another leader said, "If their goals don't fit with ours, then it doesn't make sense to work with them." Instead of trying to force a fit, our interviews show that leaders are more able to identify potential partnerships in places of shared mission. One interviewee said, "We are able to fulfill [the foundation's] mission while we are fulfilling our mission."

MI points nonprofit leaders to kingdom impact by emphasizing that the organization and the cause are not one and the same. Through our programs, leaders learn to identify broader impact and outcomes making it more likely that they will discern points of shared impact with potential grant-makers. One interviewee said, "Foundations are doing something about problems, [grant-makers] see solutions as more approachable than before because we are the bridge for people to the cause." Foundations, nonprofits, and individual givers end up working together to create exponential impact.

While it was very common to hear in interviews that leaders understood the importance of shared mission, it was surprising to see in our quantitative survey a different response. [When asked if they have learned how to better identify potential matches with foundations as a result of working with MI](#), only 25% of coaching-level and 45% of consulting-level ministries said this was somewhat true. This could mean that leaders are able to recognize shared mission, but might attribute other factors, such as size, scope of project, or cause, as barriers to matching with a foundation. This difference in the data could also mean that those interviewed were outliers. Or because of the nature of the interview conversations, leaders were able to more deeply consider how their work with MI has allowed them to better identify matches.

The identification of a shared mission with a foundation is one important element to finding a match. Data from our quantitative survey underscored the difference a consulting-level relationship with MI has on a leader's ability to recognize shared mission with a foundation.

When asked if MI had an impact on their ability to recognize shared mission with a grant-maker, only 6% of coaching-level ministries said this was very true, whereas 45% of consulting-level ministries said this was very true (Figure 3.1).

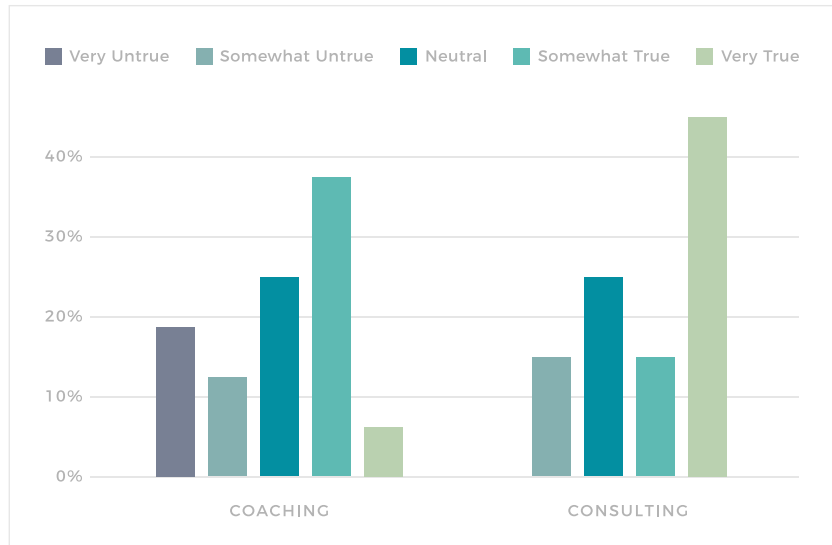


Figure 3.1 Difference between Coaching and Consulting leaders, as related to knowing how to recognize shared mission with a foundation.

SIGNIFICANCE

This finding is important because it reveals that some leaders are able to recognize that grant-seeking can result in mutually beneficial relationships of shared impact. Furthermore, this finding is encouraging because leaders are applying a key Transformational Giving principle of our program which states that, “Champions connect with organizations primarily to enhance their mutual impact on the cause.” We believe this change in posture of a ministry leader and organization makes these kinds of relationships more possible, which is fruitful for everyone. As leaders experience the MI program at greater depth, they are more likely to see the outcome of increased impact as the primary purpose for all grant work.

FINDING 3

Worth More than Dollars Raised

Key Insight: We discovered that when leaders realize that the process of seeking a grant, including developing the disciplines required for grant-readiness, is fruitful beyond the potential infusion of funds, the entire grant-seeking process can serve as a lever for organizational growth.

We teach that grant funds should account for about 10% of a nonprofit ministry's budget. For some leaders, this small amount does not seem worth the energy required to apply. Of the leaders interviewed, those that are actively engaged with MI commonly recognize that grant-seeking is about more than money. One ministry leader summed this up by saying, *"I used to think of grants as just a source of funds. Now I look at them as a strategic tool in our toolbox to reach the goals to which God has called us.* It helps to have a more balanced look at things."

These leaders express that they find the process of applying for grants as a forcing function to evaluate and strengthen their operational infrastructure. One interviewee said, *"The application process not only provides funding but a chance to prove and improve programs and processes."* Another leader said, "The granting process has spurred us onto greater levels of record keeping and clarity of purpose and vision."

Conversely, some leaders view grant-seeking more as a duty for funding and less of a joy. One such leader expressed a theme of discouragement about granting throughout the interview. These leaders tend to relinquish ownership of the application process by hiring outside consultants assuming that will offload the heavy lifting. Of those who reported in our quantitative survey that they have hired an outside granting consultant, 50% also state that they have no dedicated development staff, and the other half state that they have only 1-2 development staff.

Leaders interviewed who have used hired consultants express a common frustration that those writing the grants tend to lack the "insider knowledge and passion" for the cause. On the contrary, ministries who view the entire grant-seeking process through a P-E-O framework, and use it to grow eager staff and volunteers in the area of serving and learning, have capitalized on their connection to the cause and insider knowledge.

SIGNIFICANCE

Often leaders assume grant-seeking is only worth the effort if they win the grant. However, this finding is encouraging because it reveals that some of the leaders in our program view the entire process of grant-seeking as catalytic. These leaders see that the grant-seeking process itself fosters growth because the requirements of a grant request and the expectations of potential funders can serve as growth accelerators. When ministries lean into the refinement and learning that occurs when they take ownership of the grant-seeking process, they are able to experience the benefits of the process regardless of the application's outcome.

FINDING 4

It's Not Mystery or Magic

Key Insight: Our data show that prior to working with MI, leaders often assume there is a mysterious magic formula to grant-seeking, and what they find is that by following a foundation's rules the process is demystified.

Prior to consulting with MI, many leaders struggle to find value in grant-seeking. It was not uncommon to hear leaders say that the process “feels like a science” of which they possess little knowledge or experience. Leaders interviewed express that the process is mysterious and some even said “scary.” One leader said, *“We didn’t know the formula and were fearful.”*

It appears that without the support of a consulting-level relationship with an area director, leaders struggle to recognize that relationships are the key to confidence in grant-seeking, and not a magic formula. The data from our quantitative study shows similar results. When leaders were asked if, because of working with MI, they were confident in their granting eligibility, only 38% of coaching-level ministries said they were somewhat confident in their granting eligibility. Conversely, 55% of consulting-level ministries said that it was somewhat or very confident in their granting eligibility, with a third of consulting-level ministries aligning with very confident. One leader interviewed said that taking MI’s offer of support helps it “feel less like a science, and more a realization that funders want to do things that are helping people in the community just as we are.”

MI teaches that leaders ought to build relationships with a foundation similar to the way they build a relationship with an individual champion, discerning what the giver wants and following their lead and direction for the gift. Similarly, the data from our survey reveals that leaders in a consulting-level relationship with MI are more likely to grasp the importance of being relational with a foundation. Figure 4.1 shows that only 38% of coaching-level leaders surveyed shared they somewhat or very much see working with foundations as relationships. On the contrary, 80% of consulting-level leaders shared they see foundations this way.

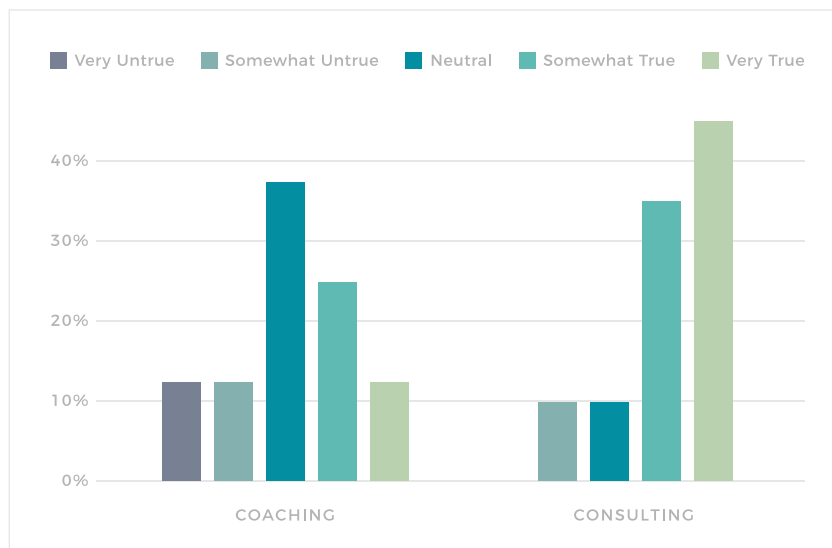


Figure 4.1 The difference between coaching and consulting leaders, as related to their ability to see foundations as relationships.

Of the consulting-level ministries who responded that they see foundations in this way, 69% of those also replied that it is somewhat true or very true that they are able to recognize shared mission with foundations for whom they will or won't build relationships with.

Additionally, a leader's willingness to follow a foundation's rules is a reflection of a healthy relationship. A leader we interviewed said, "We have learned to treat other foundations how they want to be treated." It was not uncommon for the data to show that leaders believed that following the rules influences relational potential with a foundation and as one said, "Not following the rules limits the potential of the relationship." When reviewing our quantitative data, we see that while 31% of coaching-level ministries surveyed said it was somewhat true that they understand the importance of following each foundation's guidelines when applying for a grant, only 13% of them said that was very true (Figure 4.2). Conversely, 15% of consulting-level ministries surveyed said this was somewhat true while 40% said this was very true.

Acknowledging a grant-maker's agency in the relationship allows leaders to dismantle the notion of a grant-seeking formula. MI helps leaders accept the agency of a grant-maker and become confident representing their organization as it truly is. Leaders share they are now less likely to "get caught up in mission drift" as a means to shift their identity to "win a grant." One leader said it beautifully, "MI has really given us the confidence to feel like we can keep doing the work we're called to do, and it will get funded."

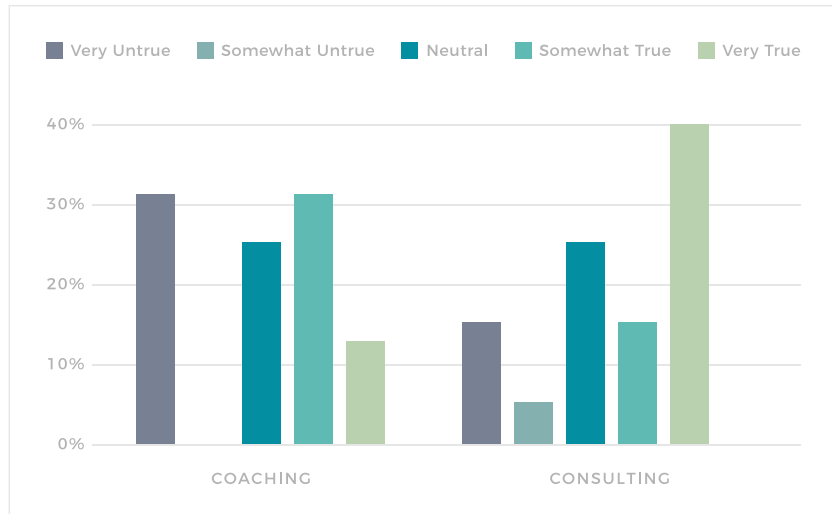


Figure 4.2 Difference between Coaching and Consulting leaders, as related to understanding the importance of following a foundations' guidelines when seeking a grant.

SIGNIFICANCE

This finding is important because it underscores that leaders who work with MI overcome a common misconception that foundations are mysterious. We know that

foundations are not intentionally mysterious. In fact, most foundations are quite transparent with guidelines and expectations. MI can remove the mystery with increased emphasis on the value of studying and carefully following the published steps and criteria for grant eligibility. As we become a broken record replaying the verse that foundations mean what they say in their grant request rules, more leaders will follow the rules outlined by the grant-makers, thus strengthening the relationship between ministry and foundation.

FINDING 5

Get Your Ducks in a Row

Key Insight: Our research reveals that when leaders implement the work needed to build fundraising capacity and infrastructure, they are more prepared for what is standardly expected and required from grant-makers.

The time nonprofits spend investing in fundraising infrastructure has direct implications for grant-seeking. MI provides help with basic components of a grant request like an annual budget, fundraising plan, strategic plan and a stable board. Knowing that these “ducks are in a row” creates confidence and possibilities for grant applications. One leader expressed that because of this, they no longer feel “Like a gamble to a foundation.” After having given up in the past, now having their ducks in a row allowed them to feel more confident to follow through with their application.

Leaders affirm the necessity for having a strong organizational infrastructure. One leader said, “It’s hard to overstate how influential MI has been in institutional readiness.” When leaders have the framework in place, their confidence increases to apply for grants. Collectively, only 20% of survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that MI was helpful to their development of organizational infrastructure.

Similarly, by having the structures in place, organizations are more “ready to receive grants,” and maintain the relationship by reporting properly. One leader said, “So much of the groundwork for writing grants is done

through MI training.” As a result of working with MI, another leader said, “Year after year we are getting more organized and efficient, making us more eligible and ready to apply for and receive grants.” Of those who responded to our survey saying their work with MI has helped them receive more grants, only 11% collectively said that they disagreed that MI helped them have their infrastructure in place.

SIGNIFICANCE

This finding is encouraging because the data tell us that MI’s programs continue to provide leaders with the skills needed to build healthy infrastructures. The components of a healthy infrastructure contribute to the confidence and ability to apply for grants. When ministries have sturdy infrastructure in place, they are more likely to cultivate multiple revenue streams, including but not limited to grant funds, which increases the depth of impact they are able to have on their overall cause.

FINDING 6

Compelling Stories Communicate Identity

Key Insight: *Our data show that through working with MI, leaders have become more confident in their organizational identity and have discovered that the best way to communicate it is through compelling stories.*

Leaders share that the support of MI helps them understand that receiving grants has less to do with size, age, or programs and more to do with confidently communicating their identity. Leaders commonly shared an understanding of the “value in their own story,” even for smaller organizations. Knowing one’s own organizational story creates an awareness of “Knowing what they need from moment to moment,” bolstering confidence to know what to ask for on a grant application. One leader expressed that because they know their own story, they are better able to “tailor how they tell their story” to elevate missional alignment with a grant-maker. **100% of leaders who said that they are somewhat or very confident in their granting eligibility also said it was somewhat or very true that they know how to articulate their cause.**

A shared story, known throughout the whole organization, helps staff and champions alike work together to move the mission forward, causing fewer hiccups along the way. Because of the emphasis MI puts on knowing and sharing your story, organizations find that this strengthens their ability for grant eligibility and relationship building with foundations. A communal story has the power to help leaders recruit champions to help write grants, as well as make introductions between organization and foundation.

Knowing their story inside and out helps organizations communicate back the difference foundations are making. One leader said that this helps them have “An ongoing relationship instead of a one-time transaction.” Another leader shared that through their storytelling, “We make the foundation feel like the hero.” This mindset, strengthened through coaching and consulting with MI, helps leaders recognize the shared story between a foundation and an organization.

SIGNIFICANCE

This finding is encouraging because it demonstrates that MI’s programs continue to provide leaders with the skills needed to know and communicate their story. Because of MI, leaders are more able to clearly articulate the cause and adapt the story without altering the identity. When a leader can confidently, concisely and passionately communicate their organization’s identity, they are able to win over hearts to the cause, resulting in increased funding and bolstered organizational impact.

FINDING 7

Lost in Translation

Key Insight: *The data show that not all ministry leaders connect how all the components of MI's programs propel their organization toward increased grant preparedness and eligibility.*

Similarly to how people who live in a foreign country might not connect that much of their language learning comes through informal conversations with local people rather than formal classes, ministry leaders often do not translate that the skills they are learning in workshops and coaching apply directly to the grant-seeking process. One leader commented, ***"I knew MI was a great help, but I didn't know that granting was one of them."***

One leader said a comment that was often echoed by others, ***"I didn't know MI helped with that."*** Many ministries are seeing MI teaching at face value, not realizing that what we teach in fundraising applies to many other areas of business infrastructure. Record keeping, sustainability, building basics (i.e.; healthy board, budgets, etc.) all have direct application in grant-seeking. As business practices improve, the credibility to champions improves, fundraising increases, record keeping becomes better, weaknesses are revealed, and business practices improve.

When looking at both coaching and consulting-level ministries collectively, 62% of survey respondents said it was somewhat or very true that working with MI has helped them have their organizational foundations in place.

However, only 33% of respondents have applied for more grants as a result of working with MI, and only 22% of respondents have received grants as a result of working with MI. This could either be because very few ministries are taking the leap to apply for grants, or in the times that they are applying, they are not recognizing the connection of how MI has helped them prepare.

SIGNIFICANCE

This finding is disheartening because it represents a missed opportunity to help leaders recognize that the skills they are gaining through our program are making them more grant ready. As ministries deepen their involvement and relationship with MI, they become more likely to make the connection between the capabilities MI helps them develop and their grant-seeking readiness. This finding will help us more explicitly connect the dots between what leaders are learning through our programs by intentionally highlighting the link between our curriculum and coaching strategy to grant-seeking.

FINDING 8

Granting Stimulates Granting

Key Insight: *The research affirms that applying for and receiving a MI grant, serves as preparation for future grant-seeking success. Working with a MI area director throughout our grant-seeking process results in new skills and abilities, as well as heightens confidence for leaders seeking subsequent grants from other foundations.*

MI's grant process is unique in that area directors walk hand-in-hand with applicants through the entire process. As one leader described it, their "Area director walked me through the grant process without intimidation." Leaders who received an MI matching grant said that process helped them realize grant-seeking was worth their time-investment. MI wants ministries to succeed and helps them develop a solid foundation to do just that. [Walking a ministry through the MI grant process builds confidence by recognizing that they are prepared and have the necessary data available to apply for other grants.](#)

MI matching grants are given to help build a skill or strengthen an area that needs improvement. This helps teach the purpose of granting. As a result of applying for a MI matching grant, leaders learn that a grant-maker is not just someone who gives money, but someone who helps organizations be better positioned for impact. One leader shared that as a result of working with MI, they now have a mindset toward the grant process that considers "What is the foundation trying to teach us when they ask certain questions? It's not just a hoop to jump through, but likely they are trying to teach us something."

Before a ministry is eligible for a MI grant, they must be invited into a consulting relationship with their area director. This requires that a ministry has an established

relationship with their area director, has regularly attended workshops and worked through a substantial part of MI curriculum, met consistently with their area director for coaching appointments and displayed an ownership of Transformational Giving mindset.

Leaders interviewed, regardless of receiving an MI grant or not, expressed, **"I feel more confident in preparing to write a grant (from another foundation) because I have an advocate in my area director."**

SIGNIFICANCE

This finding is both valuable and difficult. It is valuable that our data affirmed that the MI grant-making process is preparatory for further grant-seeking, not only a funnel for funds. This is difficult, because this is true for only select MI communities where granting is a fully realized component of the program. While we believe strongly in the value of the MI teaching, coaching and consulting programs, we need to renew our commitment to creating capacities for the granting program to be fully realized in all MI communities.

FINDING 9

Not Worth the Uphill Climb

Key Insight: *Our research reveals that leaders often view grant-seeking as futile because they don't yet believe they have the time, the people, the cause, or the relationship to make it possible.*

The data reveal a common frustration in the process of grant-seeking. Leaders expressed that they believe grant-seeking is a waste of time because of their limited capacity (i.e.: staffing, time, impacts to share, etc.). It was common for respondents to share the frustration that if they were bigger, older, or had more staff they could receive more grants. Others believe they don't know where to look for grants, or how to find points of intersection.

The data show that smaller ministries are more likely to have the mindset that they, or their cause, is not "big enough" to pursue grants. They also feel a hurdle of not having the proper history or staff to pursue grants. These leaders commonly acknowledge not knowing how much emphasis to put on grant-seeking. Questions they raise include: How much time should they expect to spend on finding organizations that have a shared impact, what about time spent maintaining relationships, or how does that translate to the 10% recommended allocation of income?

Many leaders discouraged by grant-seeking revealed that they don't know how to establish a relationship with a grant-maker. One ministry said, "It feels like a waste of time to do all that research," implying that they believe time would be better spent if they had a starting point (i.e.: a database to help narrow down the search, or an introduction made). Treating foundations as champions takes time. It takes time to find the right person within a like-minded foundation to develop and maintain relationships.

SIGNIFICANCE

It is discouraging that some ministries continue to believe that grant-seeking is futile. It represents a missed opportunity for MI to foster the internal belief that with the time, the people, the cause and the relationships ministries already possess, they can begin the granting process. When leaders carry this false belief, they are less likely to apply for grants and is therefore a missed opportunity for receiving funds, increasing impact and being shaped by the process. It is worth knowing and being known by foundations, regardless of the outcome.

Consulting Spurs Growth

Key Insight: Our research reveals that leaders who connect to MI within consulting-level relationships are more likely to feel equipped and confident to apply for grants.

Ministry leaders can engage with MI through three levels of our program. The introductory level being teaching where leaders connect with MI through group learning environments such as workshops and webinars. The next level is coaching where in addition to group learning, leaders and area directors have a one-on-one relationship, operating based on the felt need of the ministry leader. The deepest level of the MI program is consulting, which builds on the teaching and coaching programs, and allows for the area director and leader to operate on the basis of assessed need by the area director. *The very nature of a consulting-level relationship with MI requires a leader's willingness to be held accountable.*

Data from our survey reveal that a gap exists between how coaching and consulting-level ministries responded about having their infrastructure in place, understanding how to research and have relationships with grant-makers, applying for and receiving grants. By and large, consulting-level ministry leaders responded more positively, saying that MI helps them have all of these important elements in place. Our data show collectively, 37% of consulting-level ministry respondents, compared to 21% of coaching-level ministry respondents, said it was very true that because of their work with MI they

have more of their infrastructure in place. The data also show a similar gap with ministries' relationships with grant-makers. Collectively, only 37% of coaching-level ministry respondents said it was somewhat or very true that because of MI they have better relationships with foundations, whereas 56% of consulting-level ministry respondents said this was somewhat or very true.

Finally, when leaders were asked if they had applied for, or received more grants as a result of the work they've done with MI, 41% of consulting-level ministry respondents, as compared to only 24% of coaching-level ministry respondents, said this was somewhat or very true.

The overall increase of positive responses from consulting-level leaders can be due to more investment with their area director. Leaders opt in for a coaching relationship with an area director, however it is the area director who invites select leaders into a consulting-level relationship. These leaders tend to be more engaged in their own learning and demonstrate a growth-oriented mindset. It could be that through the process of selecting a leader to engage in a consulting relationship, area directors are calling out potential, allowing the leader to rise to the occasion.

SIGNIFICANCE

This data is interesting because it illuminates that while coaching-level ministries are gaining some understanding of the fundamentals required for grant-seeking, a consulting-level relationship changes how a leader benefits from the full spectrum of our program. This finding indicates that while coaching-level relationships do bear some fruit, a consulting-level relationship between ministry leader and area director improves a leader's likelihood to be poised for growth that comes from the grant-seeking process and better positioned for grant-seeking success.

CONCLUSION

Insights Into Impact

The MI program is preparing leaders and organizations for the work of grant-seeking. The more deeply ministry leaders invest their time and energy with MI, the more likely they are to pursue granting with a Transformational Giving mindset, build healthy infrastructure and learn the skills necessary for effective grant-seeking.

MI's programs are designed to build upon each other. What leaders learn through our teaching-level programs are instrumental in helping them understand what is necessary for developing healthy income streams - including grant funding. MI area directors are able to go deeper into those topics with leaders through our coaching and consulting programs, guiding leaders through the practical application of the principles taught in our workshops.

Through our programs, leaders are strengthening their infrastructure and their own capability for effective and confident grant-seeking by developing a comprehensive fundraising plan, an involved and invested board, and the ability to clearly articulate their cause. Our assumption prior to this evaluation was that most leaders are connecting the dots between the infrastructure and capacity building MI helps them foster with their ability to seek grants. The results of this research challenged this assumption. We recognize that through simple changes in how we present our curriculum and coach leaders, we can highlight the correlation between strong infrastructure, stable income streams and an organization's grant readiness.

Another key insight revealed in this study is that when leaders adopt the Transformational Giving mindset, they increase their likelihood for viewing grant-seeking and grant-making as a mutually beneficial relationship. We see this most acutely when leaders work with an area director in a consulting-level relationship.

OUR INTENDED IMPACTS

Our primary organizational impact is to see transformed ministry fundraising. From this starting point, we seek effects in three specific areas in our programs as it relates to a ministry leader's ability to have fruitful grant-seeking experiences.

Ministries have the infrastructure and capability for effective grant-seeking.

Ministries have increased funding capacity because of increased grant-seeking activity.

Ministries and foundations have increased ability to fulfill their own missions.

Evaluation Methodology

The aim of our evaluation was to see what kind and quality of impact our teaching, coaching and consulting is having on ministry leaders' mindset, infrastructure and ability related to grantseeking. To understand this, we explored two broad evaluation questions:

1. *What kind and quality of impact are we having on ministry leaders and organizations?*
2. *What aspects of our program are causing this impact?*

Over the course of the project, we (a) developed and refined our ideas of intended impact and indicators, (b) designed and implemented a mixed methods outcome evaluation using both qualitative and quantitative means to collect and analyze data, (c) identified themes and findings, and (d) considered the implications to those findings for program improvement and innovation.

This project began by identifying and clarifying the intended impact of our capacity building programs. Once the ideas of impact had been developed, we used the Heart Triangle™ model to identify qualitative and quantitative indicators of impact on the mental, behavioral, and emotional changes in the ministry leaders with whom we work. We used these indicators to design a qualitative interview protocol and a quantitative questionnaire to evaluate progress toward achieving our intended impact.

Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis

For the qualitative portion of the evaluation, we designed an in-depth interview protocol to gain data about the structural, qualitative changes resulting from our program. We used a purposeful stratified sampling technique to select a representative sample from the population we serve. The number of program participants was 87. Our sample size was 24, drawn from the following strata of our population:

- Oregon area ministries
- Engagement level is either coaching or consulting
- Active account status
- Not contingent on grant reception from Mission Increase

Our interview team consisted of Tracy Nordyke, Kevin Whitman and Katie Matheny. We convened one-on-one interviews lasting from between 45 minutes and one hour in length and collected interview data.

We then analyzed the data inductively using a modified version of thematic analysis. Each interviewer implemented the first three phases of thematic analysis (becoming familiar with the data, generating initial codes, and identifying themes) for each interview. Together, we developed common themes from the entire data corpus identifying the overarching and inter-interview themes that emerged from the full scope of our data analysis to illuminate the collective insights and discoveries. We mapped these themes visually and examined the dynamics among the themes, causes and catalysts of the themes, new or surprising insights related to the themes, and relationships between the themes that were revealed in the data. We then determined the most significant and meaningful discoveries and brought them forward as findings to be described in the final phase of thematic analysis, this report.

Quantitative Data and Analysis

For the quantitative portion of the evaluation, we designed a questionnaire to collect data on our quantitative indicators of impact. We administered this instrument to 173 and had a response of 36, a 21% response rate. The data was analyzed primarily using measures of central tendency. We identified key insights, patterns, and gaps within the data and incorporated these discoveries into the related findings. The most significant insights from the quantitative data are described in the following narrative.

Steps Forward

MI's ability to help ministries grow through increased capacity for grant-seeking compels us to:

1. More explicitly connect our teaching and coaching outcomes to effective grant-seeking.

One way of doing this will be to include a grant-readiness icon on our material that will create visual and verbal cues for connecting application steps to increased grant-seeking capability. We will continue training area directors to recognize these intrinsic connections so they in turn can create associations for leaders they serve.

2. Present these findings to all Local Advisory Boards.

By educating Local Advisory Boards and funders on the impact grant-making has on MI leaders, they will be more likely to continue funding, or begin funding MI grants in their communities.

3. Continue emphasizing to area directors the value of engaging a greater number of ministries in consulting.

More ministries engaged in deeper level consulting means a greater potential for durable and transformational capacity building.

Footnotes

1. The community that is then created between nonprofits and their champions (people connected to the cause by means of their organization) whom God uses to advance the Gospel, begins with love for others, faith in God's provision and a willingness to be led by the Holy Spirit.

2. Consulting-level relationship: Each MI area director provides one-to-one consulting to a select group of ministries; offering a more comprehensive and in-depth look at ministry and fundraising operations. Consulting is done by invitation from the area director and is offered free-of-charge.

3. Through group and individual coaching, MI area directors work directly with ministry leaders, addressing particular organizational needs or concerns related to MI's teaching topics.

4. P-E-O (Participation-Engagement-Ownership) is a champion growth strategy. It describes the different types of involvement in the cause available to champions, including staff, givers and volunteers.

5. The capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices.

6. Leader is the one to present the issues they want to work through with their area director. Focus areas for coaching are driven mainly by the leader.

7. Area director is assessing the needs of the leader and, or, organization and consulting from that vantage point. Focus areas of consulting are driven mutually by the leader and their area director.

8. Workshops and webinars.

9. Spirituality infuses all three dimensions of the human experience. Rather than examining faith and spirituality as one aspect of our lives, separate from the others, it is examined in relationship to the mental, behavioral and emotional changes ministry leaders experience.

For the mental dimension, we reference Romans 12:2 where we are called to "be transformed by the renewing of our mind." In the behavioral dimension, we reference 2 Corinthians 5:17, where we recognize that "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." Finally, for the emotional domain, we reference the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5 and 1 John 4:7 where we are called to "...love one another, for love is from God and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God."

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