

# OVERVIEWING THE WORK OF A PRINCIPAL THROUGH A CULTURE-BASED ANALYSIS



## PRINCIPAL'S REPORT - MAY 2020 - INTERNATIONAL BIBLE TRAINING COLLEGE (IBTI)

### INTRODUCTION

'Life is a journey, not a race'...The most defined characteristic of the life of a school is methodology; from its didactics to its programmes and curriculums everything points to students' achievements and the reaching of learning and academic goals. It is therefore, at times such as these: unprecedented, uncharted, unclear and abstract that our identity, vision and performance could be shaken or threatened. When that very methodical life and process is interrupted it is hard to define and quantify progress and results unless we can establish a higher method of evaluation and analysis. This is the reason why I have chosen to write this report as an overview of my work through an analysis of the very culture we live by and act out of here at the IBTI. It pays to remind ourselves that amidst uncertainty, confusion and physical limitations, God reigns supreme, boundless and unmoved, and we can continue to trust in him and his eternal plan. Our vision, values, goals and methods are therefore not restricted or motivated by achievable targets or human approval but find their life and purpose in what we believe is the truth of God's heart for the individual learning and for the community he/she is serving.

The following analysis majors on seven different areas which map out some of the priorities that my work consists of:

### A. CREATING COMMUNITY

As a Bible College with a very unique identity in teaching individuals Applied theology and training them in Christian Service we are called to be a community that serves one another both within our school and without. By creating a strong and healthy internal community we are not only living out the very message of what it means to be followers of Christ, but we are modelling the very communities our students will establish, serve and ultimately lead.



#### 1. TABLE CONNECTION

As a way to increase the connection between the students and staff beyond the setting of classrooms and chapel, every week a student is invited to have lunch with the principal.

#### 2. COFFEE CONNECT



To further facilitate a connection between students and staff, I have introduced regular 'Coffee Connect' breaks in the morning. The whole body will meet every few weeks for 45 minutes of exchanging, interacting and enjoying a hot drink.



#### 3. STAFF INTRODUCTION IN PLACES OF WORK

As part of our induction programme, our first internal meeting with a new intake is followed by a tour for students to visit staff in their different departments. These take place at their respective places of work and includes an introduction of who they are and what they do.

#### 4. EVENTS

Another way of investing into our sense of community is having internal events such as a traditional Christmas breakfast, a story-telling event for second years to report about placements and one or two Students Days. Additionally, our Open Day and Graduation event enable us to gather the wider IBTI community including local churches, supporters and friends.



## B. DEVELOPING LONG-TERM SERVICE

The very identity of our college is defined by the word Training. Our programme and methods are not designed to inform or document individuals to reach immediate goals or emotionally driven service but to make them principled individuals by adopting and establishing Godly lifelong practices. In order to foster life commitment to service in our students we ourselves are committed to a culture of stability, long-term service and continuity.



### 1. PROVIDE STABLE LEADERSHIP

One of my responsibilities is to provide stable leadership as it ensures the ongoing development of our programme and methods as well as enabling us to build on the richness of experiences and long-standing relationships with individuals and organizations. Also, our staff and tutors are supported and empowered to focus on their areas of work and impartation to our students.

### 2. VISION

It is one of my priorities to make certain that the whole college body has understood and is committed to the overall vision, in our case that of helping our students discover, define and develop their calling and God-given gifts. These values are carried through a yearly vision statement, management direction, staff briefings, oversight of departmental work and a projection of the yearly school programme. This ensures that our vision is carried through new ideas, innovations and changes.



### 3. CONTINUITY



Given the 75 year history of our college, as the principal I am very aware of our legacy of adapting to present needs to serve in a way that is relevant to each generation and our calling to ensure this work continues as long as there is a need for people to be reached with the gospel. It is important not to miss the reality that 2020 marks the year that those considered part of the 'millennial' generation are at least 20 years old and with that comes a responsibility to start looking ahead to what the passing on of this heritage could look like - including starting to open up the question of succession.

## C. FACILITATING LEARNING AND DISCIPLESHIP

Learning is not an activity but an experience; even more so spiritual learning. The indifference towards learning and following, the lack of motivation to study and grow and the failing to reach spiritual maturity are often not a consequence of the individual lack of learning competences but rather a result of prior negative learning experience. We are committed to create and keep a healthy environment for learning and continue to raise students' achievement by improving the experience.

### 1. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

My ongoing work of developing the teaching programme allows the college to incorporate students' feedback, avoid overlaps in content, keep teaching methods contemporary and ensure our subjects expose students to material that is relevant to a life of servant leadership in the context of the unique opportunities and challenges which are part of the 21st century setting.



### 2. TUTOR RECRUITMENT

As our course is in applied theology, we value theoretical expertise as well as passion and application to life as characteristics that distinguish our tutors.



For example, in 2019/20 Dr. William Kay has started teaching Pentecostal Studies which is a topic he has not simply developed a subject for but in fact dedicated much of his life's work to. My work therefore includes supporting teacher effectiveness and retention.



### 3. DEVELOPING THE MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP COURSE

In the last year, a lot of work has gone into further developing our six months course. This included the organisation of a fuller induction plan upon arrival, the design of a tailor-made placement opportunity and adjustments to the teaching programme which allow students to maximise their study time. In 2019/2020 a student from India was granted a six months student visitor visa to attend the Missional Leadership Course.



### 4. ACCREDITING BODIES



Keeping up the IBTI's accreditation with ASIC and NCFE is a vital part of my work. This includes ongoing communication as well as preparation for inspections and making frequent re-adjustments to keep up-to-date with changing regulations. As part of my constant desire to grant our students the best education we can, we have re-assessed the sum of our programme and have established that our current curriculum qualifies for a higher level of qualification. Therefore, following the latest negotiations with NCFE, it was established that as of this year the college will be issuing NCFE diplomas rather than certificates.



### 5. INVESTING IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

One added aspect that I consider to be of paramount importance to the success of our educational programme is the lay-out of a learning environment that is inductive to effective studying and development. In the last academic year this has translated into repairs and renovations in the classrooms, re-organising the storage with study material and updating our library. We have also invested in technological equipment that enables tutors to apply contemporary and innovative teaching methods.



## D. FOCUSING ON HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

We believe individuals are created spirit, soul and body and true wholeness is found in the balance of these three areas. The study of Theology is not just a spiritual exercise but it will provide life for the spirit, fuel for the mind and tools for the hand. Our programme is consequently designed to challenge and correct wrong patterns, support weak areas and cater for growth in the three areas.

### 1. HABITAT



Since a clean, comfortable and safe environment is vital to the holistic development of individuals, in 2019/20 a big effort was made to improve current house-keeping practices, increase the hygiene standard and formulate standard procedures around running the household of the college. Additionally, work on our new building project has continued.

### 2. COUNSELLING

In addition to our academic programme, upon request students and staff have the opportunity to receive one-to-one counselling. This is an important expression of our culture of caring and vision to see people being transformed into whole individuals so that they embody the very redemption they are going on to proclaim to others. Given my own educational background in this field, I value carrying this responsibility as my personal contribution to ensuring the holistic development of our students.





### 3. LIFE APPLICATION



Life Application is a very important and dynamic part of our training and the character shaping of our students. Recently, the practice of giving out written feedback at the end of the first and second term was introduced followed by a mark of students' overall progress that is given at the end of the year. Also, starting from 2019/20 ministerial feedback is mainly provided by students' mentors as part of their overall mentoring journey.

### 4. CREATIVE MINISTRY

By overseeing our different creative ministry groups I aim to ensure our students are exposed to a practical and creative form of training during their time at the college. This allows them to apply their skills, delve deeper into their passions and further explore potential areas of interest. In 2019/20, we were able to offer students the choice between the following creative ministry groups: Performing Arts & Evangelism, Event Organizing, Worship Team, Social Action, Empathy for Older People, Social Media and Discipleship.



### 5. MENTORING

As it was mentioned above, our mentoring programme has recently been enlarged to opening up a platform for students to receive feedback on their ministerial involvement as well as personal development within the context of a safe relationship. The fact that our students highly appreciate this part of our programme shows how important one-to-one care is in a world that tends to prefer focussing on masses rather than individual lives. Therefore, I allocate mentors and students with careful consideration and have introduced regular mentoring briefings which create opportunities for exchange and impartation around topics that leaders often come across in their mentoring of this current generation of students.



## E. FOSTERING A SENSE OF BELONGING

We believe God is one and the church is His body thus belonging to Him. In belonging to the one true God, the church is therefore one universal entity which although may be divided in sub-culture and subgroups, it is united by the very life of the Spirit. As an interdenominational and international college we have maintained a unique position which has prepared our students not only for geographical and cross cultural ministry but has enlarged their sense of belonging to the wider church.

### 1. PLACEMENTS AND CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Placements and regular church attendance expose our students to different ways of doing church and give them the opportunity to learn from a variety of leadership styles. They learn to worship with congregations of different denominations and traditions which broadens their view of what church is and develops a sense of familiarity with the universal body as well as the ability to adapt to that which is different.



### 2. PUBLICITY

As the principal, I aim to maintain our connection with friends, supporters and former students by sending regular newsletters and through our presence on social media. Apart from having become an important tool for the recruitment of students who are already in our circle of connections, this enables us to continue our link with people from many different countries.



### 3. MISSION

Being an international college, many of our graduates are now serving in different parts of the world. By supporting them, keeping in touch and visiting them as a college we often get involved in mission. Given that many at IBTI engage in some form of cross-cultural service, our students are automatically exposed to the dynamics around missions as their awareness of the great commission and its global scale increases.



### 4. CONNECTION WITH STUDENT WORLD




When a new student arrives at the IBTI we do not only welcome the individual but our culture is that of embracing them along with their particular world. In practice, this refers to our way of being interested in their lives, allowing students to entertain guests on our premises and making an effort to meet their parents and link up with their churches. Therefore, the community we belong to as a college increases with each new connection.

## G. ENSURING CARE THROUGH SAFETY


One of the clearest expressions of love is safety. We protect and keep safe those we love. As a principal I am not motivated by a business goal or legal compliance but rather by God's love for his people. To establish and maintain health and safety standards within the school is therefore not a dry technical process but a translation of heart principles. Assessing risks, identifying solutions, creating policies and implementing procedures becomes a natural, caring exercise which leads to a safer environment.

### 1. ESTABLISHING SAFETY MEASURES

The development of policies and implementation of respective procedures is very important to make certain the safety of students and staff. Therefore, to ensure appropriate training of staff, frequent risk-assessments, ongoing awareness of changing regulations and updating of internal practices, I have arranged several health & safety meetings for the whole team and more frequent and organised inductions for staff and students. In 2019/20 this work  revolved particularly around regulations for overnight guests, development of policies and staff inductions.



### 2. MANAGEMENT OF VOLUNTARY WORKERS

Every year, the identification of needs and necessary tasks and the development of respective job-descriptions needs careful consideration. Vacancies cannot always be replaced directly, which often requires an exploration of skills and gifts of staff and the re-allocation of responsibilities. For example, in 2019/20 the cook could not simply be substituted which therefore  moved me into a work of restructuring a whole department and making changes in a number of jobs descriptions.



### 3. RETENTION OF STAFF

The recruitment and retention of staff who offer their services on a voluntary basis requires much dedication and time as I aim to find ways to foster continuous motivation in the people who make up our working team and our team of internal and external lecturers. Through this effort I intend to ensure the turn-over of staff is minimized so that the organization can function with stability and continuity from one year to the next.



## G. EMPOWERING A FAITH JOURNEY

The history of the college points to a faith mandate. Its institution was not commissioned by a denomination, was not supported by a business plan or sponsored by external bodies. It was rather conceived by faith in response to a particular need. Throughout the years I believe this DNA has been the very effectiveness of the college in empowering students to learn and live by the same principle.

### 1. STAFF AS GOD'S RESOURCES

From the very beginning, the IBTI has depended on God's provision of staff who were moved to serve the college. To this day the IBTI is run by people who are not simply taking up any job that was available but rather have embarked on a journey of selfless service to the kingdom through their work at the school. As the principal, it is my responsibility to ensure that recruitment continues to take place in a way that is linked to people's sense of calling and it can therefore never take place without prayer, discernment and faith for God to initiate this process and continue to provide workers for the college.



### 2. FINANCES

Our finances as a college have always been a journey of faith. In the same way, we make an effort to help students in their individual situations to learn how to respond to their needs with faith. This entails encouraging our students, motivating respective church leaders for support and looking for ways to navigate our expenses as a school without a steady or predictable income of finance.

### 3. INVESTING IN A NETWORK OF SUPPORTERS

One of the ways in which God provides for the work of the IBTI is moving his people to give. As a principal, I therefore make it a priority to express our gratitude on behalf of the college. For example, in December 2019 we had a visit in connection with the handing over of a donation to the college for which we publicly thanked and honoured our guests. In general, I with the team make an effort to nurture our relationships to friends and supporters through regular updates, invitations, visits, conversations on the phone etc. and to keep those connections strong even in light of the recently updated GDPR regulations.



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#### Annotations



= This symbols marks innitiatives introduced since the last Principal's Report in April 2018.

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