

Life Scaffolding for Effective Long-Term Language Learning

To set up *Life Scaffolding* for effective language learning, learners will need to reflect on and address three major areas of life. **QUESTION:** Based on your knowledge, personal and coaching experience, which strategies will need to be in place in each of the areas below to act as strong scaffolding for language learning over the long-haul?

1. MINDSET - The learner fully embraces the status and role of “learner”. Some strategies might include

- A commitment to engagement in language and culture learning until their goal is reached
- Willing to make sacrifices in order to make timely progress
- Willingness to ask for help
- Intentionally surrounding yourself with wise counselors
- Willingness to prioritize language learning above other work activities

2. ENVIRONMENT - The learner and his team live and work in a way that supports language and culture learning long-term. The environment is safe: there is a spirit of encouragement, cooperation, humility and sharing rather than one of competition, pride and comparison. Some strategies might include

Learner

- Having a strong faith life - ability to do “self-teaching and care” when necessary
- Intentionally befriending others who are doing what they are, and are ordering their lives similarly.
- Willing to live where native speakers of the target language live/work
- Seeking relationships with other language learners of like mind

Team

- There is a strong and positive faith-life.
- The community creates a sense of corporate belonging and purpose to each member of the team
- The team provides accountability for learners by those who are knowledgeable about language learning and can give object feedback.
- The team provides regular assessment of learners’ progress.
- The team protects learners’ time and doesn’t require them to take on ministry before language goals are met
- The team gives special attention to struggling learners

3. LIFESTYLE - The learner chooses to order their life according to local rhythms, customs and social norms. A few strategies include

- Dependence on the Holy Spirit to empower them for the task - Strong prayer life
- Regular reflection on the effectiveness of their efforts
- Discipline in how much time they spend online and connecting with those in the home country
- Increasingly relying on locals and their knowledge to help them adapt to local life
- Getting their social needs met primarily by local people and resources.
- They protect their health:
 - Getting enough sleep and regular rest
 - Daily exercise and study breaks
 - Diet that contributes to a healthy brain and lots of energy
- They get advice from knowledgeable people about how to live in challenging conditions
 - light deprivation , changes in climate, pollution (high noise levels, dirty air or water)