

How to Use *Go Tell It* on Your Short-Term Missions Trip

BEFORE YOUR TRIP

Step #1: Know the place.

Plow through data from the CIA World Factbook. How big is the country? What's its history? What's the current political situation? What's the religious climate? Read articles about that country and the city or region where you're headed. (Pages 39, 42) Know cultural faux pas.

Step #2: Know your game plan.

Know and practice greetings in the local language. If you don't know the language, arrange for a translator. Develop as firm an itinerary as you can with your contact. Know how you will get to places and how much that should cost. (Pages 41-42)

Step #3: Get your stuff (and your mindset) together.

Pack correctly. (Pages 48-49) Know the Society of Professional Journalist's Code of Ethics: Seek truth and report it. Minimize harm. Act independently. Be accountable. (Page 56) Decide on the best photo and video gear for you. (Pages 113-116)

DURING YOUR TRIP

Step #4: Pay attention.

Find answers to the questions: "What is God up to?" and "How can people participate in it?" Observe without obstructing. Report fairly and accurately. Do everything for the glory of God first. (Pages 45-55)

Step #5: Look for the story.

Think in terms of what God is already doing in that place, even without you there. Identify the monster that God's people are working to defeat. (Page 66) Find the basic human truth within the story. (Page 69) Look for the Other—the person who is usually overlooked. (Page 72) Write a one-sentence statement about what this story is about. (Page 75) Recognize the elements of the story: characters, conflict, resolution, universal themes, redemption. (Pages 76-77)

Step #6: Take notes, video, and pictures. Gather stories to share at home.

Tips for interviewing: Write down at least five good questions beforehand. Ask open-ended questions—questions that can't be answered with "yes" or "no." Ask "how" and "why" questions to elicit more interesting responses. Prospect for anecdotes and details. Use silence, and don't be afraid of it. Get the basic details right. (Pages 93-94) Record as much sensory detail and dialogue as you can.

Tips for photographs: Focus on composition and technique: Always be aware of light: the optimum times and places, plus challenges to overcome. Fill the frame. Use the rule of thirds. Find a clean background. Take pictures of real people doing real things. Take scene-setter, medium-range, and detail pictures. (Pages 122-123) Take names. Get permission. Back up your work! (Pages 127-130)

Tips for video: Interview the person once before the on-camera interview. (Pages 138-139) Work hard to get high-quality audio. (Pages 150-154) Get plenty of b-roll. (Pages 140-142) Back up your work! (Page 154)

AFTER YOUR TRIP

Step #7: Get your content together.

As you write or edit video, keep the story simple, with one central point. (Page 150) Build scenes using details and dialogue. (Page 99) Incorporate your interviews, using them to flesh out the scene. (Page 109)

Step #8: Check your content for accuracy and safety.

Make sure all names and places are correct. If you are reporting on a sensitive area, take your cues from the people on the ground. Publish as much as you can, but only as much as the most conservative people with skin in that game will allow. In security-sensitive areas, don't let the strands of *name*, *location*, and *ministry* touch. Pick one and tell only that. (Page 36)

Step #9: Take your photos, videos, and articles, and GO TELL IT.