



The Five "Minds" of the Cross-Cultural Church Planter in the 21st Century¹

1. **Disciplined Mind** - Although much of the emphasis today is on interpersonal and entrepreneurial skills, the successful cross-cultural worker in the 21st century will have also mastered certain skills to use and impart to others. Those without skills will be at a disadvantage or always working for others. Christian workers will have to acquire and upgrade sets of skills. Those skills may include church planting expertise, evangelism and discipleship, theological education, and leadership / management skills.
2. **Synthesizing Mind** - Whereas in the past it was important to "know" much and have mastered great volumes of information, the leader in the future has ample information at his disposal. A crucial skill for the 21st century will be to take information from disparate sources, understand and analyze that information, and then relate it to the problem at hand. For the 21st century cross-cultural church planter or church planting team, being "knowledgeable" is not as important as being able to "synthesize" information and be skilled at networking.
3. **Creating Mind** - The creating mind breaks new ground, puts forth new ideas, poses unfamiliar questions, conjures up fresh ways of thinking, and arrives at unexpected answers. The successful church planter will approach his context and community with new eyes and ears in order to dream of new ways of ministering and reaching the unreached.
4. **Respectful Mind** - The 21st century leader will be aware and welcome differences between human individuals and between cultural groups as he seeks to work with them. Cross-cultural church planters will partner with local Christians early on, engaging them as they interpret the culture and context together.
5. **Ethical Mind** - The ethical mind works from values and not just pragmatism. Values are based on biblical worldview, one's ministry context, and the desires and needs of the culture in which one lives and ministers. Values are the foundation of ministry.

¹ Howard Gardner, *Five Minds for the Future*, Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2008.