

The Christian Effectiveness Model

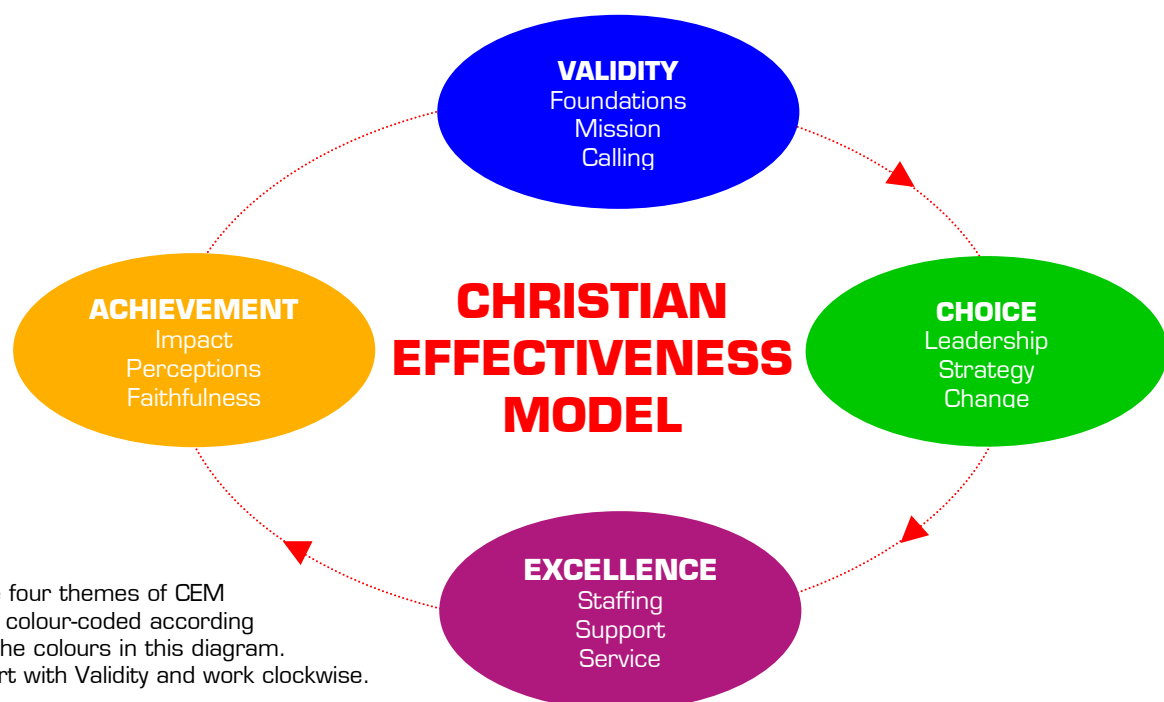
Part 2: Questions and tests

HC7 Health-checks series

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The Christian Effectiveness Model (CEM) is designed to test the effectiveness of any Christian mission agency or church enterprise. This second paper shows, in full, the 48 questions which form the core of the Model, together with the sample tests for each question. The questions are divided into four themes (shown below). Each theme has three sections. To understand how to use the Model, it is essential to have first read Part 1 in [HC6](#) on this website.

This is the October 2015 (updated in December 2024) version which includes a recasting of all the questions, revised explanations and other new material. The Model will continue to be updated as users and readers suggest improvements.



Using the model

A summary of the Introduction paper

The following describes the simpler form of the Christian Effectiveness Model which should prove sufficient for most churches.

This page summarises the Introduction paper (HC6) but that should still be read by everyone taking part.

Four *themes* for effectiveness

The ***Christian Effectiveness Model*** takes four ***themes*** and asks twelve questions about each one. The themes are:

- 1 The VALIDITY theme
- 2 The CHOICE theme
- 3 The EXCELLENCE theme
- 4 The ACHIEVEMENT theme

Twelve *questions* for each theme

In each case the twelve questions are divided into three ***sections*** of four questions each.

The themes and sections are listed on the diagram on the previous page which gives a visual representation of what the Model covers.

The questions have several phrases within them and so any one of them may be seen as a series of linked questions. This is deliberate because the Model has to cover a wide range of organisations.

Five *sample tests* for each question

To help you make the assessment each question has five ***sample tests***. The model depends on the questions not the tests so these may be varied to fit your organisation. You are not expected to be doing everything listed in the tests!

In the simpler form of the Model there are six possible assessments for each question:

- 1 Doing well
- 2 Reasonably well
- 3 Needs improvement
- 4 Weak
- 5 Serious problems

There is then a sixth option for 'Not applicable', but this should only be used in special cases and is not intended as an excuse for avoiding issues!

Assessment Group

The review is carried out by an ***Assessment Group*** of various stakeholders. This might be four to seven people who between them understand attitudes and views throughout the board, staff, volunteers and beneficiaries and who have a wide perspective on the organisation's work.

The final two pages of this second part of the Model show a pro forma sheet which can be used by the group to record their assessment for each question.

No need to cover all four themes

You may find it preferable to deal with just one of the four themes and come back to the other three later. The Model depends on the whole, but can be carried out on one theme at a time.

A more detailed application

There is a more thorough way of using the Model which involves a grading system, possibly stakeholder research, an external observer, etc. There is a detailed manual for this and a licence system so that I can train the Assessment Group.

The simpler form of the Model described above will be sufficient for most organisations. Everything needed for this application is included in this paper and the previous one.

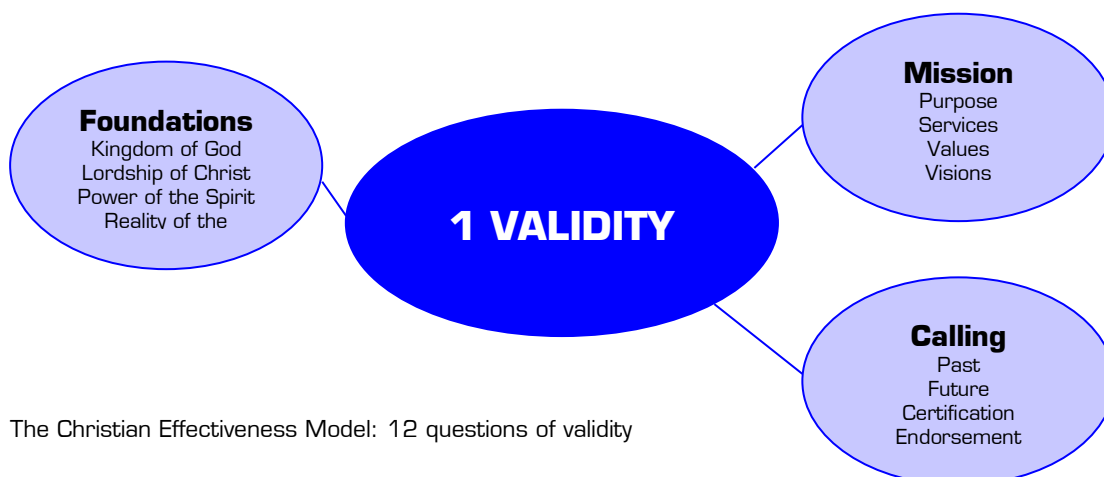
The VALIDITY theme

Does the organisation make the right strategic choices?

Summary

The following 12 questions, when put together, seek to build up evidence of genuine validation for the ministry of the organisation in terms of its Christian basis, what it is doing and where it is going. Validity is taken to mean 'being within the will of God'. This area is fundamental to an understanding of effectiveness, but is of course difficult to assess. It has to be the first of the four themes as failure here makes further questioning irrelevant.

<i>Ref</i>	<i>SECTION Question title</i>	<i>Sub-title</i>
FOUNDATIONS – testing whether the organisation can properly be termed 'Christian'		
V1	The Kingdom of God	Christian basis
V2	The Lordship of Christ	Christian practice
V3	The power of the Spirit	Christian expectation
V4	The reality of the world	Christian involvement
MISSION – testing for clarity of what the organisation is seeking to do and to achieve		
V5	Purpose	The question 'Why?'
V6	Services	The questions 'What?' and 'For whom?'
V7	Values	The question 'How?'
V8	Visions	The question 'Where?'
CALLING – testing whether God is calling the organisation to continue its work		
V9	Past	Evidence from history
V10	Future	Evidence for continuation
V11	Certification	Evidence from those to whom it is accountable
V12	Endorsement	Evidence from other external leaders



The Christian Effectiveness Model: 12 questions of validity

V1-4: THE VALIDITY THEME – Questions of Foundations

These test whether the organisation can properly be termed 'Christian'.

V1 THE KINGDOM OF GOD – Christian basis

How clearly is the organisation founded on the Christian creeds, and committed to seeking and fulfilling God's will, giving glory to him, and extending his Kingdom?

Sample tests *(cf.A12)*

- 1 a statement or understanding of Christian creed/foundation (even if deliberately broad and inclusive) around which board, staff and volunteers are clearly united;
- 2 the organisation's purpose being part of one mandated in Scripture for God's people to be engaged in (eg. to preach the gospel, strengthen the Church, care for the needy); *(cf.V5)*
- 3 the overall vision clearly seeking to achieve or support growth in the Kingdom of God;
- 4 (if applicable) agreement by external advisers that this work can legitimately be carried out by an independent Christian organisation rather than by local churches alone;
- 5 publicity, annual reports, etc. demonstrating that the organisation is committed to seeking and doing God's will, rather than following its own ambitions. *(cf.V10)*

V2 THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST – Christian practice

To what extent does the organisation function in a way, and its board, staff and volunteers relate in a way, that clearly reflects the Lordship of Jesus Christ, rather than merely human foundation and endeavour?

Sample tests

- 1 selection procedures for leaders, staff and volunteers that include appropriate requirement for Christian commitment (except in clearly defined circumstances);
- 2 agreement that there are open, honest and loving relationships between board and staff/volunteers and within these groups; *(cf.C3)*
- 3 no practices within the organisation which are judged to be unethical or questionable for a Christian enterprise;
- 4 the testimony of those who deal with the organisation (including suppliers and those who share facilities) that the organisation operates in a special and attractive way;
- 5 evidence that study of the Bible and prayer have a high priority in every area of the organisation's work and at every level of decision-making.

V3 THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT – Christian expectation

How open to new directions, but with clear discernment, is there, with a clear expectation of the Holy Spirit's work in the lives of people, both those who serve the organisation and those it serves?

Sample tests

- 1 an overall vision that is acknowledged as being beyond human power to achieve; *(cf.V5)*
- 2 an expectation of spiritual development for beneficiaries, but also for supporters and staff, as a result of the organisation's work;
- 3 evidence from programmes and literature that prayer is expected to be effective and that prayer supporters are valued members of the overall team; *(cf.E5)*
- 4 staff and volunteers respected for their spiritual gifts, irrespective of their position;
- 5 an openness to God's surprises, shown by flexibility in planning and demonstrated by all leaders in what they teach and how they work.

V4 **THE REALITY OF THE WORLD** – Christian involvement

How much understanding through practical experience of the physical and spiritual culture in which its beneficiaries live does the organisation have, so that it can work with integrity within that culture?

Sample tests *(cf.A8)*

- 1 leaders and staff living within the culture in which the organisation is working, or with recent experience and current understanding of that culture;
- 2 any activity that researches and monitors the changing environment so that decision-making is informed and trends are predicted;
- 3 the use of external advisers to help the organisation understand the culture in which its beneficiaries are placed;
- 4 any placing of offices and staff within the culture being reached, rather than in areas that the organisation might find easier or more conducive to work in; *(cf.E2)*
- 5 the testimony of beneficiaries that the organisation understands both them and their needs and works from this basis.

V5-8: THE VALIDITY THEME – Questions of Mission

These test for clarity of what the organisation is seeking to do and to achieve.

V5 **PURPOSE** – The question ‘Why?’

How well understood and applied is the purpose of the organisation, and the overall vision behind it, and how far does this provide a motivating force which unites and energises all its board, staff and volunteers?

Sample tests *(cf.A1)*

- 1 staff and volunteers able to articulate the organisation’s overall vision and purpose and seeking to work to these in all they do;
- 2 leaders regularly restating the overall vision and clearly working to this in their strategic decision-making; *(cf.C5)*
- 3 evidence that each department is applying the purpose to its own work, creating a unity throughout the whole structure;
- 4 any form of investigation of the overall vision and purpose over the recent past;
- 5 the testimony of those who deal with the organisation that it has real purpose and passion for its work at every level of staffing.

V6 **SERVICES** – The questions ‘What?’ and ‘For whom?’

To what extent are the services provided consistent with the purpose, meeting the real needs of clearly identified groups of beneficiaries, and offered with genuine love?

Sample tests *(cf.A3)*

- 1 board, staff and volunteers able to identify each group of services that the organisation offers, and describe the beneficiaries each is intended for;
- 2 any recent check that each service provided is still the best one to serve the purpose;
- 3 specific evidence throughout board, staff and volunteers of a real concern for the needs of, and a commitment to, beneficiaries, with clear Christian compassion where appropriate;
- 4 ongoing research into how beneficiaries react to each of the organisation’s services, which then has a significant input into decision-making; *(cf.C6)*
- 5 staff time given to mapping change and forecasting trends, leading to adjustment of services so that these remain relevant to beneficiaries.

V7 **VALUES** – The question ‘How?’

How consistent are the values with the organisation’s Christian foundation, purpose and services, and how effectively are they shared by its board, staff and volunteers, and applied in a coherent way to each department of its work?

Sample tests

- 1 board, staff and volunteers able to name and explain the organisation’s values;
- 2 testimony from those who deal with the organisation in any way that these values are worked out in practice;
- 3 evidence that all leaders own these values and seek to take decisions about future direction and activity in their light;
- 4 the wholehearted compliance with these values in every area of the organisation’s ministry (internal and external); *(cf. V2)*
- 5 any recent review to ensure that the values are consistent with the foundations of the organisation’s beliefs and work.

V8 **VISIONS** – The question ‘Where?’

How accurately could it be said that the organisation defines and develops challenging visions of the impact it seeks to have based on its purpose, services and values, and how focused is its ministry on working towards these?

Sample tests *(cf. CB, A2)*

- 1 some form of current vision statement, outlining the overall direction the organisation is seeking to take by listing planned achievements for the future;
- 2 staff and volunteers able to articulate such visions, and with a genuine desire to work towards these;
- 3 evidence that such visions depend on God’s work – eg. time set aside to pray for them;
- 4 regular monitoring of progress towards such visions and adjustments to services or resources in the light of this; *(cf. C12)*
- 5 an excitement among board, staff and volunteers that the organisation can, through God, achieve great things.

V9-12: THE VALIDITY THEME – Questions of Calling

These seek to test whether God is calling the organisation to continue its work.

V9 **PAST** – Evidence from history

How strong is the evidence for believing that God called this organisation into existence, has empowered its work until now, and has used it to bring blessing to his Church and world?

Sample tests

- 1 a clear sense of overall vision in the original founding, and in any subsequent rebirth;
- 2 stories from a variety of external sources telling of God’s clear hand upon the foundation and subsequent work of the organisation;
- 3 stories of specific and planned changes in the lives of beneficiaries or the building up of the Church over the lifetime of the organisation;
- 4 evidence that God has still blessed the work to the present day through the changes it is bringing about (best assessed with help from an external adviser);
- 5 careful assessment and explanation of any times of particular difficulty over the years. *(cf. A11)*

V10 **FUTURE** – Evidence for continuation

How strong is the evidence for believing that God is still calling this organisation to continue its ministry (even if with changed services), rather than to close down, amalgamate or give way to something new?

Sample tests

- 1 any recent consideration of closure or amalgamation with another organisation, with the considered belief that it was right to continue;
- 2 attested signs that this work is still within God's purposes and the enthusiastic belief of various stakeholders that this is so;
- 3 evidence of an unabated and continuing need for the work to continue among its beneficiaries;
- 4 the on-going provision of human, financial and physical resources to enable the work to continue; *(cf.A4)*
- 5 a careful examination, preferably by an external adviser, of whether there are now other organisations better able to fulfil the needs at present being met.

V11 **CERTIFICATION** – Evidence from those to whom it is accountable

To what extent do the parties to whom the organisation is accountable, or who work alongside it, continue to endorse its ministry both in the present and for the future?

Sample tests *(cf.A5-7)*

- 1 positive assessments by any parent, co-ordinating or denominational agency to which the organisation is accountable;
- 2 similar assessments from others who work alongside the organisation in some way;
- 3 levels of, as appropriate, support, membership or sales continuing or growing with encouraging proportions of renewals or repeat business;
- 4 lack of any specific criticisms by the Charity Commissioners, the auditors or other such legislative bodies;
- 5 approval of local/national secular agencies and of corporate/trust funders for the work of the organisation, except in cases where clear Christian principles are at stake.

V12 **ENDORSEMENT** – Evidence from other external leaders

How clear is the endorsement of the organisation's work today and for the future from independent and respected Christian leaders, from other Christian bodies, and from external advisers?

Sample tests *(cf.A5-7)*

- 1 written and spoken endorsement from Christian leaders of national or, if relevant, local standing who are not directly linked to the organisation itself;
- 2 similar endorsement from the leaders of other Christian groups working in related fields; *(cf.E6)*
- 3 validation of the organisation's work from any recent investigation by an external adviser;
- 4 a proper assessment of any known critical comment from such groups with appropriate action taken as a result;
- 5 no evidence of any view from such groups that the organisation's existence is in itself hindering other Christian activity.

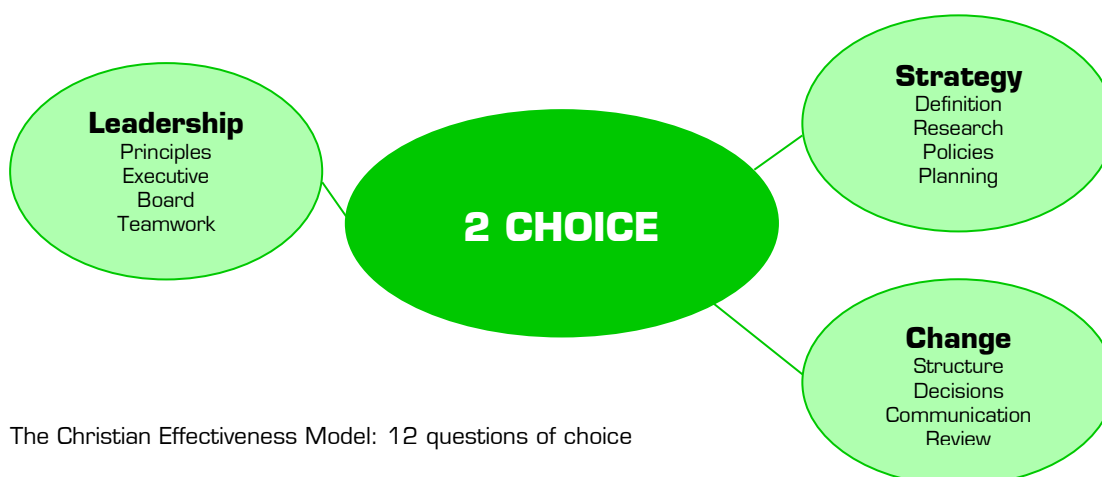
The CHOICE theme

Does the organisation make the right strategic choices?

Summary

Having tested the validity of ministry, the second theme of 12 questions and tests focuses on the big choices of leadership and strategy and the resulting structures to be set up and decisions to be taken. To be effective in its mission, an organisation needs to have effective leadership and to have set, and as necessary to change, strategies to achieve the intended results in the best possible way.

<i>Ref</i>	<i>SECTION Question title</i>	<i>Sub-title</i>
LEADERSHIP – testing the quality of the organisation’s leaders		
C1	Principles	The practice of Christian leadership
C2	Executive	The practice of staff leadership
C3	Board	The practice of trustee leadership
C4	Teamwork	The practice of working together
STRATEGY – testing the ability of the organisation to master the issues		
C5	Definition	A mind for alternatives
C6	Research	A mind for beneficiaries
C7	Policies	A mind for consistency
C8	Planning	A mind for the future
CHANGE – testing the ability of the organisation to review and adapt its work		
C9	Structure	Ready for changes
C10	Decisions	Making changes
C11	Communication	Explaining changes
C12	Review	Assessing changes



The Christian Effectiveness Model: 12 questions of choice

C1–4: THE CHOICE THEME – Questions of Leadership

These test the quality of the organisation's leaders.

C1 **PRINCIPLES** – The practice of Christian leadership

How consistently are biblical/Christian patterns of and qualifications for leadership identified and adhered to throughout the organisation, with styles of leadership that are appropriate for current needs?

Sample tests

- 1 biblical patterns and principles studied and applied for leaders and their selection, with the focus on servanthood rather than status or power;
- 2 an excellent modelling of the organisation's values by each staff leadership body (eg. in conduct of meetings, individual behaviour, etc.); *(cf. V7)*
- 3 general respect throughout the organisation for leaders (and their styles of working) by those who are led;
- 4 leaders who give direction, having enough time to think, to pray, to plan and to develop others, rather than being caught up in administrative detail;
- 5 good delegation throughout the organisation, giving people responsibility and support in an appropriate balance, and a flow of new leaders from within. *(cf. E4)*

C2 **EXECUTIVE** – The practice of staff leadership

To what extent are the Chief Executive and any other executive staff well informed, respected for their styles and qualities of leadership, and successful in developing the organisation towards its overall vision?

Sample tests

- 1 a Chief Executive (and other executive staff) with self-awareness who understands his/her leadership style and is able to adjust it to fit different situations as necessary;
- 2 respect for the Chief Executive from board, staff and different groups of stakeholders;
- 3 a Chief Executive who is approachable, who knows his or her staff, and who ensures they are managed well; *(cf. E1)*
- 4 evidence that hard decisions have been taken, and taken well, rather than shirked, and difficult situations handled with wisdom and sensitivity; *(cf. A11)*
- 5 agreement that the organisation handled the last change in CEO post-holder well.

C3 **BOARD** – The practice of trustee leadership

How well is the board working in harmony with the staff, with necessary skills and time, a clear commitment to and understanding of the organisation, and good relations with the Chief Executive?

Sample tests

- 1 the board working to a clear role in setting direction and monitoring progress which is understood by board and staff and clearly distinguished from day-to-day management;
- 2 little evidence of any frustration by staff at a board who do not know them or understand their work;
- 3 board and its committee meetings chaired and working well, with good levels of attendance and actions that are communicated well and put into practice speedily;
- 4 a board that is of appropriate size, possesses necessary skills and experience (eg. finance, theology, missiology, strategy), and has a satisfactory gender and age profile;
- 5 whoever chairs respected by board and staff for his or her leadership, and having an excellent working relationship with the Chief Executive.

C4 **TEAMWORK** – The practice of working together

How truthfully could it be said that each leadership body (board and staff) is working well as a team, and teamwork throughout the organisation creating high levels of achievement and satisfaction?

Sample tests

- 1 board, committees and executive seen to be working well as teams with clear roles and high levels of commitment and mutual support;
- 2 board and staff meetings and conferences felt to be productive and well led, with clear decisions and action taken, and with minimal wastage of time;
- 3 a positive impression of teamwork by all team members throughout the organisation, with the provision of training both for leaders and for members;
- 4 teams that display high levels of commitment and understanding of each other within a Christian context;
- 5 a concern in teams for people's whole lives, not just their workplace input.

C5-8: THE CHOICE THEME – Questions of Strategy

These test the ability of the organisation to master the issues.

C5 **DEFINITION** – A mind for alternatives

How carefully have the organisation's leaders considered all possible strategies, then chosen those they believe will be best to achieve their visions, and how well are they working to them?

Sample tests

- 1 leadership bodies setting aside adequate time at meetings to consider strategic issues rather than just reacting to matters of daily urgency;
- 2 any recent listing and study of alternative strategies to achieve visions, with clear decisions taken;
- 3 any recent and realistic listing and study of the various resources (human, financial, physical, spiritual, goodwill) at the organisation's disposal with clear decisions taken;
- 4 the testimony of staff that visionaries and strategic planners are working in harmony;
- 5 the clear consistency of present strategies with the organisation's Christian values. *(cf. V7)*

C6 **RESEARCH** – A mind for beneficiaries

To what extent is the choice of these strategies based on the present and future needs and expectations of the (potential) beneficiaries, rather than on previous needs or the preferences of the organisation itself?

Sample tests

- 1 resources deployed for the collection of research data on forecasts and developments relating to beneficiaries and their environment to predict future needs and expectations;
- 2 a budget for market research into present views of the organisation's services from those who use them, and a deliberate attempt to understand beneficiary needs; *(cf. A6)*
- 3 the wise use of future predictions about the culture in which the beneficiaries are placed to enable proactive planning for future needs; *(cf. V4)*
- 4 discussion and co-operation with other organisations in the sector to promote Christian partnership, rather than rivalry, in meeting beneficiaries' needs;
- 5 the examination of alternative strategies to ensure the best value of output for the cost of input.

C7 POLICIES – A mind for consistency

How clearly thought out and, as appropriate, Christian are the policies that are being applied on both major issues relating to the organisation and on more general areas of life today?

Sample tests

- 1 any stated and applied policies on funding issues such as methods of appeal, use of Lottery funding, use of trusts within the context of the Christian values; *(cf.E10)*
- 2 any stated and applied policies on placement of staff, whether for office bases, regional field staff, or international deployment;
- 3 any guidelines on when volunteers are to be sought and used rather than paid staff;
- 4 clear policies on issues, as appropriate, linked with discrimination, gender, age and the environment;
- 5 the testimony of staff and volunteers that they know and understand all such policies, and can play a part in decisions about them.

C8 PLANNING – A mind for the future

Assuming there is an appropriate system of planning ahead for the organisation, within the context of the overall vision and God's sovereignty, how much do such plans stretch people's faith, and are they reviewed and updated as necessary?

Sample tests *(cf.V8, A2/3)*

- 1 any documentation demonstrating a clear system of step-by-step planning based on aims and targets or other performance indicators;
- 2 an appropriate balance of short-, medium- and long-term planning within a Christian context that acknowledges that the organisation seeks to fit into God's plans; *(cf.V1)*
- 3 plans that demonstrate an understanding of changes in the market-place for beneficiaries (and other stakeholders) rather than simply following previous ideas; *(cf.A6)*
- 4 challenging aims and targets set that demonstrate innovative thinking and that force the organisation out of its comfort zones;
- 5 any study of the organisation's history, and review of the recent past, to assess what may need to change and where God is taking the work. *(cf.V9)*

C9-12: THE CHOICE THEME – Questions of Change

These test the ability of the organisation to review and adapt its work.

C9 STRUCTURE – Ready for changes

How effectively is the organisation structured to serve well its purpose and visions, to adapt to meet changing needs, and to enable staff and volunteers to feel involved, secure and well managed?

Sample tests

- 1 any visual depiction of structure which all feel comfortable with, where everyone has value and where they can understand how their work affects the mission of the whole;
- 2 any recent appraisal of the organisation's decision-making processes (both management and governance) to check these serve the purpose and visions;
- 3 agreement that visionaries, planners, pastors, managers and administrators are working together in harmony;
- 4 positive meetings and teamwork at all levels throughout the organisation; *(cf.C4)*
- 5 lack of frustration at poor or slow decision-making caused by rigid or hierarchical structures now inappropriate for present needs. *(cf.E9)*

C10 **DECISIONS** – Making changes

How open is the organisation to change, and how well is the organisation able to make bold but wise decisions for change wherever necessary and to handle the ensuing process well?

Sample tests *(cf.A10)*

- 1 evidence of a boldness to make innovative changes to fit needs without destabilising the organisation; *(cf.V3)*
- 2 any recent changes where there was understanding of the vision that drove the change, and a positive review of the way it was handled and the impact it had;
- 3 any systems that demonstrates that staff and volunteers are encouraged to question procedures and make suggestions for improvement; *(cf.E4)*
- 4 evidence that staff and volunteers feel secure in a culture of on-going change through good consultation and sensitivity to people's needs; *(cf.E3)*
- 5 evidence that the organisation is competent in handling emergencies, assessing risks, dealing with conflict, and discerning what needs changing and what does not.

C11 **COMMUNICATION** – Explaining changes

To what extent is there an internal communications network that is working well, and close two-way links with all external stakeholders, so that each group feels it is adequately informed and that its views can be expressed and heard?

Sample tests

- 1 someone responsible for the communications system (human and physical equipment), who is respected for the impact their actions have had;
- 2 appropriate newsletters/emails/website to inform all stakeholders of decisions made, with minimal feeling from such people that they have not been adequately informed;
- 3 appropriate means of allowing staff, volunteers and supporters to give input to the leadership on their views, with evidence that these views have been heard;
- 4 an appropriate system of sharing people-news throughout the organisation resulting in high levels of morale and a feeling of belonging;
- 5 a reputation of welcome for and genuine interest in all external stakeholders who approach the organisation.

C12 **REVIEW** – Assessing changes

How open is the culture to expect and welcome review of the performance of the leadership and of the organisation, both groups and individuals, leading to improvement and development?

Sample tests

- 1 an appropriate appraisal system in place for the board, Chief Executive and other leadership bodies, so there is continuous review of corporate performance;
- 2 an ongoing process of monitoring the organisation's output and review of its methods and plans, and an openness to external investigation and admission of failure; *(cf.A9)*
- 3 methods in place for check and discernment of all claims of God speaking to the organisation in some way;
- 4 any recent investigation by an external adviser (including financial auditor) with evidence of appropriate action taken and changes made as a result;
- 5 any discussions with other mission agencies and/or churches to see if there might be better ways of co-operation. *(cf.E6)*

The EXCELLENCE theme

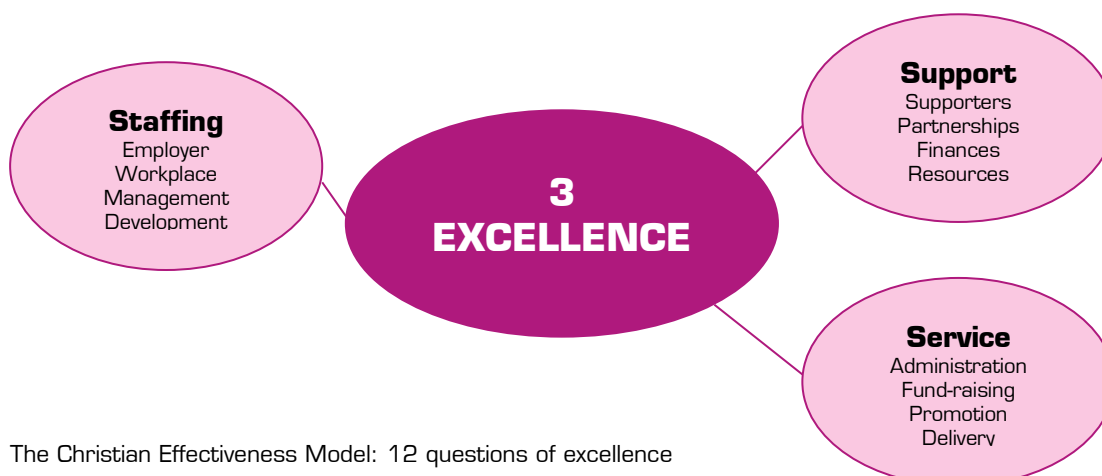
Does the organisation carry out its work in an excellent way?

Summary

This is the theme most closely allied to the issue of quality standards. The Excellence Model (see HC6) tests people, partnerships, resources and processes and some of the ideas behind that model have been incorporated in the CEM.

The thesis here is that to do things well is a necessary part of effectiveness, but not sufficient on its own. For Christians this third set of 12 questions also has the concept of honouring God in the way we do our work for him.

<i>Ref</i>	<i>SECTION Question title</i>	<i>Sub-title</i>
STAFFING – testing how the organisation manages its staff and volunteers		
E1	Employer	Caring through good practice
E2	Workplace	Caring through resources
E3	Management	Caring through staff support
E4	Development	Caring through challenge
SUPPORT – testing how the organisation manages its other human and physical resources		
E5	Supporters	People resources: internal
E6	Partnerships	People resources: external
E7	Finances	Physical resources: financial
E8	Resources	Physical resources: non-financial
SERVICE – testing the quality of the back-up systems that serve the main ministry		
E9	Administration	Systems that serve the ministry
E10	Fund-raising	Systems that finance the ministry
E11	Promotion	Systems that tell of the ministry
E12	Delivery	Systems that provide the ministry



The Christian Effectiveness Model: 12 questions of excellence

E1-4: THE EXCELLENCE THEME – Questions of Staffing

These test how the organisation manages its staff and volunteers.

E1 **EMPLOYER** – Caring through good practice

How well is the organisation showing proper care for its staff (and volunteers) within a coherent HR policy, and not exploiting them or simply following traditional but inadequate practices?

Sample tests

- 1 evidence of good practice, based on biblical principles, on issues such as equal opportunities, salary structures, leadership and hierarchy, the value of individuals; *(cf. V2)*
- 2 knowledge of, and strict adherence to, all legislation affecting employment and contracts, insurance, child protection, discrimination, etc.;
- 3 the existence of, and adherence to, clear HR policies and guidelines for staff and for volunteers, including updated job descriptions and staff handbooks (as appropriate);
- 4 salaries/wages/allowances paid on time, and all proper expenses reimbursed promptly;
- 5 efforts to ensure that staff take proper days off, volunteers are not taken advantage of, and the sick and retired are properly cared for.

E2 **WORKPLACE** – Caring through resources

How adequate and safe are the staff and volunteers of the organisation and how appropriate are the resources they are given to carry out their responsibilities and duties?

Sample tests

- 1 staff and volunteers satisfied that they have an adequate quality of work environment, whether office, home or field workers;
- 2 strict adherence to all legislation affecting health and safety, with special care given to those who are working in isolated, difficult or dangerous situations;
- 3 staff and volunteers satisfied that they are supplied with adequate equipment and software (with appropriate training) and, where appropriate, vehicles; *(cf. EB)*
- 4 appropriate checks in place to protect staff and volunteers against financial, sexual and other forms of temptation;
- 5 proper arrangements for healthcare and child education/travel for those abroad.

E3 **MANAGEMENT** – Caring through staff support

To what standard of care and responsibility are the staff and volunteers managed and trained, leading to individual job enjoyment, team satisfaction and high levels of morale?

Sample tests

- 1 staff and volunteers satisfied at the quality and quantity of supervision and support they receive from their line managers;
- 2 care for staff and volunteers through appropriate recognition, salary/wage levels, and benefit structures;
- 3 the existence of a realistic training budget, with proper induction and on-going provision;
- 4 a disciplinary procedure that is respected by all, and which results in speedy and fair resolution of any problems;
- 5 a high level of satisfaction and morale for staff/volunteers with low rates of people turnover and no inappropriate levels of stress experienced. *(cf. C4)*

E4 **DEVELOPMENT** – Caring through challenge

To what extent are staff and volunteers encouraged to participate in decision-making as appropriate, and how well are their gifts and potential recognised and developed insofar as there are opportunities?

Sample tests

- 1 evidence that the recruitment and selection of staff/volunteers is carried out to a high standard with errors in choice or placement minimised;
- 2 staff and volunteers encouraged to attain national qualifications and use their gifts within the organisation;
- 3 appropriate means of appraisal so that staff and volunteers can assess and improve their performance, identify learning needs, and seek promotion; *(cf.C12)*
- 4 a sufficiently flexible approach so that people can contribute outside their own speciality;
- 5 clear systems of staff/volunteer involvement in decision-making processes, with a welcome for creative ideas from all parts of the organisation. *(cf.C10)*

E5-8: THE EXCELLENCE THEME – Questions of Support

These test how the organisation manages its other human and physical resources.

E5 **SUPPORTERS** – People resources: internal

How highly regarded are the organisation's supporters (volunteers, donors, pray-ers) evidenced by regular and appropriate information for the part they play, in suitable formats, and personal contact?

Sample tests

- 1 any readership surveys that show that the organisation's newsletters/magazines are communicating well and appreciated by those who receive them;
- 2 evidence that the way that prayer and other information is made available in various media is helpful for and used by supporters;
- 3 donors impressed at the speed and courtesy in which their gifts are handled and acknowledged;
- 4 the provision and the regular updating of the database so that waste is reduced and accurate records are kept;
- 5 an enthusiastic supporter base, with low levels of turnover and appropriate age and gender profiles.

E6 **PARTNERSHIPS** – People resources: external

To what extent are creative partnerships outside the organisation (Christian and secular) sought and developed to everyone's benefit, and how thoroughly are good relationships with other organisations undertaking similar work developed?

Sample tests

- 1 an attitude of collaboration rather than competition with other Christians working in the same field;
- 2 evidence of appropriate co-operation with secular agencies working in the same field;
- 3 examples of strategic alliances with Christians and/or secular agencies in other fields which provide added value to the organisation's work;
- 4 the use of bought-in theological and other specialist help wherever appropriate;
- 5 an attitude of seeking God's glory and the growth of the Church, rather than the survival of the organisation at any cost. *(cf.V10)*

E7 **FINANCES** – Physical resources: financial

How true is it that both income and financial assets are managed responsibly with proper systems of check and budgetary controls, adequate accountability and appropriate reporting systems?

Sample tests

- 1 processes for setting budgets, authorising expenditure, managing investments, etc. regularly checked and adjusted as necessary;
- 2 board and executive satisfied that they receive all necessary financial information in appropriate formats and on time for effective decision-making; *(cf.C3)*
- 3 a constant drive for good stewardship, efficient purchasing, minimum waste, ethical investment, environmental concerns, etc. consistent with Christian values; *(cf.C7)*
- 4 systems of check and audit of all financial systems and recording, especially any handling of cash by volunteers, with approval from the auditors;
- 5 funds handled in such a way that bills are paid promptly, interest on savings maximised, and tax refunds dealt with speedily.

E8 **RESOURCES** – Physical resources: non-financial

How well is the administration of the buildings, equipment, IT, vehicles and other physical resources handled in terms of choice, purchase, maintenance, insurance and disposal?

Sample tests

- 1 any recent examination of a buildings register to ensure that their location, size, facilities, etc. serve the current (rather than past) needs of the organisation; *(cf.E2)*
- 2 good systems of maintenance, renewal, safety, and care for all assets;
- 3 the choice of appropriate quality for all purchases, to minimise maintenance and frustration but without undue extravagance in handling charitable funds;
- 4 a proper analysis of risk management and insurance needs applied to all assets;
- 5 choices for purchases, the use of technology and the disposal of waste handled with appropriate concern for environmental issues.

E9-12: THE EXCELLENCE THEME – Questions of Service

These test the quality of the back-up systems that serve the main ministry.

E9 **ADMINISTRATION** – Systems that serve the ministry

How adequate are the administrative systems and activities to service the organisation's ministry and how efficient are they to ensure that resources set aside for mission are maximised?

Sample tests

- 1 administrative processes regularly tested to check they meet the needs of beneficiaries and to see if they can be improved;
- 2 evidence that both finance and time available for direct mission (rather than administration, fund-raising and promotion) are maximised;
- 3 agreement that the organisation recruits administrative staff of sufficient calibre;
- 4 the organisation's database equipped to provide all necessary information on people, markets, etc. with confidential information handled responsibly and legally;
- 5 research showing high levels of satisfaction from beneficiaries and others with the reliability and efficiency of the organisation's administrative functions. *(cf.A6)*

E10 **FUND-RAISING** – Systems that finance the ministry

How professionally are financial appeals (to corporate donors, trusts, churches or individuals) handled, being consistent with the values and with sufficient research and understanding?

Sample tests

- 1 agreement by all that the means of appealing for funds (including the use of events and any special offers) are consistent with Christian values, and those of the organisation; *(cf. V7)*
- 2 results of all appeals carefully monitored so that this activity is known to be cost-effective;
- 3 choices made (eg. between targeting individuals or trusts, Christian or non-Christian sources) based on wise thinking, good information and appropriate research; *(cf. C5)*
- 4 lack of any evidence of potential donors upset by the organisation's inefficiency (eg. through poor record-keeping) or by inappropriate mailings;
- 5 donors provided with appropriate information about the use of their giving (eg. regular newsletters, occasional magazines, prayer letters from staff supported). *(cf. C11)*

E11 **PROMOTION** – Systems that tell of the ministry

To what extent is the promotion of the organisation to potential supporters, staff/volunteers and beneficiaries based on Christian values, and how appropriate in both choice of media and level of quality, and resulting in development in ministry?

Sample tests

- 1 promotion (advertisements, website, literature, etc.) agreed to be truthful, of required quality, reaching its target audience and resonating with it in an appropriate way;
- 2 the impact of such promotion meeting desired levels of response from existing and potential beneficiaries, supporters, etc. to make it cost-effective;
- 3 good channels of communication with existing beneficiaries resulting in high levels of repeat business or requests for service; *(cf. C11)*
- 4 a continuous flow of enquiries from potential beneficiaries and resulting growth in the markets being reached;
- 5 appropriate use of outsourcing where the organisation does not have the necessary skills for quality promotional materials.

E12 **DELIVERY** – Systems that provide the ministry

How accurately could it be said that the services (or products) of the organisation are delivered to the highest appropriate standards and adequately resourced, with the organisation known for its reliability in honouring commitments?

Sample tests

- 1 evidence from beneficiaries that services are delivered reliably, at expected levels of quality or better, and on time;
- 2 beneficiary complaints listened to carefully, handled quickly and put right satisfactorily;
- 3 appropriate follow-up for, or service/product after-care offered and delivered to, the beneficiaries;
- 4 regular monitoring of appropriate information about beneficiaries and their needs and views; *(cf. V4)*
- 5 evidence of high levels of beneficiary and other stakeholder satisfaction regarding both quality and delivery.

The ACHIEVEMENT theme

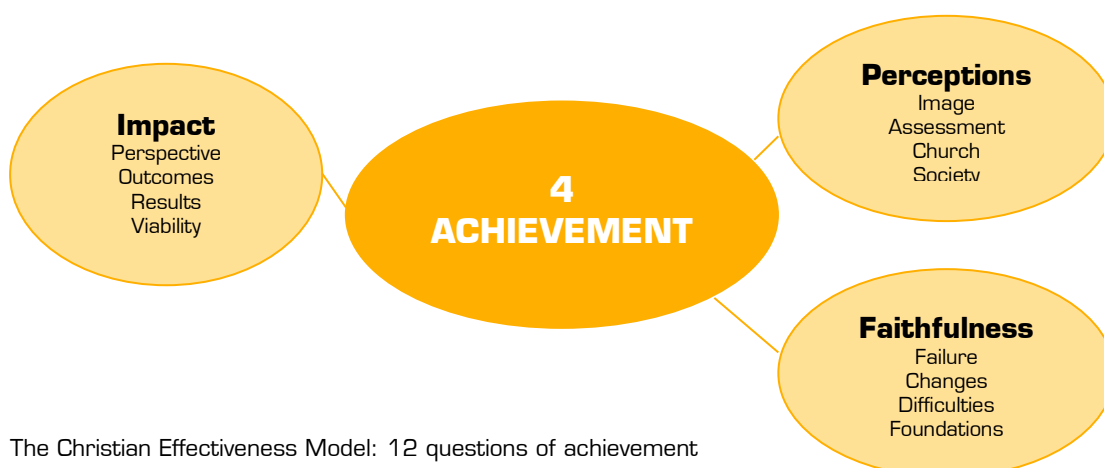
Does the organisation achieve what God requires of it?

Summary

Effectiveness can only be measured by results. Yet here there are major unknowns. If the organisation is achieving what it set out to achieve, were its plans the right ones? Might it have achieved more if its strategies or processes had been different?

For Christians, the measurement of results introduces further questions. Most would be uneasy about a model that looked only for numbers. Yet to take the opposite standpoint, to claim that results are wholly in God’s hands, leaves us open to justifying mismanagement. These 12 questions seek to take all this into account.

Ref	SECTION Question title	Sub-title
IMPACT – testing whether the organisation’s plans are being achieved		
A1	Perspective	Success in the long-term
A2	Outcomes	Success in achieving plans
A3	Results	Success for each service
A4	Viability	Success in resourcing
PERCEPTIONS – testing how others perceive the organisation’s achievements		
A5	Image	How beneficiaries view the organisation
A6	Assessment	How beneficiaries view each service
A7	Church	How Christians view the organisation
A8	Society	How the world views the organisation
FAITHFULNESS – testing whether the organisation has remained true to God		
A9	Failure	When things go wrong
A10	Changes	When things are different
A11	Difficulties	When things get tough
A12	Foundations	When things move on



The Christian Effectiveness Model: 12 questions of achievement

A1-4: THE ACHIEVEMENT THEME – Questions of Impact

These test whether the organisation's plans are being achieved.

A1 **PERSPECTIVE** – Success in the long-term

How well is the organisation working to its purpose and achieving its overall vision in the medium- to long-term, with evidence of clear change among those it seeks to serve?

Sample tests *(cf. V5)*

- 1 evidence that over an appropriate time-scale, the organisation has made clear progress towards its overall vision by comparing the situation now with the original position;
- 2 evidence that such longer-term trends are continuing today;
- 3 agreement by external advisers that such results are sufficient to indicate hoped-for levels of achievement given the faith and resources of the organisation;
- 4 agreement by all parties that the organisation has been working to its purpose, and is continuing to do so;
- 5 acknowledgment by all parties that such results are of God's doing and could not be by human endeavour alone.

A2 **OUTCOMES** – Success in achieving plans

How accurately could it be said that the organisation is achieving its overall aims and targets to a high degree of success, and achieving planned levels of awareness in the culture within which it works?

Sample tests *(cf. V8, C8 and see A3 too)*

- 1 clear progress towards the visions that have been defined over the past year (or other fixed time period);
- 2 a good degree of success in the achievement of each general aim set for the past year; *(cf. C8)*
- 3 targets or other performance indicators met for each of these aims without weakening them to make achievement more attainable;
- 4 evidence that promotion is having the desired impact in relation to its cost and that there is a satisfactory profile in the culture in which the organisation is working; *(cf. E11)*
- 5 evidence of an assumption that needs and expectations will be continually changing, with the ability to move at whatever speed is required to keep in step with such changes.

A3 **RESULTS** – Success for each service

When considering each specific service, how well is the organisation achieving its aims and meeting its targets, without these measures being set artificially low?

Sample tests *(cf. V6, C8 and see A2 too)*

- 1 a good degree of success in the achievement of all aims set in the past year for each particular service that the organisation provides;
- 2 targets or other performance indicators met for each of these aims without weakening them to make achievement more attainable;
- 3 the use of customer/beneficiary surveys/feedback to assess external measurement of achievement for each service provided;
- 4 year-on-year development in each service being offered in terms of quality, scope, relevance, sales, etc.;
- 5 similar achievement for internal aims and targets regarding administration.

A4 **VIABILITY** – Success in resourcing

How well resourced (consider fixed assets, people and annual income) is the organisation to carry on the work without undue hindrance, and without staffing or financial restraint becoming the main factor that determines decisions on mission?

Sample tests

- 1 recent job vacancies attracting applicants of suitable character, gifting and experience, with posts filled without undue frustration;
- 2 sufficient gift (or, if appropriate, trading) income to enable the organisation to function to its planned capabilities;
- 3 absence of warnings from auditors/examiners about trading position or reserves;
- 4 the evidence for appropriate build-up and/or use of capital reserves within a carefully chosen plan, rather than unexpected use of capital funds; *(cf.E7)*
- 5 lack of examples of cut-back in planned mission as a direct result of lack of suitable personnel or sufficient finance.

A5-8: THE ACHIEVEMENT THEME – Questions of Perceptions

These test how others perceive the organisation's achievements.

A5 **IMAGE** – How beneficiaries view the organisation

How positive an image do the various groups of beneficiaries (and potential beneficiaries) have of the organisation's achievements, and how effective is any action currently being taken to improve the position?

Sample tests *(cf.V11/12 for A5-7)*

- 1 research among potential beneficiaries indicating positive awareness of overall service communicated by promotion, reputation and representatives (staff and volunteers);
- 2 research among present beneficiaries indicating positive impressions of overall service and the way it is delivered; *(cf.E12)*
- 3 close correlation between the image that the organisation seeks to attain, and research findings of the actual impressions gained;
- 4 evidence that loyalty to the organisation is increasing or already satisfactory;
- 5 appropriate action taken where perceptions outside the organisation do not match those sought.

A6 **ASSESSMENT** – How beneficiaries view each service

How positive an assessment do the various groups of beneficiaries (and potential beneficiaries) have of each service or product, and how effective is any action currently being taken to improve the position?

Sample tests

- 1 research among beneficiaries indicating positive impressions of each service in regard to quality, delivery, value for money, etc.; *(cf.C6)*
- 2 such research indicating positive impressions of the organisation's staff and volunteers in regard to ability, helpfulness, handling of problems, sensitivity, etc.;
- 3 evidence that existing beneficiaries are increasing their use of each service on offer;
- 4 evidence that beneficiaries are recommending the services on offer to others in increasing measure;
- 5 appropriate action taken where perceptions of any product do not match those sought.

A7 **CHURCH** – How Christians view the organisation

To what extent is there knowledge of, interest in, and respect for the organisation within the Christian community leading to a supporter base that is developing in a healthy way?

Sample tests

- 1 evidence that churches hold the organisation in high regard and see it as supporting and strengthening the national Church; *(cf, EB)*
- 2 evidence that the organisation is having such an impact within younger generations and forms of emerging church;
- 3 a satisfactory year-on-year improvement in the supporter base shown in numbers, age-profile, geographical distribution, giving, offers of help;
- 4 adequate monitoring of any changes in the supporter base (eg. age, church/individual proportions) and appropriate action taken;
- 5 evidence of a growing commitment and enthusiasm from existing supporters through attendance at events, contacts made, prayer groups, recommendations offered, etc.

A8 **SOCIETY** – How the world views the organisation

What level of respect for the organisation is there in the society or culture in which it operates, or is the organisation prepared to be unpopular if this is believed to be necessary?

Sample tests *(cf. V4)*

- 1 documented changes in the culture directly attributable to the organisation's work;
- 2 awards, commendations or references of any kind given to the organisation by leaders in the culture in which it operates;
- 3 independent research indicating that people in the culture hold the organisation in high esteem;
- 4 evidence that the organisation is prepared to take carefully considered but unpopular decisions for the sake of the gospel when necessary;
- 5 if there is opposition, careful checks to ensure that this is caused by offence to the gospel and not by unwise decisions taken by the organisation.

A9–12: THE ACHIEVEMENT THEME – Questions of Faithfulness

These test if the organisation has remained true to God.

A9 **FAILURE** – When things go wrong

When the organisation has failed in any way in the recent past, how well was the situation handled, and were lessons learned and appropriate action taken as a result?

Sample tests

- 1 all agree that there is an honest approach to failures rather than seeking to cover them up or 'spiritualise' them in some way;
- 2 an analysis of actions taken as a result of each failure and the monitoring of subsequent performance;
- 3 evidence of an attitude that takes risk and expects failure but which treats it as a learning exercise for the future benefit of the work;
- 4 evidence that failures have led to improved performance, greater faith, or other benefit;
- 5 lack of repeat failures in any area of the work.

A10 **CHANGES** – When things are different

How effectively have any recent changes in leadership, structures, strategy and/or activities developed and improved the performance of the organisation, and how well have necessary changes for the future been identified and planned?

Sample tests *(cf. C10)*

- 1 comparisons of like-for-like as far as is possible before and after each change indicate improvement;
- 2 agreement by all that these improvements have been worthwhile for the sake of the organisation's mission given their associated costs (financial, people, etc.);
- 3 analysis of any changes in leadership indicating a more appropriate style introduced for current needs; *(cf. C1)*
- 4 analysis of any changes in structure indicating a more appropriate one introduced for current needs; *(cf. C9)*
- 5 needs for possible future changes already identified by the board and executive, with proper research in hand.

A11 **DIFFICULTIES** – When things get tough

To what extent has the organisation remained faithful to God in the face of any internal difficulties (crises, disagreements, resourcing issues), or any external misunderstanding, opposition, conflict or just apathy?

Sample tests

- 1 a charting of times of internal disagreement (board and executive, among staff, etc.) and a positive assessment that these were handled with godly wisdom;
- 2 an examination of reactions by the organisation to times of opposition or persecution and positive effects of such times on the organisation's longer-term ministry;
- 3 absence of any unwise shifts in belief, values or activities which may have been produced by cultural pressures to conform;
- 4 evidence of effective leadership by the Chief Executive and board during periods of difficulty; *(cf. C2/3)*
- 5 agreement that times of difficulty have led to greater prayer and to spiritual growth, rather than unwise decisions that betrayed a lack of faith. *(cf. V2)*

A12 **FOUNDATIONS** – When things move on

How accurately could it be said that the organisation has remained faithful to the essential purposes within its foundation documents, to the vision of its early years and to its Christian basis, and is it still learning from God today?

Sample tests *(cf. V1)*

- 1 a positive assessment of a comparison of purpose/vision today compared with the same at the time of foundation;
- 2 an examination of its faithfulness to any credal statement on which the organisation was founded;
- 3 an examination of its faithfulness to the intentions of the founders, interpreted within the current culture of either world or beneficiaries;
- 4 agreement by external advisers that the means used to achieve the original mission of the organisation have not become the mission themselves;
- 5 the ability to list lessons learned in corporate Christian discipleship over the past year.

Postscript

The following two pages give a pro forma for an Assessment Group to use for any one theme. You may copy this as many times as you like. The codes used for the six boxes are:

- DW Doing well
- RW Reasonably well
- NI Needs improvement
- W Weak
- SP Serious problems
- N/A Not applicable (only to be used in special circumstances)

Here are some words of St Paul to consider in the light of CEM.

“But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.” [1 Corinthians 16:8,9 \(NIV\)](#)

“Be very careful, then, how you live – not as the unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.” [Ephesians 5:15-17 \(NIV\)](#)

This paper is available at <https://www.john-truscott.co.uk/Resources/Health-checks-index> then HC7. It forms the second part of two papers outlining the Christian Effectiveness Model with the first part available at the same web address but with HC6 instead of HC7. For details of the Church Health Review (for churches), see papers HC4 & HC5 on the same site. For indexes of all items available on the site, visit the [Resources page](#).

Contact John if you would like to enquire about using the Model in its fuller form, with detailed advice on scoring and assessment in general. John would also like to hear your ideas for improving the Model – please contact him with ideas regarding its basis and structure, its questions or its sample tests.

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Theme

agree and tick one box for each question

Q	Question name	DW	RW	NI	W	SP	N/A
1							
	Action						
2							
	Action						
3							
	Action						
4							
	Action						
5							
	Action						
6							
	Action						

Questions 7-12 on next sheet

Priority Action

Theme cont

agree and tick one box for each question

Q	Question name	DW	RW	NI	W	SP	N/A
7							
	Action						
8							
	Action						
9							
	Action						
10							
	Action						
11							
	Action						
12							
	Action						

Questions 1-6 on previous sheet

Priority Action