

ROI CASE STUDY: HEALTH FOR GROWTH

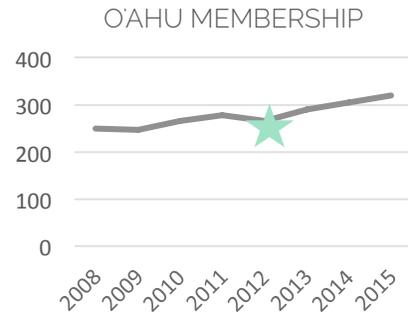
The first situation where my transformative methodology, which is now the basis of the consulting endeavors of Bridging International, was tested was on the Hawaiian island of O'ahu during the summer of early 2012. At the time I was studying at Lipscomb University's Institute of Conflict Management. I called my method the Transforming Organizational Conflict Method, or TOCM but I had not yet applied it to a severe crisis in an unfamiliar setting. Following an urgent phone call just before Memorial Day in 2012 the TOCM was presented to various representatives of the O'ahu Church of Christ.

The intervention project was immediately launched on Sunday, June 8. The approach depends heavily on various discovery procedures, which lasted

"...THE O'AHU CHURCH HAD DECLINED IN NUMBER FROM ABOUT 820 IN 1999 DOWN TO 250 IN 2008 WHEN IT BEGAN TO PLATEAU."

Discovery, Mediation, and Transformative Measures and concluded on August 21, 2012. It is important to note that the O'ahu church had declined in number, from about 820 in 1999 down to 250 in 2008 when it began to plateau. There are two things to know about the turning point indicated on the above chart. First, in 2010 it looked like they were going to continue growing again; however, there were problematic patterns in leadership that was holding the church back. Second, the intervention in 2012 was able to identify those unhealthy patterns and variety of other impediments to growth and unveil them to the congregation. From there we were able to guide the O'ahu Church of Christ away from recurring conflicts towards health. The leaders then took it onto growth. Over the last three years the church experienced the first substantial growth upswing in thirteen years.

The intervention has become an example of costs and savings of a properly led engagement. The return on investment (ROI) was apparent at the end of the project but even clearer later. One year later we held a nine-day follow up meeting and chronicled the ROI.



RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI) DETAILS

The cost of the 9 week intervention project was about \$44,000, including salary, travel, hotels, venues, car rentals, and food.

Over the next year contributions had increased by about \$2700 per week, averaged over a year, translating to roughly sixteen weeks of additional giving that covered the cost for the entire intervention. The contributions were actually up by \$4500 week at the end of the first year.

The departing minister, Rhys Kiaania, stated that if the measures were taken back when the problems first appears "We would not have lost nearly 600 members," and "Our losses in regular and missions contributions were somewhere between \$600,000 and \$1,000,000."

The O'ahu Church transformed their conflict without losing a single member in the summer of 2012 and has grown from about 260 to 320.

I don't know of a first world mission fund where a dollar-to-soul saving, dollar-to-dollar increase in giving and dollar-to-morale can compare with the impact of the O'ahu project. The full reports of the O'ahu endeavor, illustrating TOCM, was presented in a graduate paper in 2013 and successfully utilized again in Los Angeles in 2014. And it continues to be refined but is the basis of all of my consultation projects involving crisis or chronic dysfunction.

After our work completed Anthony and Saun Galang began leading the congregation. Anthony had this to say about the progress,

“From time to time churches need to hit the reset button. O'ahu was in decline for many years and Steve and Tricia Staten came in and did what was needed. Steve did the work of an elder, preparing the way so that Saun and I could hit the ground running. I believe that elders in our churches should get his training. We could not have had the success we are experiencing without the work of clearing out the deep issues in the church. And in less than a year our membership has gone from about 263 to nearly 300, attendance from about 290 to an average of 420.”

Every situation has its own challenge and the particular kind of growth being targeted might vary. Growth can mean the number of baptisms in a given year, or increase in membership size, or even improved retention of youth, the expanding of sacrifices, the number of members who become more fully engaged, or the surge of missionaries sent out. But sustainable growth requires health and Bridging International is a Health-for-Growth service.

Stephen F. Staten

Organizational Health Consultant

[See the full report of the O'ahu Church of Christ.](#)

WWW.BRIDGINGINTERNATIONAL.COM