

The Christian Effectiveness Model

A summary of the Model

HC3 Health-checks series

This paper is designed as a short summary of the Christian Effectiveness Model and was last updated in August 2024. It is copyright © John Truscott. You may download this file and/or print up to 30 copies without charge provided no part of the heading or text is altered or omitted.

The Christian Effectiveness Model (CEM) is designed to test the effectiveness of any Christian mission agency.

CEM provides a thorough effectiveness investigation for any such agency but it may also be applied to church 'business' ministries such as the running of a café, playgroup or church school.

It was first published on my website in August 2008, was given a major makeover in October 2015 and last updated in December 2022. It is listed as papers HC6 and HC7 in the Health-checks pages of the Resources section of the site at <https://www.john-truscott.co.uk/Resources/Health-checks-index>. This is merely a summary of those two papers.

There is an equivalent exercise for churches which follows the same basic structure but is based on quite different themes. The **Church Health Review** was first published on the website in October 2007, was given a major makeover in September 2014 and last updated in August 2024. This is listed on the website as papers HC4 and HC5 in the same set of pages.

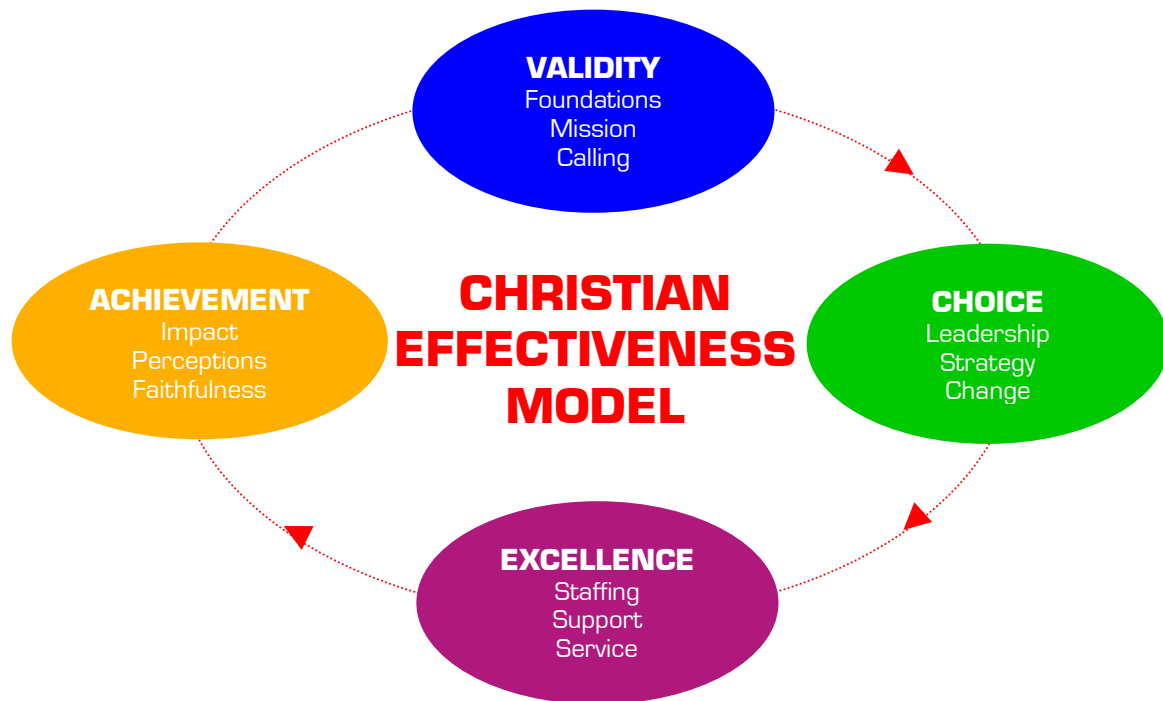
To compare CEM and CHR see HC1, **Contrasting CHR and CEM**, also on the Health-checks index page..

Working from the website, a simple form of CEM can be used by any Christian mission or church enterprise without charge or further permission and this is now the normal use for the Model. But it is possible to undertake a more thorough exercise which would involve my help in some form. For the full applications, a manual is available and the Model may be used under licence.

The Model consists of a set of 48 **questions** to be asked, divided into 12 **sections** which, between them, form four **themes**. Five **sample tests** are provided for each question.

Understanding CEM's four themes and 12 sections

The analysis of the basic structure for the 48 questions is an essential part of the Model. Even if you do not use the Model as such, these headings can in themselves help any Christian mission agency to think about and assess its life.



- 1 **12 questions on the theme of VALIDITY**
Does the organisation have a valid Christian ministry?
4 questions each in sections on **Foundations**, **Mission** and **Calling**
- 2 **12 questions on the theme of CHOICE**
Does the organisation make the right strategic choices?
4 questions each in sections on **Leadership**, **Strategy** and **Change**
- 3 **12 questions on the theme of EXCELLENCE**
Does the organisation work in an excellent way?
4 questions each in sections on **Staffing**, **Support** and **Service**
- 4 **12 questions on the theme of ACHIEVEMENT**
Does the organisation achieve what God requires of it?
4 questions each in sections on **Impact**, **Perceptions** and **Faithfulness**

Understanding CEM's 48 questions



Validity – Foundations

- 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

Validity – Mission

- V5 **PURPOSE** – The question 'Why?'
- V6 **SERVICES** – The questions 'What?' and 'For whom?'
- V7 **VALUES** – The question 'How?'
- V8 **VISIONS** – The question 'Where?'

Validity – Calling

- 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



Choice – Leadership

- 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

Choice – Strategy

- 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

Choice – Change

- C9 **STRUCTURE** – Ready for changes
- C10 **DECISIONS** – Making changes
- C11 **COMMUNICATION** – Explaining changes
- C12 **REVIEW** – Assessing changes



- Excellence – Staffing
- E1 **EMPLOYER** – Caring through good practice
 - E2 **WORKPLACE** – Caring through resources
 - E3 **MANAGEMENT** – Caring through staff support
 - E4 **DEVELOPMENT** – Caring through challenge

- Excellence – Support
- E5 **SUPPORTERS** – People resources: internal
 - E6 **PARTNERSHIPS** – People resources: external
 - E7 **FINANCES** – Physical resources: financial
 - E8 **RESOURCES** – Physical resources: non-financial

- Excellence – Service
- 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



- Achievement – Impact
- A1 **PERSPECTIVE** – Success in the long-term
 - A2 **OUTCOMES** – Success in achieving plans
 - A3 **RESULTS** – Success for each service
 - A4 **VIABILITY** – Success in resourcing

- Achievement – Perceptions
- 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

- Achievement – Faithfulness
- A9 **FAILURE** – When things go wrong
 - A10 **CHANGES** – When things are different
 - A11 **DIFFICULTIES** – When things get tough
 - A12 **FOUNDATIONS** – When things move on

Understanding how sample tests support questions

Each of the questions is supported by five 'sample tests'. These are only indications of how to assess each question, and may need to be adapted to fit the mission agency. This is explained in more detail in the papers for the Model. Here are examples of sample tests for two questions in the Model.

CEM V1-4: THE VALIDITY THEME – Questions of Foundations

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

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.

CEM 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.

Assessment Group

The review is carried out by an **Assessment Group** representing a range of stake-holders. This might be four to seven people who between them understand attitudes and views throughout the organisation and who have a wide perspective on its life.

The Model includes a pro forma sheet which can be used by the group to record their assessment for each question (see sample below). There are five categories:

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

A more detailed application

There is a more thorough way of using the Review which involves a grading system, possibly stake-holder 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 applications.

Pro-forma sheet (extract)

Theme

agree and tick one box for each question

| Q | Question name | DE | RW | NI | W | SP | N/A |
|----------|--------------------------------------|----|----|----|---|----|-----|
| 1 | Action | | | | | | |
| | and so on for all 12 questions | | | | | | |
| 2 | Action | | | | | | |
| | and so on for all 12 questions | | | | | | |
| 3 | Action | | | | | | |
| | and so on for all 12 questions | | | | | | |

Priority action

The full review is at HC6&7 on the Health-checks page of the website.

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This paper is available at <https://www.john-truscott.co.uk/Resources/Health-checks-index> then HC3. The full Christian Effectiveness Model is given in two parts: an introduction at HC6 on the same site, and all the questions and sample tests at HC7. For indexes of all the items available on the site, visit the [Resources page](#).

Contact John if you would like to enquire about using with the Model in its fuller form, with detailed advice on grading and assessment in general. John would also like to hear your ideas for improving the Model. Email him at john@john-truscott.co.uk.

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