

# Pass It On

Rick Iles (riles@utanet.at), of OM Greater Europe in Austria, talks about how his vision for the value of Christian literature impacts his everyday work.

**W**e all know that books influence us greatly, but what we often forget are the people who work to impact and change lives through literature. If we value Christian literature, we must take time to value those we work with to produce and distribute it along the way.

I have been involved in the distribution of Christian literature in Central and Eastern Europe for the past 13 years. My experiences working alongside people of different nationalities, and often

with great distances between us, have taught me a lot. Following are tips for sharing your love and passion for the work with those around you.

### *Believe in the power of Christian literature.*

If you are leading a work, you need to believe in what you are doing. If you are passionate about Christian literature, care for it, and want to pass it on, tell others why. Share your story. When people work alongside others who love what they are doing, they automatically become infected by their excitement.

### *Show appreciation.*

It is vital to show your staff what part they are playing in the goal of your business and the importance of their contribution. Make it a priority to go out and get feedback on how books are being used and how lives are being touched. As you witness the impact of the books, remind each person of their value and part in it all. When we hear these things, it gives us courage to press on. It reminds us again of the value of Christian literature,

bringing us back to our core values or purpose in work.

### *Share the struggles.*

Other people may have overcome the problem you are presently facing, and can give you solutions. Sometimes people may deal with things in a totally different way and give you another perspective. I work with a broad spectrum of people and have often shared one person's situation with another. This brings new ideas, shows them that other people have overcome similar problems, allows them to see a way ahead, and offers them a sense of unity.

### *Know your staff.*

We all have different personalities and gifts. Know the people you work with and understand how they work. Some people work step by step, in a methodical manner. Others need the big picture in order to focus on their part of getting things done. Allow for cultures and personalities to come through in people's work. Let them express their uniqueness and encourage it where appropriate.

### *Know yourself.*

Know your own style of working and what you expect from your staff. Be sure to pass that information on to them. Be honest.

### *Communicate with clarity.*

Initiate and maintain good communication. Be the one that takes time for



Rick Iles attended Cook's International Christian Publishing Institute on marketing in 2000 and on leadership in 2002.

people, is the first to address any conflict, and the first to say sorry. All of this will show that you care. When things are not clear, make it a point to clarify things so that you are on the same wavelength.

### *Allow for differences.*

What we understand as we read an e-mail may be different than what the person who wrote it meant. Think of what they might have been trying to say. If something is confusing to you, invest the time to write back and ask for clarification. Put what you understand in your words to see if you are in agreement. Try to look at this as a difference in interpretation without negatively jumping to conclusions.

### *Be realistic.*

When you are dealing with distance and different cultures, set realistic deadlines. Have an open mind. Be quick to be gracious if deadlines are not kept. Focus on hearing the stories to balance deadlines and frustrations; it is important to share both the struggles and the success stories. Be understanding.

### *Commit your work to the Lord.*

Christian literature publishing and distribution needs to be run effectively and in compliance with the laws of the country. Ultimately, we also need to see that we are working for the Lord. As we allow Him into our world of work, we are given a different perspective on our situation.

### *Pray together.*

We have found it so exciting to stand with other companies as they celebrate successes, hold special book launches, or walk through difficult times. It is a blessing to be in prayer and communication with others at strategic times. This kind of partnership takes time and effort, but it is worth it. Write before a special event to say that you are thinking about and praying for those

involved. Follow up by asking how things went. Share this information with all of your staff, from the beginning to end of a situation. Standing with others gives us a sense of a much wider community and unifies the body of Christ. Praying and sharing our stories can bring strength.

### *Build relationships.*

Take the opportunity while at conferences, book fairs, and training courses to build relationships, culturally and cross-culturally. It is healthy to hear what God is doing in a different part of the world. Building relationships and sharing problems or special events broadens our vision, it is encouraging and gives us an overall perspective of our work with literature.

them. A true exchange of experiences brings people together across the miles and difficulties—and into a better place.

**W**e need to express our commitment to those around us on a routine basis. As stated above, being passionate about literature, taking time to care for those we are working with through communication and prayer, gleaning from others, and sharing our successes are vital in our everyday work. But the key in it all is passing it on in order to see the body of Christ built up. ❖



### *Reach out to others.*

Glean all you can from others, but also be prepared to give back to them. God has gifted each one of us in many different ways. We all have something valuable to offer. Are you mentoring someone? Challenge and encourage