



Summary Overview: Critical Touchpoints in the Mobilization Journey

Research Base: *Structured interviews with mobilization leaders from 18 organizations • Full report available with detailed narrative, examples, and discussion questions*

1. The First 24-48 Hours: Response Window

Most critical touchpoint occurs within hours of inquiry. Organizations responding within 8-24 hours dramatically outperform those taking days. MAF shifted from 3-5 day to 24-hour response after experiencing "huge drop off with Gen Z." Average candidates contact 2-3 organizations—they're comparing responses. Effective approach combines speed with personalization.

2. Discovery Conversation: First Substantial Contact

This 30–60-minute conversation determines forward movement. Effective mobilizers let candidates talk 80% of time, assess need and urgency, practice "going for the no." FIM reports "most drop off between first and second steps" as reality sets in. Organizations scheduling discovery within a week retain more candidates.

3. Financial Reality: The Support Raising Discussion

Single biggest roadblock. "When candidates understand what support raising really looks like, that's when the big drop off happens." Top performers introduce financial reality early with clear numbers, coaching support, and realistic 1–3-year timelines versus optimistic 6-month projections. Organizations hiding requirements until later experience higher attrition.

4. Church Affirmation: The Pastoral Conversation

Church buy-in represents "number one" factor determining retention. High performers assess early: "What feedback from your pastor?" If pastors affirm readiness, process continues. If they suggest more local service, candidates move to nurture pipelines. Organizations attempting to send without church affirmation experience attrition before departure or within first term.

5. Team Connection: Survey Trips and Field Interaction

Pre-application field visits or virtual meetings reduce attrition and prevent conflict. "It's crazy to ask a team to accept someone without first inviting them." Candidates envision roles, assess chemistry, understand realities. Teams evaluate fit. Organizations facilitating these connections before application experience dramatically better retention.

6. Application Process and Timeline

Timelines extending 18+ months experience higher attrition. FIM achieves 75-82% field deployment through efficient 12–18-month processing. Assessment forces question: "Do I really want this?" Organizations view this as healthy filtering. Common elements include biographical information, ministry experience, doctrinal alignment, assessments, pastoral references, formal interviews.

7. Extended Timelines: Long-Runway Engagement

Organizations report "maybe 50% stay engaged" during extended preparation (pilots building hours, degree completion, debt payoff, maturation). Those maintaining engagement implement structured touchpoint plans: 3-6 month contact with field stories, cohort programs, intermediate steps. Support-raising phase particularly challenging without coaching and realistic expectations.

8. Post-Acceptance: Pre-Deployment and Field Transition

Often-overlooked touchpoint. "Once I moved, coaching stopped." Organizations treating acceptance as finish line experience preventable field attrition. Effective organizations provide comprehensive pre-field training and structured member care handoff ensuring continuity. First year on field requires different support but benefits from familiar relationships.

Key Pattern: Organizations optimizing these touchpoints achieve significantly higher retention. Speed matters at inquiry, honesty in early conversations, church partnership non-negotiable, team connection prevents conflict, efficient timelines maintain momentum, structured engagement for long-runway candidates, post-acceptance support prevents attrition. *Full 5-page report with detailed examples and 8 discussion questions.*