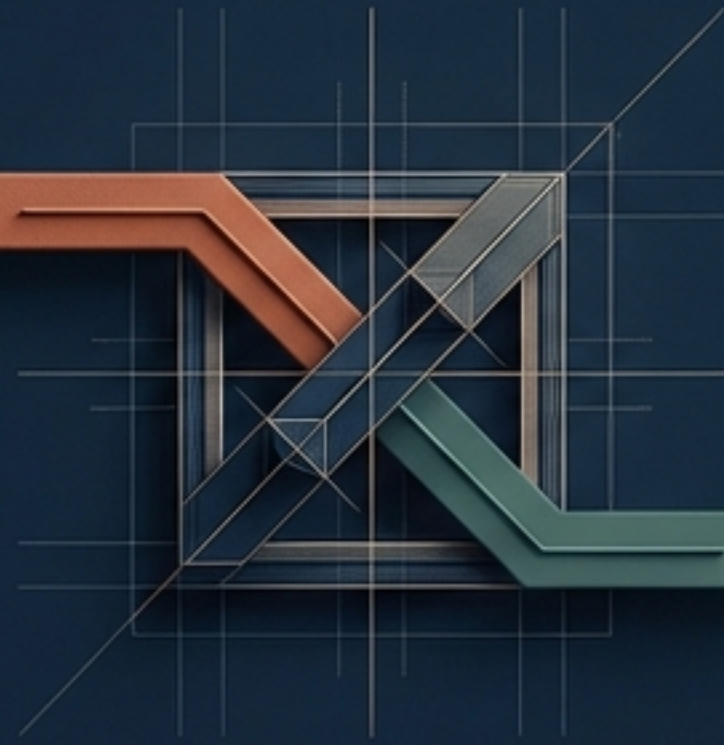


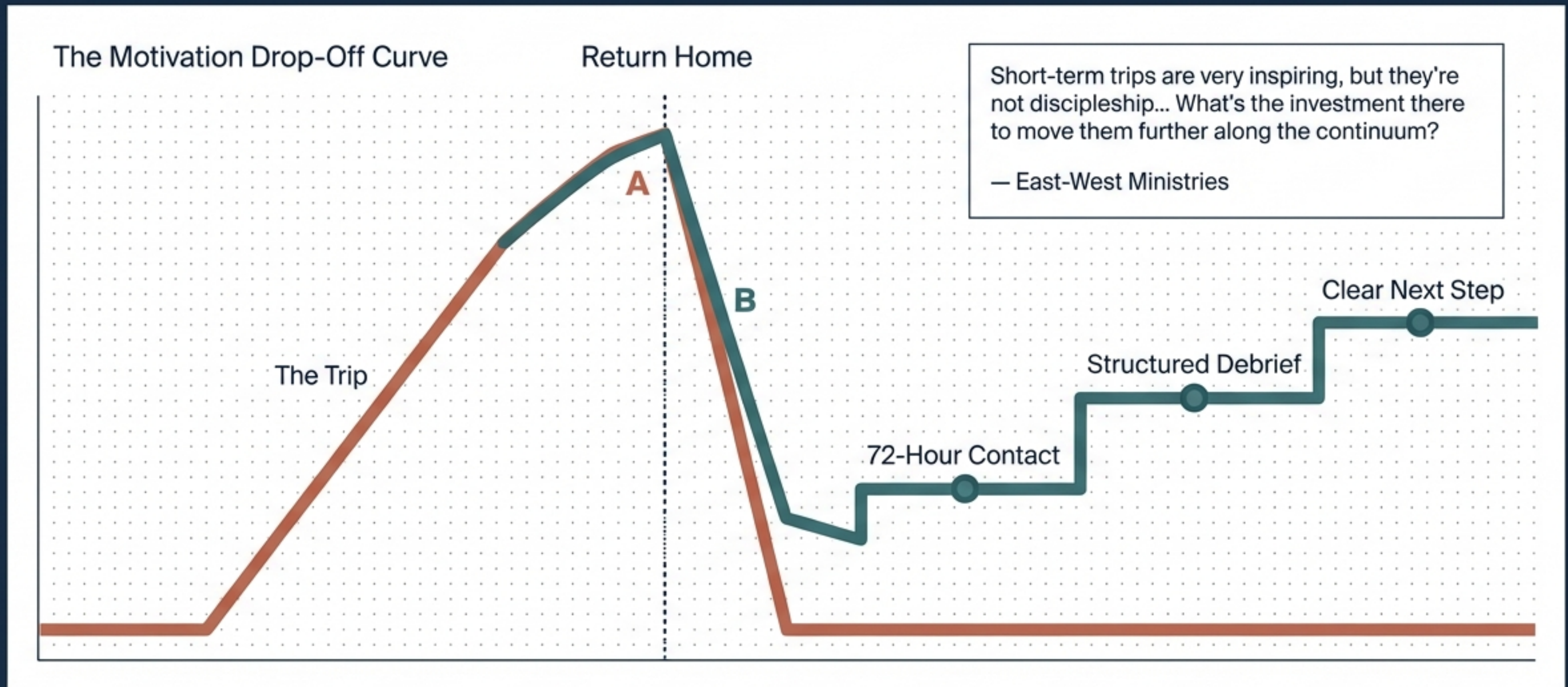
# The Short-Term Missions Pipeline

Moving from isolated inspiration to intentional mobilization.



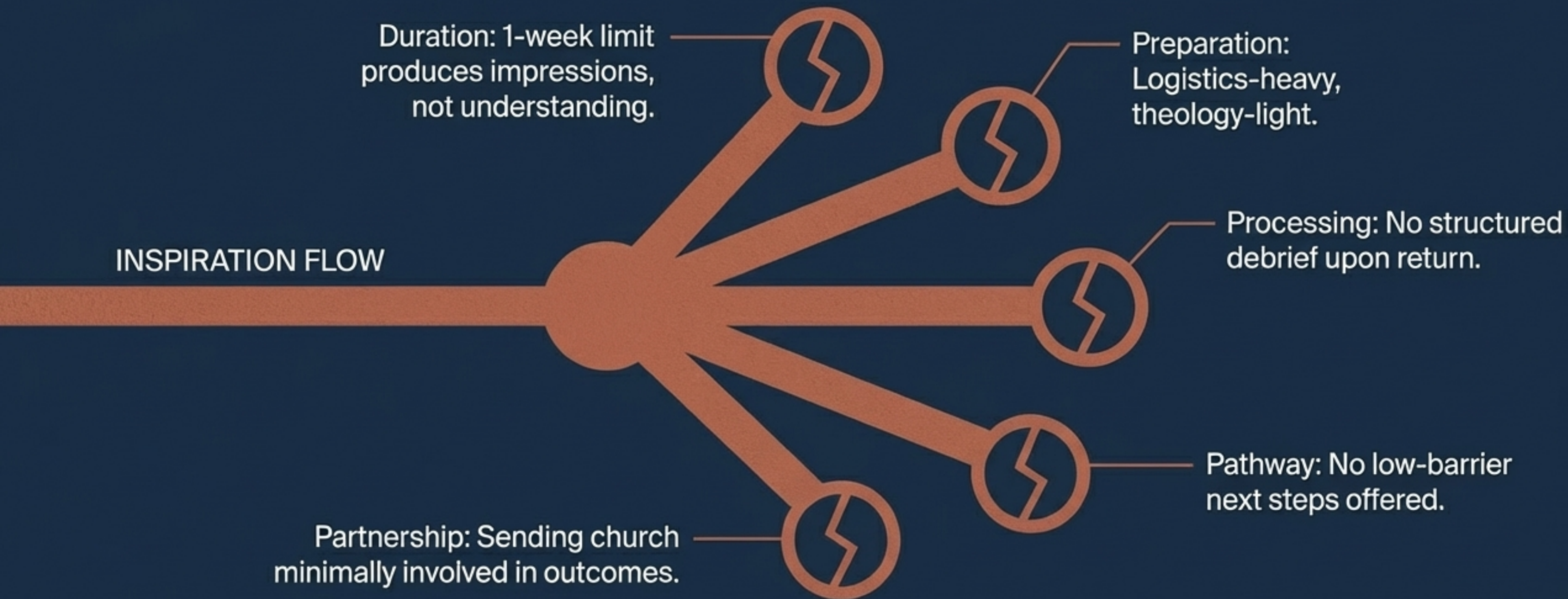
Based on Missio Nexus Mobilization Research (Paper #10) | Qualitative interviews with 18+ mission organizations & 2025 Launch Survey data (2,400+ respondents).

# The Inspiration Drop-Off



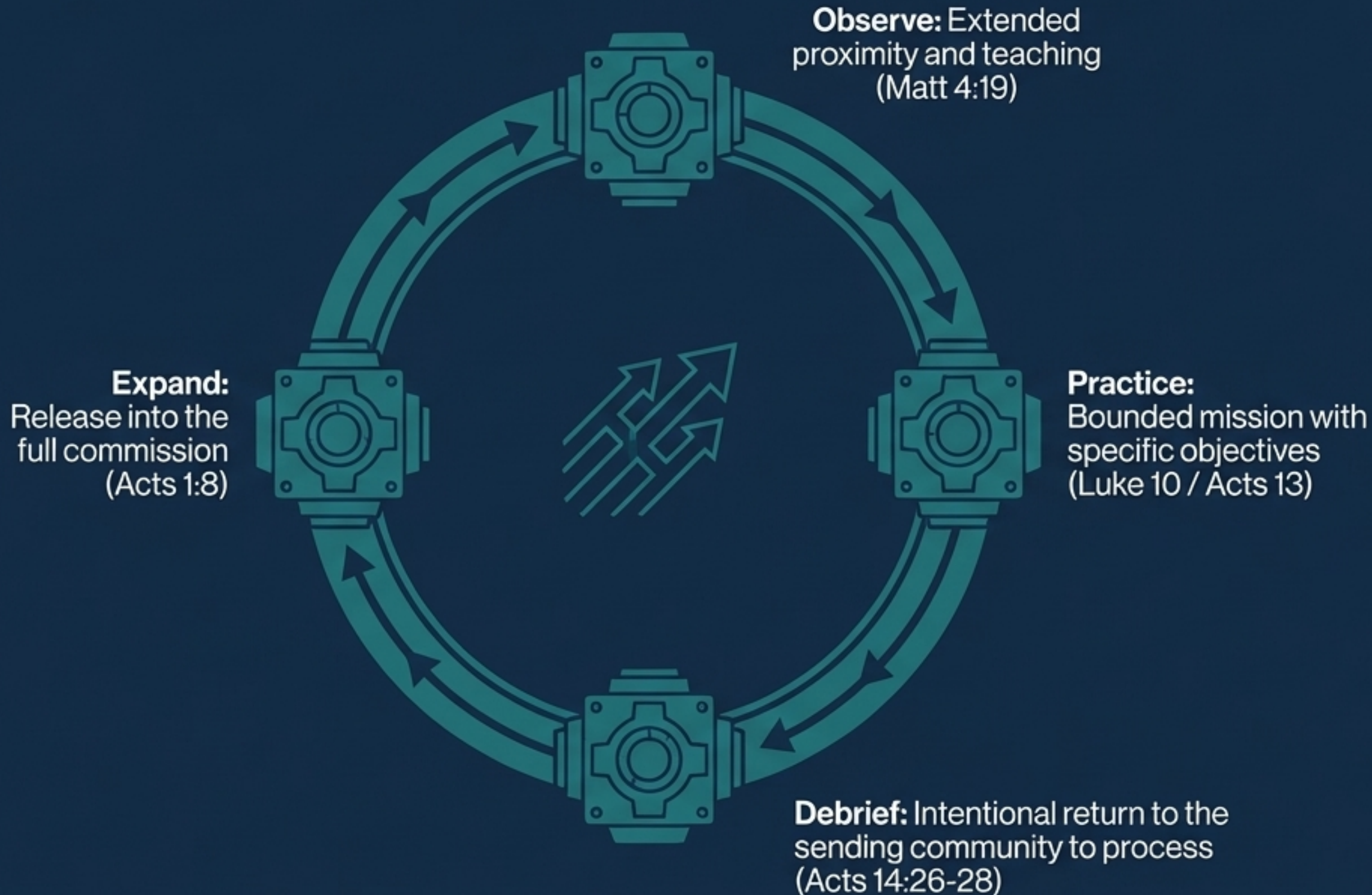
Thousands return transformed, but without deliberate cultivation, the urgency fades. The failure is not the trip; it is the follow-up.

# The Exposure-Discipleship Gap



Inspiration without direction dissipates. Discipleship gives it somewhere to go.

# The Jesus and Paul Commissioning Engine



Short-term missions have always been part of how God forms long-term laborers—when embedded in community, marked by accountability, and followed by intentional discernment.

# Redesigning the Architecture of the Trip

Legacy Paradigm	Pipeline Paradigm
<b>Goal:</b> Inspiration & Project Completion	<b>Goal:</b> Discernment & Formation
<b>Duration:</b> 1-2 Weeks (Task Focus)	<b>Duration:</b> 1-3 Months (Rhythm Focus)
<b>Prep:</b> Logistics & Fundraising	<b>Prep:</b> Honest Missiological Realities
<b>Field Role:</b> Tour Guide & Host	<b>Field Role:</b> Scout & Mentor
<b>Post-Trip:</b> Return to Normal	<b>Post-Trip:</b> 72-Hour Active Engagement

“They didn’t coddle or make it seem easy.  
They prepared us for the reality.”

— 2025 Launch Survey Respondent

# The Tri-Partite Formation Ecosystem

Provides pre-filtered candidates and receives them back for ongoing local discipleship.

The Sending Church

Provides cross-cultural reality, life-on-life mentoring, and assessment.

The Field Worker

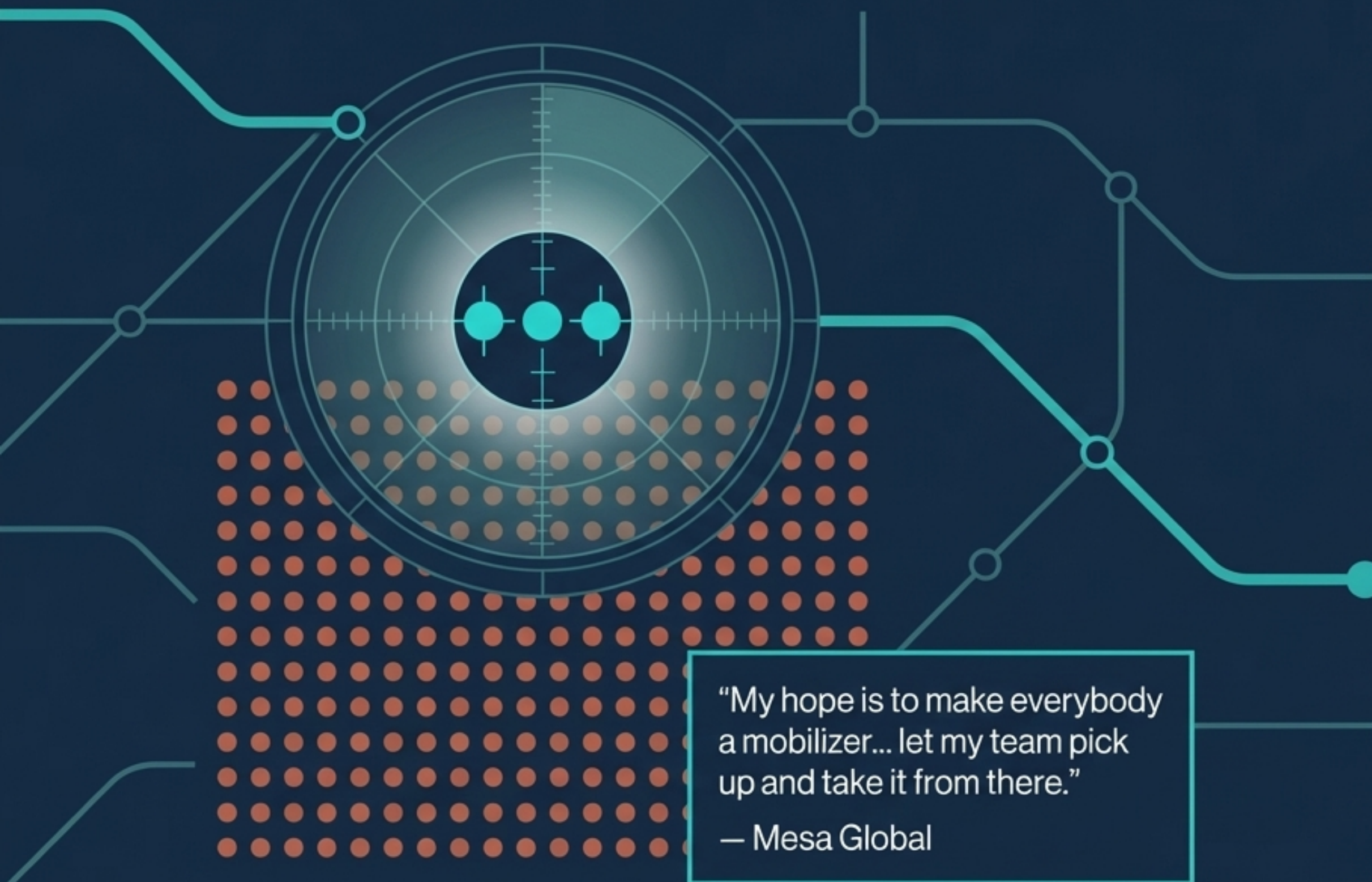
The Candidate

The Mobilization Team

Provides structured training, clear pathways, and follow-up mechanics.

The handoff between inspiration and mobilization currently happens by accident. The ecosystem approach systematizes the handoff.

# Equipping the Field Worker as a Scout



“My hope is to make everybody a mobilizer... let my team pick up and take it from there.”  
— Mesa Global

## The Reality:

Missionaries already receive short-term teams from supporting churches that agencies don't control.

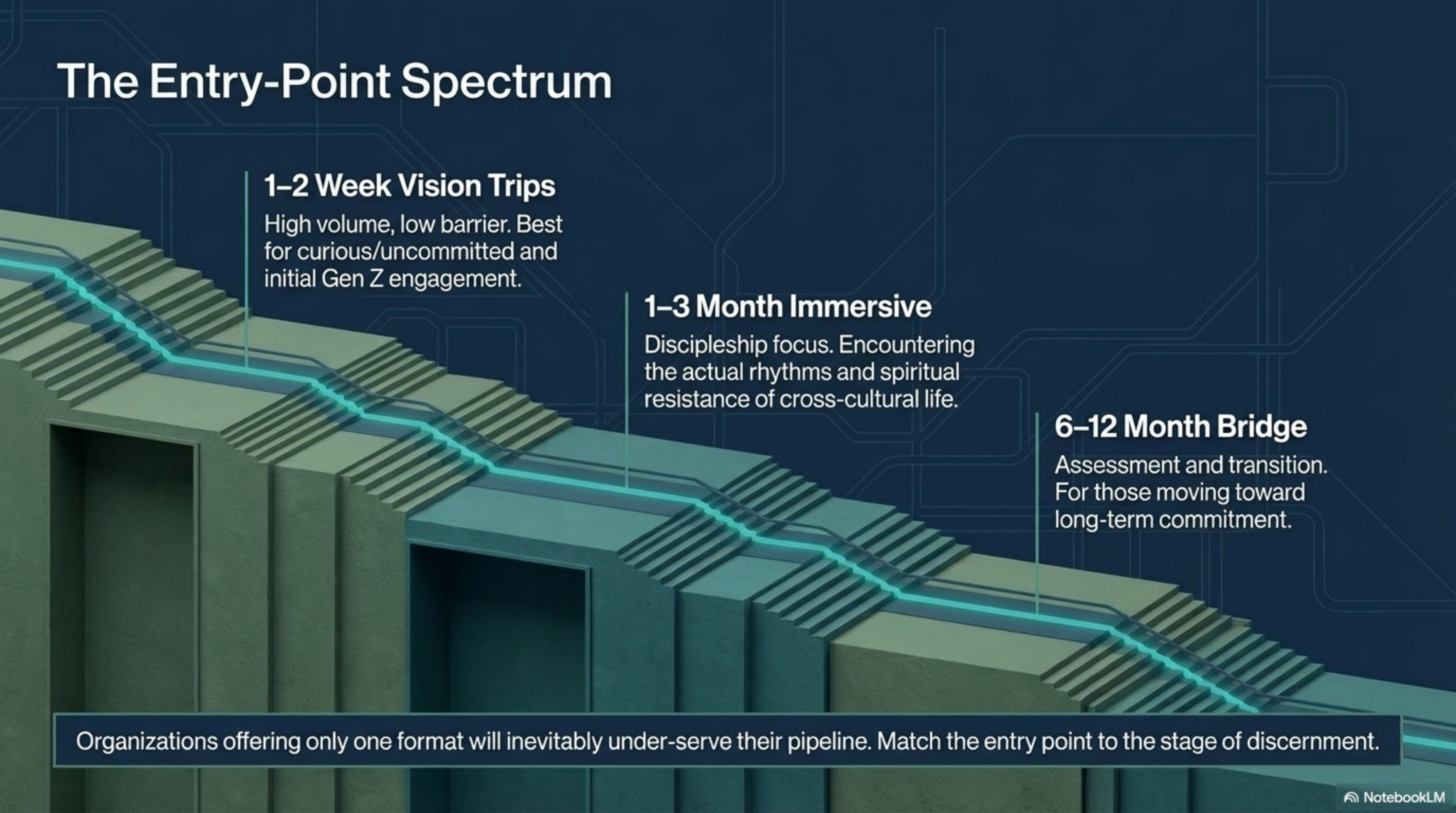
## The Shift:

Stop treating field workers as logistical hosts. Train them to identify who thrives cross-culturally and who asks serious questions.

## The Action:

Equip workers with simple invitation language (“Would you consider coming back longer?”) to generate warm referrals for the mobilization team.

# The Entry-Point Spectrum



## 1–2 Week Vision Trips

High volume, low barrier. Best for curious/uncommitted and initial Gen Z engagement.

## 1–3 Month Immersive

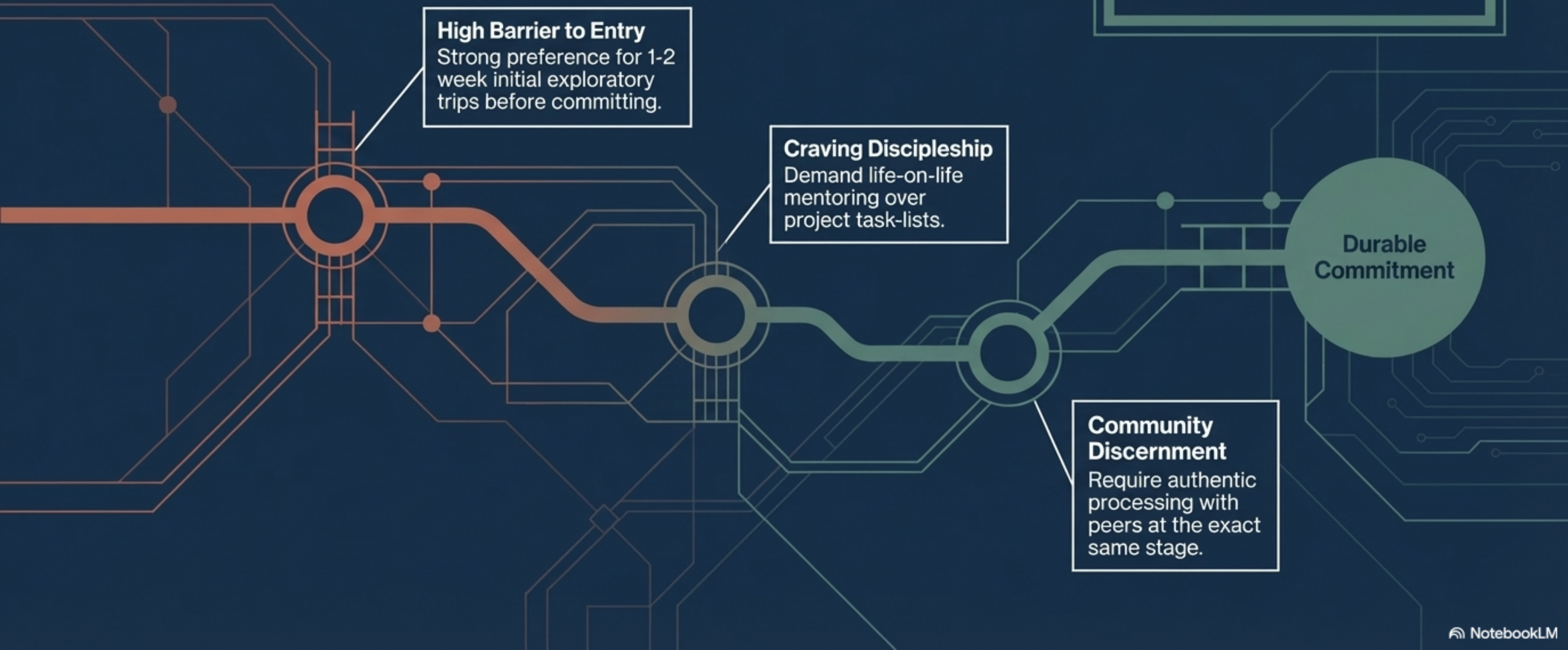
Discipleship focus. Encountering the actual rhythms and spiritual resistance of cross-cultural life.

## 6–12 Month Bridge

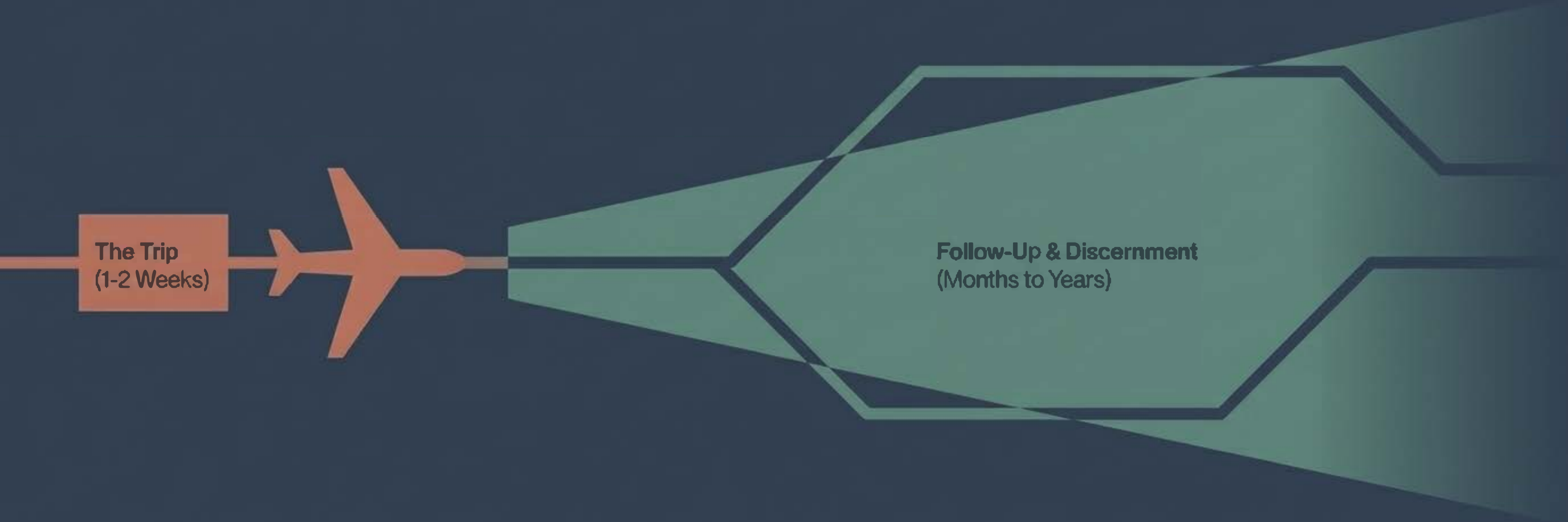
Assessment and transition. For those moving toward long-term commitment.

Organizations offering only one format will inevitably under-serve their pipeline. Match the entry point to the stage of discernment.

# The Generational Processing Timeline



# The Return Flight is the Beginning



**The emotional weight of organizational planning must shift from logistics to trajectory.**

The return flight is not the end of the experience; it is the beginning of the mobilization conversation.

# The Post-Return Follow-Up Blueprint

## Pre-Trip

Follow-up owner assigned by name.

## 72 Hours

Personal, non-automated contact acknowledging the specific experience. The highest moment of candidate receptivity.

## 30 Days

Substantive conversation exploring what is persisting from the experience.

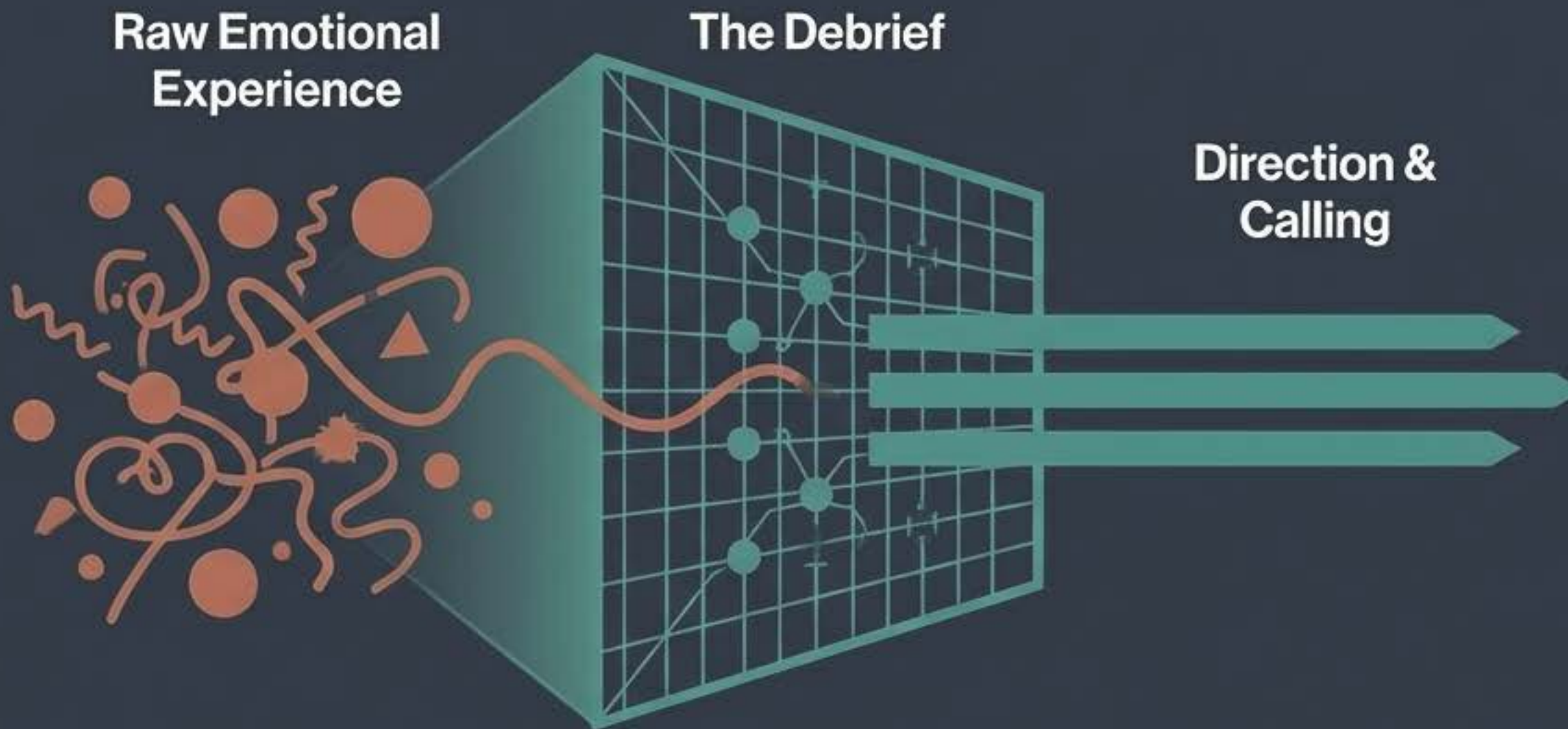
## 90 Days

Invitation to a clear next-step resource (no pressure for long-term commitment).

## Annually

Brief contact to keep the relationship warm for long-runway candidates.

# The Debrief as a Discernment Filter



## Diagnostic Questions for Candidates:

- What surprised you about the work?
- Where did you feel most alive?
- What was harder than you expected?
- What needs to be true for you to take the next step?

# Providing Low-Barrier Next Steps

Returning Candidate

```
graph LR; A((Returning Candidate)) --- B[Missions Education]; A --- C[Cohort Programs]; A --- D[Intermediate Experiences]; A --- E[Mobilization Conversations];
```

## Missions Education

Enrollment in Perspectives or Mission of God studies.

## Cohort Programs

Connection to community (e.g., "Explore Together" groups) for those who are good fits but years away from deployment.

## Intermediate Experiences

Follow-up exploratory trips or 1-3 month immersive deployments.

## Mobilization Conversations

Direct engagement with specific sending agencies based on theology and target populations.

# The Pipeline Audit



You Are Here

- Are our trips designed primarily to form candidates, or to complete projects?
- Is a specific person assigned to follow up with each participant before they depart?
- Do we execute a structured, personal connection within the critical 72-hour return window?
- Are our field workers actively trained to identify and refer thriving candidates?
- Do we offer an entry-point spectrum, or just a single, one-size-fits-all trip?

The harvest is plentiful. The workers are already in the short-term pipeline.  
What they need is not more inspiration but a path forward.