

# **HOW TO USE SEAN COURSES EFFECTIVELY**

Practical tips  
on how to set up  
an effective TEE programme  
using SEAN courses



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This Manual has been written gathering together the rich experiences of a number of TEE programmes around the world that are using SEAN courses. Many of these programmes have been developing over a number of years and consequently are now very strong. Obviously, with new and sometimes struggling programmes, it will be necessary to modify the principles laid down in this Manual according to the more limited resources available. So, if you are just starting, or considering starting, please don't be intimidated by this Manual. Aim high, but adapt the principles laid down here, to your own situation.

# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this Manual on how to use SEAN courses effectively. Let's start with first things first, our firm belief in the unbreakable link between Mission and Theological Education.

*"For God so loved the world, he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent his Son into the world... that the world might be saved" Jn. 3:16,17.*

*"GO into all the world and MAKE DISCIPLES... teach them to obey all I have commanded you". Mt. 28:19,20.*

*"The things you have heard me say... entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others" 2 Tim. 2:2.*

## THE GREAT COMMISSION

Mission and Theological Education should always go hand in hand, and should never be divorced as unfortunately has happened in many areas of the world.

God initiated "Mission" (Latin for 'sending') by sending His Son to this world to save us.

Having achieved His aim, Jesus, in turn, sends us to all nations to "**make disciples**" and to "**teach them to obey all he commanded**", thus establishing a sending, discipling, teaching ministry.

Paul, obeying Jesus, develops this process by training Timothy who he charges to train others, who will train others in a never-ending dynamic evangelistic discipling chain.

This idea that all Christian believers should be active in the ministry of the church, in its worship and witness, in its teaching and serving, has been generally accepted in Protestant circles, from the rediscovery at the Reformation of the "priesthood of all believers", to the emphasis now on "every member ministry" or "Body ministry".

But all too often, that belief has been contradicted in practice, by the tendency to allow a situation where the work of the church depends on a professional, academically trained elite, which becomes increasingly separated from "ordinary" church members.



## THE GREAT OMISSION

In current speech, these members are distinguished from the pastor/priest by the odd name of “lay people” (from the Greek “the people of God”), and the idea is thereby accepted in practice that there are certain functions which can only be carried out by the specialist class. As a result, the specialists are placed on a pedestal, the rest are devalued, and the work of Christ is held up because most of those who could be doing it have acquired the idea that somehow they are not considered adequate.



Among the causes of this much-lamented distinction is the way the elite class are trained. It is assumed that, to be able to do the things they do, they need long, expensive, isolated training, at as high an academic level as possible. Since such training is difficult to obtain, financially costly and demanding in skill and time, the number of the elite is kept small. Thus, their separation from “the laity” is increased, and the dependence of “the laity” on them further deepened. This model, over the years, has established a pattern: Boards of Academics set the rules and students study at the feet of “Specialists” rather than Pastors. The result is usually a middle class, academically-trained ministry that has virtually de-churched the masses of artisan people from the main-line denominations.

By this we are not saying that research and higher education are wrong or that, in essence, Theological Colleges are evil. On the contrary, the church needs highly qualified theologians. The argument here is that these institutions are ineffective for the training needed for front-line ministers in a rapidly expanding church.

For decades, Colleges and Bible Institutes became the only form of training in most denominations, and missionaries exported the same pattern to the mission field.

## HE WHO HAS EARS TO HEAR...

In the early Sixties, a heart searching investigation made by a Seminary in Guatemala, Central America, finally came to grips with the fact that, in places where Jesus’ command for mission is taken seriously, the traditional residential model alone is not enough.

This group made a careful analysis of their achievements over their 25-year history. During that period of time, they had produced roughly 250 graduates of which only 60 were involved in some form of church ministry.

Sadly, of the 60 only 6 were ordained pastors, and all 6 were ministering in the main town churches which could pay for their services.

However, during that same period of 25 years, over 200 dynamic and growing rural congregations had developed, none of them led by a theologically-trained leader from the Seminary.

## TIME FOR TEE

To redress this imbalance, the Seminary broke with tradition and gave birth to the liberating concept of Theological Education by Extension (TEE).

This new approach to the training of church leaders established two main differences with its traditional counterpart. The revolution developed gradually, first in a change of “method” and then, as the experiment progressed, it deepened into a change in “principle”.

**A change of method:** The first step in TEE was to reverse the system of bringing students to a central place, to be taught by lectures, usually in residence, and to take the studies to where the students lived and ministered. This became theological education by extension.

But soon it became evident that this step alone was not enough, the Seminary professors could not cope with the demand, and the students could not cope with the lectures. So gradually the traditional norm of lectures began to change. Added to that, as churches began to identify their pastoral needs according to local reality the old system of Academia setting the tune for ministerial training also began to reverse. Local programmes began to prescribe the programme that would train ministers to meet their needs more effectively.

**A change of principle.** Although still providing for higher academic training, now the main thrust was aimed at the specific pastoral needs of local leaders and members. This brought about a massive increase in students, as serious training and discipling became available to all levels of society, especially the great preponderance of church members in the working classes. The Ephesians 4 passage of every member ministry was re-discovered.

In this way, TEE programmes adapt to local needs and are many and varied. However, basically they all use two essential components:

- a) **Home study text books** specially prepared for each student to study on his own, (not, as in most cases, books written in the traditional way for the traditional market, which usually are unsuitable for students with little formal academic background.)
- b) **Weekly Group Study**, in which a number of those studying a course in the same area meet to discuss what they have studied, under the guidance of a Tutor. The Tutor’s job is **not** to impart knowledge, but to guide the members of the group as they join in discussion and work through the application of what they have studied. A tutor may visit weekly from elsewhere for this purpose, or may be a local leader, or even be a trained member of the study group itself.

Thus, the programme is freed from the restrictions of a building with resident staff and students, allowing extreme mobility of outreach.



## **BY THEIR FRUIT ...**

In places where growth and mission are the norm, the **benefits** of TEE soon become evident:

- a) **The student remains in his local situation**, and is not transferred to an alien environment, which can easily either leave him disorientated and ill at ease, or else change him so that he no longer fits back into his previous background culture, and indeed no longer wishes to.
- b) **The student can therefore continue to earn his living as before**, stay within his family and other local support structures, and continue to work in his church.
- c) **The student has time to work through his studies at his own pace**, and is able to apply it to his local situation, so making it more real, and enabling him to spread immediately the blessings he is learning.
- d) **At the end of the process, the student is much more ready to continue working in the church and culture where he has been all this time**, and also, takes much more readily to the idea of continuing to study, learn, and grow as a natural part of his Christian life and service, just as he has been doing during the previous years (ie. there is no temptation to sit back, gaze at one's Diploma, and think "Now I've arrived!").
- e) **Training can be made available to far more church members** than would have been the case with residential training, so that the involvement of every believer in active Christian service is much more feasible.
- f) **The financial cost is much less than the traditional residential method**, which requires financial support to be found for the student (and often his family as well) during his time there, as well as all the costs of lecture facilities, staff, etc. of the seminary.

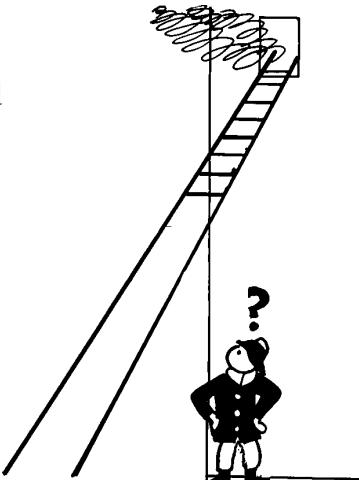
These advantages of TEE - the opening up of Bible teaching and ministry training to most of the Church's membership - have in fact been available at times in the past, long before the title TEE emerged. The Methodist revival in Britain, church growth in the North American west and the Pentecostal revival in Latin America are just three examples. You may be interested to read about this in Appendix 1.

## SEAN (PRONOUNCED “SAY-ANN”)

SEAN began in 1971, on the wave of TEE and by the initiative of a few missionaries of the South American Missionary Society, who wished to provide programmed teaching material for the relatively small Anglican churches in a few South American republics.

SEAN per se never set up as a formal TEE programme; it dedicated itself to write study materials and Tutor Guides for use in other programmes.

Up till that stage, though TEE had been widely hailed as a major breakthrough in training methods for underprivileged areas, very little well-written study material had been produced on a basic level, although a high proportion of prospective students come from this sort of background.



Someone once likened traditional Theological Education to a fireman’s ladder with the bottom 20 rungs missing! To study theology, a student must be able to jump and catch on to the 21st rung. This being the case, SEAN set its aim at filling in the bottom 20 rungs, by producing basic level materials in such a way that intelligent students would end up studying at a far higher level than when they entered.

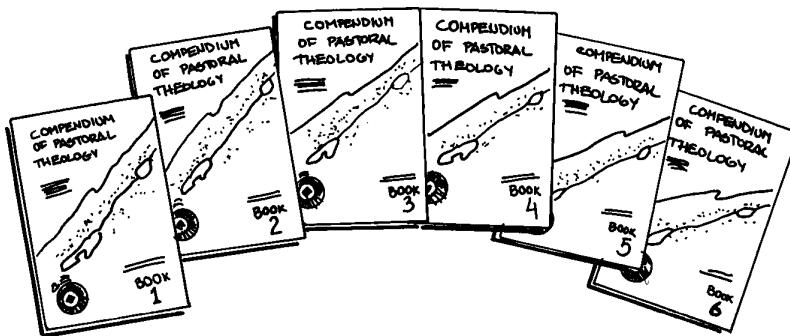
At the start, the initials “S.E.A.N.” stood for “Seminario por Extension Anglicano” (Anglican Extension Seminary). However, when it became evident that its courses were being used by many other denominations in several countries, a decision was made; courses would be written for interdenominational use and SEAN became: “Seminario por Extension A las Naciones” (Study by Extension for All Nations). The idea was for SEAN, so to speak, to produce a cake that would allow each denomination to put on its own icing.



Initially the name was also chosen because the word “Sean” in Spanish is “To Be”, the first word in the motto text 2 Timothy 2:2. “To be qualified to teach others also”.

As mentioned before, here the Apostle Paul expresses his concern that what he had passed on to Timothy, should not merely be passed on by Timothy, but then passed to others who (by their faithfulness) could be counted on to continue the process of receiving, living and passing on to yet others the benefits of their knowledge and experience.

## **SEAN IN ACTION:**



It has also been the concern of SEAN that TEE should not become merely a matter of the geographical relocation of students and their studies, so that a previously residential seminary merely transfers its customary syllabus and methods to several decentralized locations. Rather, the aim has been to take the opportunity, along with the change to the TEE method, to help students not only to acquire knowledge traditionally conveyed by lectures, libraries, essays and examinations, but also to develop new attitudes, and to train them in skills which will be of use in active Christian ministry.

With this aim, SEAN's classic, the "Compendium of Pastoral Theology", based on the Life of Christ according to Matthew's Gospel and produced in 6 books needing some 3 months each for study, was designed as an integrated curriculum that includes lessons on how to study the Bible, how to use the Bible, how to visit from house to house, how to witness and to lead someone to Christ, how to plant a new church, and many similar concerns, while other courses deal with how to lead Bible studies, how to preach, how to prepare and lead services, etc..

At frequent intervals in the Compendium lessons, the figure of the "teacher" appears, urging the student at that moment to pray (as the drawing implies the "teacher" himself is about to do!), to thank God for this or that, or to engage in some practical activity, so that what has just been studied may not be merely something else to store in the memory, but something to change the life of the student, and in due course, to contribute to changing the lives of others also.

The Tutor's Manuals similarly include a good proportion of discussion questions whose basic thrust is: "How can we put this into practice in our own lives, in our church, etc.?".

Similarly, a number of further courses have been produced, all of which are geared to on-the-job training. For a list of courses currently available, please look up Appendix 2.

By the Grace of God these materials have been remarkably successful and SEAN has caught on so widely that, at present, several of the courses are used in 100 countries, and have been translated into over 70 languages.

## WHY IT WORKS

To date, SEAN courses are successfully used in many different circumstances and with equal profit by students with university degrees or working class background. This success has baffled specialists and has been subject to quite serious analysis.

Most agree that SEAN's success is due to the fact that its courses:

- are Bible based and fully interdenominational.
- promote active learning and participation.
- are simple in method but profound in content.
- are self-pacing, in other words, slower students can keep up.
- are self-correcting, as the answers are included in each book.
- apply the Bible to life and ministry.
- develop teaching skills.
- promote task-oriented fellowship in the study groups.
- prime students for prepared discussion.
- produce remarkable confidence-building in many students.
- are excellent for identifying ministerial gifts.
- are Church-based, as students remain in their local congregations.

**Note:** these points are developed further in Appendix 3, which at a later date you may need to use for promotional purposes.

However, it is also true that some groups have used SEAN materials and, after initial success, have failed.

## POSSIBLE PITFALLS

Again research has revealed several reasons why this has happened:

- a) **The courses were promoted and used only through the enthusiasm of one or two people** without being made an official part of the local church or denominational activities. As the church or denomination didn't have a part in running the programme, it would gradually disintegrate, once the key promoting leader moved out.
- b) **The courses were given out free of charge** by enthusiastic missionaries, and when the missionary left, the programme folded up.
- c) **The courses were just used, book after book, without becoming part of a seriously set-out TEE programme.** Since students couldn't relate to terms or fixed dates, their secular activities would force them to miss group meetings and, being unable to catch up, they would eventually drop out.
- d) **The courses were used without choosing and training competent Tutors,** gradually disorder would creep in and after initial enthusiasm, the study groups would gradually fall apart.
- e) **Study groups were organized without the consent of the local Pastor.** Sooner or later SEAN study group dates would conflict with local church activities, creating friction with the church so students would gradually begin to fall out of the course.
- f) **Students were enrolled unaware of the cost in terms of finance, time and energy,** so when the pressure of work, study and ministry become intense, they fell away.

We have briefly seen reasons for success and pitfalls for failure. Now let us read two Case Studies, one based on a local church and one organized throughout a whole denomination, that illustrate these key points.

## CASE STUDY 1 : SEAN IN A LOCAL CHURCH BACKGROUND

**Trinity Anglican Church** is located in Las Condes, an upper-middle class area of Chile's capital city, Santiago. It started some eight years ago with the dynamic leadership of an Anglo-Chilean missionary who, having grown up there, feels he has the big advantage of being recognized as one of them. Membership is now around about 800, very largely drawn from the professional classes, and mostly new Christians, either from a nominal Roman Catholic background, or none.

Church growth in that location is unique, as it is well known that, previously, Protestant evangelical churches had only flourished amongst the Chilean working classes, but never in a prosperous suburb like Las Condes.

What has been the reason for this unexpected growth? The Pastor's answer is unequivocal: "Unashamed evangelism in the power of the Holy Spirit, and the organized discipling and mobilization of leaders using SEAN courses."

This church outreach and training programme using SEAN has been so successful, that the Pastor is continually in demand to speak elsewhere on how to set up similar self-multiplying churches.

### HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS:

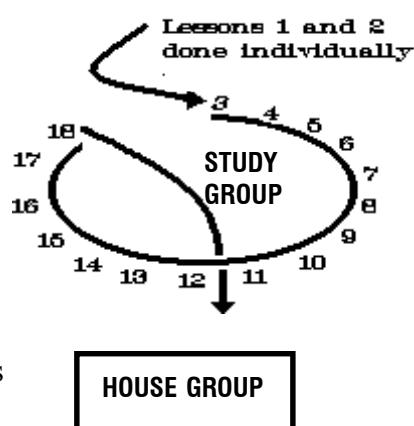
Constant evangelism on all fronts leads to a continual flow of new believers and inquirers.

#### First step - Abundant Life

The first step for all new-comers is the **Abundant Life** course which, although designed for use with new Christians, has also proved fine for use with newcomers or those who have been in church for years but that have never learned the basics of the Christian faith.

Abundant Life is used in open meetings, in cyclical form, all year round. Lessons 1 and 2 are done privately with each new individual, who is then in a position to join in with whatever lesson the group is currently doing. He or she continues with the open group until completing the cycle.

The Newcomers' Group starts afresh each year, in March, using the Abundant Life cycle, but following a very flexible programme, including dealing in personal ministry with whatever may be needed in the way of healing, dealing with demon possession (quite a number have dabbled in the occult at some time or other), their need to be filled with the Holy Spirit, etc..



In commenting on the use of such simple study material with middle class and professional people, the Pastor says that he finds no difficulty in telling them that though they may be experts in their professional field, spiritually they are in effect illiterate and so need to start from the beginning. And with this, these highly educated students readily concur.

### **Second step - Bible Encounter Manual**

Now fully acquainted with the personal and group study concept, new believers are readily integrated into house groups led by trained leaders that use the Bible Encounter Manual. In fact this SEAN course originated in this local church as a tool for such a purpose.

In this way, apart from the regular church services, many forms of practical ministries and evangelism, the believers continue to be nurtured in small house groups. When it is felt that a new believer is ready for increased responsibilities he/she is “called” to also take part in the Programme for Growth and Ministry.

### **Third step - Programme for Growth and Ministry**

So in the second or third year “newcomers” now no longer considered as such, move on into “Procremin” (a Spanish abbreviation, standing for Programme for Growth and Ministry, ie. making plain that it is not study for study’s sake).

This programme lasts another 6 years. The church tries to avoid committing members to more than one midweek meeting, although the widespread involvement of members in Marriage Encounter (in many cases what first brought them to the church) has made this more difficult to maintain.

Each year starting in March and ending in November (the Chilean school year) students cover one book of the Compendium and participate in some associate ministries, as set out below:

- **Year 1:**  
Compendium Book 1, house group and Ev. Explosion.
- **Year 2:**  
Compendium Book 2, house group and practical ministry.
- **Year 3:**  
Compendium Book 3, house group and practical ministry.
- **Year 4:**  
Compendium Book 4, house group and practical ministry.
- **Year 5:**  
Compendium Book 5, house group and practical ministry.
- **Year 6:**  
Compendium Book 6, house group and practical ministry.

Practical ministry means constant involvement in active evangelism and training for other ministries such as Sunday School teaching, tutoring SEAN Groups, counsellng new believers, leading House Groups, etc..

All 6 years are kept running concurrently, so each week there is a meeting for those in their 2nd year, another for those in their 3rd year, etc. and also one for the Newcomers, etc.

Study groups meet on whichever night most suits the members and are led by a trained Tutor with an assistant Tutor-in-training.

Most members study SEAN in addition to their housegroups so, to prevent them having to go to two meetings a week, housegroups alternate with Procremin, each holding meetings fortnightly. This means that each fortnight, the whole membership meet in different groups, which produces helpful cross-fertilization.

Once members have graduated out of the 6 year Procremin programme many continue with other SEAN courses, such as the Paul series or the Pentateuch. Those with notable leadership gifts and pastoral vocation are also moved on to the Diocesan Level 2 Training Programme or even a Theological College.

Added to the above, some prefer to move more quickly through the SEAN Books, and a “SEAN Express” has just started, which will take them through 3 Compendium books in a year. However, they are still encouraged to stay in their housegroups, hence these students will have to meet more than twice a week.

As mentioned, they find that it is very important to keep to a strict programme, like a school term – “They must fit in with our programme, and not we with theirs” says the pastor, “This is just what they are used to anyway within the Chilean educational system, so that they don’t even question it. On the contrary, seeing their name on a list to belong here, go there, etc. makes them feel pleased that someone has troubled to think of them and include them, and they happily comply.”

Las Condes Church has had the advantage of being able to start out this way, rather than having to tighten up a lax past. This has created a dynamic church where Christians just take for granted that training, evangelism, fellowship and worship are their natural way of life.

Some of the housegroups are expected to develop in time into new churches, and in fact this is happening in some of the groups further out who find it hard to get to the central church’s activities.

An added reason for the successful use of SEAN in Procremin has been the serious training of Tutors. Generally they have found that the existing SEAN Manuals are sufficient, with appropriate support from the pastor, since by now, all new Tutors have had the opportunity of being students first, and so of being on the receiving end before becoming Tutors.

However, there is an important special training month in March, as the Chilean summer holidays come to an end, called “Procapaz” (Training Programme), which gives those who have finished the SEAN Compendium Books 1-6 additional training in leadership and Tutoring skills.

Added to the above, over the years, Trinity Church have added further SEAN courses and also adopted an advanced level programme using courses from a recognized Seminary.

## RESULTS:

With the notable exception of Trinity church in Las Condes, and a few others, Anglican churches in Chile have been slow to grow. However, it has been interesting to note the difference in growth, leadership training and life, between those that have followed the Procremin method and those that just plod on doing their own thing. Over 250 members are actively engaged in study and ministry, no wonder the church is growing! “This is the most efficient system there is”, comments one of the full time lay Pastors, in spite of serious doubts he had in the past.

## CASE STUDY 2 : SEAN IN A DENOMINATION

### HISTORY:

This is a case study of SEAN used as the basis for a TEE programme organized by a denomination in Northern Colombia, the Asociacion de Iglesias Evangelicas del Caribe, AIEC (Association of Evangelical Churches of the Caribbean), with some 400 churches in all.

Interestingly, although initiated by Latin American Mission (LAM) missionaries, now the church is 100% nationally run as is also the TEE programme.



It is an interesting case study as it represents a place where SEAN materials were first used in the early 70's, and after a promising start the programme fell apart. However, years later, once the programme was organized on a serious footing, it has continued with extraordinary success.

During the early 1970s some well-intentioned missionaries attempted to get TEE started, using SEAN materials as they gradually became available. The programme prospered and had up to 300 students at one period. However, the programme lacked objectives and organization, so as missionaries went on furlough, it gradually petered out, apparently due to lack of fresh materials, and also to lack of promotion by senior figures within the denomination.

Subsequently a census showed that most pastors were relatively untrained. In an attempt to deal with this, over a hundred Pastors and Leaders enrolled in the Logoi/SEAN (FLET) diploma level course. However, within 6 months, some 60% of the students had fallen out as they couldn't cope with the level of study.

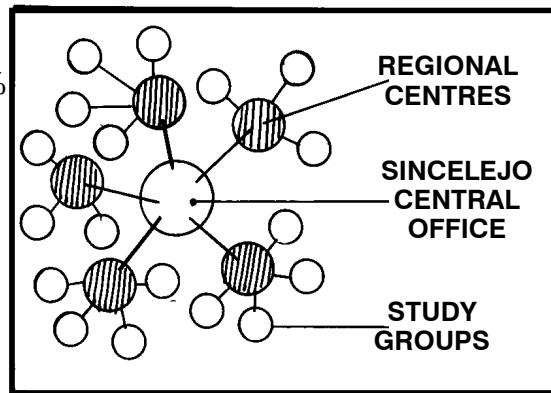
It was at this time that the SEAN courses were re-introduced but now as part of a well-planned Basic Level programme. The results have been remarkable, currently with about 1300 students a year.

Now, even pastors who have graduated successfully from the Diploma course have returned to study the Basic Level, both for their own benefit and as an example to their church members.

## STRUCTURES:

The area involved is very approximately 500 Kms. across and 200 Kms. deep. 80% of the AIEC churches are rural or located in small villages, where travel is difficult, often needing a boat for river travel, and with some areas much affected by guerrilla warfare.

There are some 160 local study groups spread over the area, with a limit on numbers of 5-10 per group, and each with their local Tutor.



The local study groups of different geographic areas are linked together in about 20 Regional Centres to which, at the end of each term, they travel to take their exams, participate in a workshop, and receive new materials.

The hub of the programme is the main office in Sincelejo where there is also a Bible Institute. In this case TEE isn't second class to residence as no student can attend the Bible Institute unless they have done TEE studies first.

Local Tutors are supervised by four full-time "Instructors", who visit them from time to time, often unexpectedly, to keep them on their toes!, or when asked to do so by groups facing problems. Travel difficulties mean that very often such a visit involves an overnight stay, and visits can be very time and energy consuming, to say nothing of the financial cost even when carried out by public transport, insofar as it exists!

Supervising the Instructors is a Director. He is a senior and much respected Pastor who has been freed of the charge of a local church to allow for travel. Indeed his energy and vision have, humanly speaking, largely contributed to the establishing of this programme.

NB. Some of those described as being full-time also have other responsibilities, hence the number of 4 full-time Instructors really means that out of all those who do this work (more than 4 in all), there is the equivalent of about 4 working full-time on SEAN supervision.

## THE PROGRAMME:

The programme fits into the regular national school year system and all groups begin studies on a same date in February. They continue for three terms (1 SEAN course per term) until the school year finishes in November. Thus, the Compendium of Pastoral Theology, which forms the basic core curriculum is covered in two years, as show below:

### YEAR 1



### YEAR 2



**THE CURRICULUM:**

In this TEE programme SEAN materials have been intelligently woven into a comprehensive plan of studies that teaches students to read and write, through all levels right up to the Bible Institute for advanced training. The following diagram illustrates how SEAN courses form the basis of the Basic Level studies which represent over 80% of the student body of roughly 1300 a year.

**LEVEL 1**

**LEARNING TO READ AND WRITE  
ALFALIT**

**LEVEL 2**

**FOR NEW BELIEVERS  
ABUNDANT LIFE (SEAN)  
ABUNDANT LIGHT (SEAN)**

**LEVEL 3**

**BASIC CERTIFICATE (2 Years)  
6 BOOK OF COMPENDIUM (SEAN)**

**LEVEL 4**

**ADVANCED CERTIFICATE (2 years)  
PAUL'S LIFE & LETTER (SEAN)  
THE PENTATEUCH (SEAN)**

**LEVEL 5**

**DIPLOMA PASTORAL & FURTHER TRAINING  
MATERIALS FROM OTHER SOURCES**

## **STUDENTS:**

To a large extent, the recruiting of students has been carried out by visits of the free-ranging Pastor mentioned above, who enjoys good relationships and prestige throughout the denomination. Typically, he would preach in Sunday services, stressing the need both locally and more widely of well-instructed Christians, and also of leaders able to take their place in society (where he feels there is now a vacuum left by the Roman Catholic Church's lack of standing). He would ask the church to fill in the appropriate form with intended numbers of students, requesting affiliation.

Since study and ministry are a natural part of their church life, students respond enthusiastically. In fact not all who apply are accepted as no student can join a study group without the support of his pastor and confirmation that he or she is already involved (or eager to be involved) in some kind of pastoral/evangelistic work in the church.

If a student begins to fall behind, the Tutor will give individual help, especially if this is caused by sickness. In the case of a student who has just had a baby, she is allowed one week off, and then the group meet in her house for a while to make sure she isn't missed out!

Apparently it is widely known among other denominations that the AIEC is growing as a result of their SEAN groups and emphasis on Bible teaching and evangelistic outreach, and therefore many of them are showing interest in making use of the studies also. Demand exceeds supply, but the AIEC are open to other denominations' participation, and offer to all concerned that if they are in a position of being able to nominate a competent Instructor, they can become part of the AIEC programme.

## **TUTORS:**

Usually these are chosen from the ranks of graduate students and are trained in Work-shops and with the On-the-Job "How to Tutor" Manual. However, from time to time in new areas where there is no one who has already studied/tutored before, the group of students about to begin appoint one of their own number to be Tutor, and also another as stand-in. The Instructor from outside may sometimes feel a need to try to influence such appointments, if he feels an unwise choice is likely to be made. The stand-in leads occasional meetings, with advance notice, to gain experience. The Tutor therefore has the double task of studying for himself and also preparing to lead the week's tutorial.

It is claimed that someone who has never been a student before has an advantage as Tutor, in that as the students know he's not an expert, they therefore feel freer to express their own opinions. In addition to this, Instructors are available to help, and especially so in the case of new Tutors.

It seems that, in theory at least, there is an Instructor responsible for each Zone, but that if he is unable to visit when there is a need, he is free to ask another to go in his stead. Visits are carried out, where possible, on the day when the group meets. The Instructors are also involved in other work of the Bible Institute, teaching (for example) a denominational course on Stewardship, using TEE methods.

## **FINANCES:**

The global Theological and Ministerial Training of the AIEC has a total of eight full-time workers associated with the Bible Institute, spending around half their total time on SEAN, which means the equivalent of 4 full-time workers. Travel and office expenses need to be met as well as wages for the Instructors, and also capital for the original printing and the 10% copyright fee payable to SEAN International.

Some of their funds come from the USA and offerings given by about ten more affluent AIEC churches. This money goes mainly towards covering salaries and the more expensive FLET diploma level courses. The Basic Level programme, however is virtually self-funding.

Each student pays a matriculation fee at the beginning of each year of about 5 dollars, and then a term fee of roughly another 7 dollars every three months. These can be made in instalments, but all must be paid in before taking the exams.

Here a very important principle is established. Students are enrolling in a TEE programme, not just purchasing SEAN books.

## **RECOGNITION:**

The AIEC use the standard SEAN exams and all study groups meet up at pre-established dates at their Zonal Centre to take exams together. All Exam papers are then sent in to the central office for marking and the results are then returned to the groups (but not the papers, so there is no temptation to share the exam questions with newer students the following year!). Groups also send to the central office weekly test marks, and attendance figures, which - together with final exam results - are put together into a final mark. Those with 70% pass on to the next book, and those with 60% and below have to repeat the Book, which in practice means waiting till another group is about to start the following year.

At the end of each level, a locally produced certificate is awarded at a graduation ceremony held at the Bible Institute once a year as part of a large ceremony, with overnight hospitality being provided for those coming from a distance.

## **EFFECTS IN CHURCH LIFE:**

The President of the AIEC (who himself studied his way through all the then available SEAN books) says that in the eleven years they have been following this system, the denomination has grown, in numbers of members and of congregations, by “a little over 100%”.

The studies are producing better leadership, and a new enthusiasm for evangelism. One pastor, now a full-time Instructor, says that his church had similarly doubled in numbers, without any need to organize special evangelistic campaigns, since the changed lives and new confidence in witnessing of the SEAN students meant that a continuous trickle of new believers were coming to the church.

**Note:** This programme has continued successfully since 1987, in spite of the raging civil war in Colombia. A very interesting development is taking place in many prisons where currently a spiritual revival is taking place. You may be interested to read the book: “The Lord of Bella Vista” which describes the use of TEE in prison.

Having heard about the benefits and exiting results of TEE/SEAN, it is not enough to simply try and copy what someone else has done, with the feeling “we must have one of them too”! It is vitally important for every future user of SEAN courses to make a very serious plan of action in order to get the best results.

What follows is a brief description of the ten basic steps taken by all the programmes that have been successful in their use of SEAN courses.

# **TEN BASIC STEPS FOR SETTING UP AN EFFECTIVE TEE PROGRAMME USING SEAN COURSES**

## **1. ESTABLISH CLEAR OBJECTIVES**

It is necessary to work towards precise objectives, resolving such questions as:

- a) What training do our churches need?
- b) How must a TEE programme meet those needs?
- c) Who should our students be? What levels of people are we primarily concerned with reaching? (eg: New Christians? Those who already have experience in leadership but little formal training? The up-and-coming youth of the church?)
- d) How will the people who are trained use their new skills within the local church or denomination?
- e) What do we want them to learn anyway (bearing in mind that SEAN materials aim not just to impart head knowledge, but to change attitudes and to train in new skills for ministry)?
- f) Will such changes be measurable/observable in any way, and assuming they will, how will they be evaluated so as to monitor the success or otherwise of the training programme?
- g) On the basis of the previous answers, what courses should we use?
- h) Which is the best way to use these courses in our circumstances?
- i) Who should be involved in this planning process?
- j) How shall we choose the leaders to run the programme?
- k) What should the relationship be between TEE and the Church?
- l) What impact should the programme have on the Church, assuming it goes well?

After pondering these questions, and making sure you have clear answers to each one, finish this step by summarizing your thoughts and writing out a brief ‘statement of purpose’ for your TEE programme.

## **2. SELECT A COMPETENT ORGANIZER/DIRECTOR WITH A VISION**

Perhaps the single most important aspect of an effective programme is the correct choice of the person to organize and direct it, the Organizer/Director.

The Organizer/Director must:

- Be a senior leader.
- Have the full backing of Church, Board or Denomination.
- Be respected by all concerned (pastors and students).
- Be fully informed on TEE and SEAN.
- Have a clear vision for this ministry.
- Be a hard, disciplined worker.
- Be a notably efficient and well organized person.
- Be honest in managing money.

- Be a sticker who won't pull out half way through.
- Have sufficient resources available to do the job.
- Be able to manage people.

Being responsible for the setting up and running of the TEE programme, the Organizer/Director will need a clear job description and obviously, the larger the programme the more efficient and well prepared this person must be.

**Note:** Although the jobs that follow are the responsibility of the Organizer/Director, in larger programmes most of them should be delegated to other competent officers.

**The Organizer/Director must:**

- a) set up an administrative office which at least must have basic office equipment, including a good filing cabinet and space to store materials.
- b) set the curriculum specifying the courses to be studied and in which order.
- c) purchase or print all course materials and provide them well in advance for the study groups:
  - SEAN courses, Tutor Manuals and Final Exams.
  - Promotion literature.
  - Administrative papers.
- (**Note:** If he is going to print courses, he must also establish contact with SEAN International for authorization and the publishing contract.)
- d) set the academic year based on the national School and Church calendar.
- e) select and train competent Tutors.
- f) publicize the programme, and design and implement the enrollment process.
- g) organize workshops, special meetings and exams.
- h) manage the finances of the programme.
- i) file all home study, attendance and exam records, issuing the corresponding certificates and accreditation.
- j) prepare statistics and reports on a regular basis for his board, council or denomination.

The Organizer/Director is also requested to record interesting testimonies of the use of the programme, collect feedback and corrections and send them to SEAN International on a yearly basis, in order to help upgrade the courses.

### **3. ESTABLISH CLEAR ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES**

Small or large, whether organized for one local church or for a whole denomination, you will need clear administrative structures.

Once the right person has been chosen to lead the programme, you must answer questions such as:

- a) Will your programme be in the context of a local church, a group of churches, a denomination in a country or will it be international?
- b) Roughly how many students do you reckon you will have?
- c) To whom will the Organizer/Director be responsible?
- d) How often and when should the Organizer/Director report?

- e) How will the TEE programme relate to the church or denomination?
- f) What are the Organizer/Director's powers and prerogatives?
- g) What other officers will be involved in running the programme?
- h) What resources do they have to do the job?
- i) Where will the administrative office be located?
- j) What elements do you already have?
- k) What do you need to get? How will you get them?

Once links are clearly established between the Denomination or Church and those who will run the programme:

- Write out job descriptions for each officer.
- Design an organigram that shows the lines of command, reporting and responsibility.
- Establish clear procedures.

**Note:** The case studies in Appendix 5 may give you some ideas on this.

#### 4. ESTABLISH SOLID FINANCIAL POLICIES

It is worth settling, at an early stage, such matters as: who pays for the initial printing of books, who sets the costs to students, who meets incidental expenses , who audits accounts and to whom are they then presented. This is still more necessary if the programme is to be set up across denominational or other boundaries where there is not already a working financial basis.

There are many factors to take into account:

- travel, post, use of premises, insurance of stock,
- printing or purchase of SEAN courses and any other promotional or administrative materials. (If you are printing: you will need to preserve capital for further printing in the future, cover costs of storage and insurance of stock, the 10% publication fee to be paid to SEAN International, etc.)
- possible salaries such as: staff who may be needed for posting books, dealing with correspondence and administration, or supervising tutorial groups, etc..

We recommend you make careful calculations and fund your programme by charging a reasonable matriculation fee at the beginning of each year or term, and then a term fee which, if needed, can be paid in monthly installments.

In finances there are some vital principles to remember:

- a) **Never make the programme free.** This has been done several times and invariably the programme isn't taken seriously. If students genuinely can't pay for the course, arrange for churches or individuals to provide scholarships **but always insist the student at least pays a token amount.**
- b) **Never link the fees charged to the student with the cost of the SEAN text book.** Emphasize the student is entering a programme, not just purchasing a study book.

c) **Always insist everything is paid before a student takes the term exam.**

Remember, apart from teaching course content, the purpose of the programme is to develop principles of Christian living and ministry. One of these is paying debts!

## 5. ESTABLISH FIRM ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

It is easy, once one or more leaders have become enthused with the possibilities of TEE/SEAN, for them to rush ahead virtually on their own, try to persuade those they can influence to enroll in the new programme, and carry through at least a short burst of such activity simply on the basis of their initial enthusiasm.

Such cases will be short lived. Students will come merely because “this missionary or that pastor persuaded me”, and they won’t have the long term commitment and dedication to training that they need to last the course, and to make the best of it. Here we have an important principle:

**NEVER make the entrance to the programme too easy.** Remember you aren’t merely training students, **you are training people to be God’s servants and this demands discipline and hard work.** Jesus was quite emphatic on this point: “Unless you are willing to take up your cross and follow me, you are not apt to be my disciple”.

Therefore it is much better to be able to work towards a situation where, in effect, potential students are keenly requesting enrollment, rather than being begged to join the course.

Once this right attitude is established, where the pressure is “from outside trying to get in”, rather than the reverse, important conditions can be laid down.

The usual requirements are:

- 80% minimum home study to be completed.
- 80% minimum punctual attendance at Group Meetings.
- 80% minimum pass mark in the Final Exam.
- all fees paid before taking the Final Exam.
- active involvement in local ministry assignments.

Here is another vital principle: **Always insist that enrolling students pledge to fulfill the programme’s conditions of entry** and make them sign a statement to this effect on an official enrollment form. You have a sample enrollment form in Appendix 6 to illustrate this point.

## 6. ORGANIZE THE PLAN OF STUDIES

If one expects discipline and hard work from the students, obviously they are entitled to enter a serious programme. This means they must know exactly:

- what they will be studying,
- what benefits it will give them,
- how long it will take,
- what it will cost them in terms of finances and time, etc..

## **A. The Curriculum:**

As circumstances are different in each local situation, this plan of studies will vary from place to place. However, in most areas SEAN courses are used on three specific levels:

### **Pre-foundation courses:**

- Abundant Life (The A, B, C of Christian Life).
- Abundant Light (A panoramic view of the whole Bible and its message)
- Union with Christ (A devotional study of Ephesians).
- Bible Encounter Manual (A dynamic group-study tool).

### **Main foundation courses:**

- Compendium of Pastoral Theology (an integrated programme in six three-month terms).
- Life and Letters of Paul (three 12 week terms)
- The Pentateuch (two 12 week terms)

### **Additional leadership training courses:**

- Students can elect from these courses according to their ministry:
- How to Preach (12 week term)
- How to Prepare and Lead Services (12 week term)
- How to be a Tutor (12 weeks while tutoring Book 1)
- How to use the Bible Encounter Manual
- How to teach children in the Church (Feed my Lambs)
- How to teach children Community Health
- How to set up mercy ministries (Mercy, Mission, Me?)
- Work for All (12 week term)
- Jeremiah, Prophet of Hope – an advanced course (12 week term)
- Hebrew, learn as you read (12 week term)
- Train & Multiply (A complete Church Planting learn-on-the-job programme).

**Note:** Many programmes, don't just use SEAN courses, they also integrate other materials.

## **B. Practical Ministry Assignments:**

It has already been pointed that out TEE lends itself to applying academic studies to their practical outworking. SEAN, in particular, has this aim throughout. It is worth establishing as a condition for joining the programme that a student agrees to be involved in some practical ministry in the church. This service, however simple, will help to ensure that nobody studies just for the sake of it or merely to gain prestige by displaying a diploma on the wall!

Perhaps even more important is for students to have some idea of what the studies will lead on to, in terms of on-going practical ministry. For example, the recognition they will receive from the church, increased responsibilities to follow, further opportunities of study and advancement within the church's leadership. This can provide both stimulus to intending students, and also avoid discouragement and disillusionment on the part of people who thought that doing such a course would mean their being (for example) ordained with a high salary and status!

The clearer the organizers of the programme are about this, the more chance there is of sending appropriate signals to the potential constituency, both students and the rest of the church.

The SEAN Manuals give guidance on this and, in order to know what SEAN courses teach, be sure to read Appendix 2 where all this is set out.

When setting up the plan of studies, remember the basic and liberating concept of TEE is that pastoral needs, rather than academic requirements, should be the basis of the programme.

## **7. SET UP A REALISTIC ACCREDITATION SYSTEM**

Obviously if students study and minister in the context of a local church they must receive credit for their work, both from the TEE programme and from the church.

Again, situations vary from place to place. In some areas certificates and ceremonies are vitally important to encourage students; in others a simple certificate is enough. In most places, however, it is recommended that the student be given frequent encouragement for all work successfully achieved.

In most programmes, students get a simple certificate for each of the pre-foundation courses just to prove they have finished them. As usually these certificates are not pre-requisites for higher study, they do not earn credits towards the higher diploma.

On the other hand, the official "Certificate of Pastoral Theology", given to students who successfully finish the two year Compendium, is a pre-requisite to continue on to higher levels or to the SEAN leadership training courses. Some give a small certificate per term finished, and then a larger official one at the end of the complete course.

Just for your information, a student who successfully finishes the Compendium of Pastoral Theology, will have:

- done over 200 hours of home-study,
- taken part in 66 group discussions (120 hours),
- interacted with several thousand pages of text,
- taken about 150 tests,
- participated in many practical ministry assignments,
- taken 6 stiff exams.

Really the accumulative effect is quite remarkable!

After the "Certificate of Pastoral Theology", programmes usually establish a "Diploma of Pastoral Theology" which is given to students who, over and above the Compendium, accrue credits for successfully finishing a specified number of "Leadership training courses".

In the last few years studies are underway in several well-known Seminaries in the USA to give official Credit Hours for SEAN courses taken in serious TEE programmes. This means students will be able to use SEAN studies as credits towards Bachelor's or Master's degrees, thus saving them thousands of dollars in tuition fees.

As these projects continue, they will soon extend to other countries and continents, therefore it is very important for TEE programmes to give special attention in filing all student records very accurately.

## **8. SET A CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES**

One of the major advantages of TEE is its flexibility, that allows students to study without having to leave their jobs, families and church. However this flexibility should not be abused. Experience shows that when churches just use SEAN courses, starting or stopping at any time they think fit, the “programme” loses seriousness and gradually grinds to a halt. Therefore it is very important to establish which elements within the programme are flexible and which are not.

As opposed to Residential Seminaries, TEE isn't bound by a campus and buildings; any reasonable place will do. Having said this, the more programme components that can be legitimately fixed, the better.

For instance, **the place and time for the students' home study** is flexible to their situation and needs. However, the more they can be encouraged to study at a set desk, in a fixed room, at regular hours on predetermined days, the better. TEE relies on self discipline which should be encouraged at all times. Note: The SEAN booklet “How to Study” is published to help students organize their studies.

Also, the **day, place and time of the group meeting** can be arranged to the best advantage of its members. However, once these three elements are fixed, it is vital that they aren't changed at whim. To do so will only be to the detriment of the programme.

As regards **the programme itself**, it is of the greatest importance to organize it in 12-week terms with fixed dates for the first group meeting and Exam/workshop of each term. These terms must coincide with the regular school system of the country concerned. In this way, children and TEE parents have holidays at the same time.

Some find it useful to incorporate at least one “flexi-week” in each term to allow for adjustments and for groups to catch up before the Exam/workshop.

Another important issue is to **harmonize dates with the church's or denominational activities**. The two case studies in Appendix 5 show how important this is.

When, fixing dates, it is also important to **bear in mind the availability of supplies of teaching materials** for each successive stage. Many programmes have lost vital momentum by running out of study material. **Once started, a programme should never be halted for lack of study materials**. To do so takes away from the seriousness of the programme, students will be discouraged and a key teaching point, of doing things well for the Lord, is lost.

## 9. SELECT AND TRAIN COMPETENT TUTORS

**Note:** In some programmes Tutors are called “Group Leaders”.

Humanly speaking, good tutoring of study groups is the key to success; its lack is frequently the cause of failure in a TEE/SEAN programme. The whole approach of TEE tutorials is that they are based on open discussion and discovery-learning that involve each member of a Study Group, rather than being a one-way lecture by a teacher to a largely passive group of listeners.

So we have another key principle:

**“The making or breaking  
of your TEE/SEAN programme  
will depend largely on your success  
in choosing and training efficient Tutors.”**

### **Criteria for selecting Tutors:**

- a) Needless to say, those selected as Tutors must be mature, committed church members whose Christian witness is well established, with a consistent life style, able to set a good example, and preferably with at least some experience in Christian leadership and ministry.
- b) Tutors must be highly motivated and in favour of the programme so as to lead from the front.
- c) Tutors must have recognized pastoral gifts to continually care for and encourage members of the tutorial group.
- d) Tutors must have a clear track record in punctuality and responsibility in fulfilling entrusted work, as they must uphold the programme regulations by example.
- e) Tutors must have the recognized ability of “chairmanship” to steer a discussion along useful channels, to keep to the point, to maintain a sense of direction, to avoid distractions, to calm heated moments, to encourage the timid and (tactfully) restrain the over-talkative, to maintain control without dominating, to sum up (or better still, help others to do so) at the end of each stage, etc..
- f) Tutors must be honest and organized in all dealings with money. They must also insist and help the students to fulfill their obligations. Tutors should never give away grades to gain popularity.
- g) Prior knowledge of theology may be a help, although some think it more of a hindrance in that it can inhibit discussion by the others, unless kept very much in the background.

Some other considerations:

Sadly, pastors and school teachers don’t always make good Tutors; they are so used to one-way communication that Group Meetings easily end up being sermons or lectures. Therefore, if they are to be involved, special attention must be given to helping them understand the difference between their usual methods and those of a good Tutor, who should act as a catalyst.

Tutoring is a ministry in its own right, and must be recognized as such. Some have the gift and others don't; it's as simple as that. However, some have this as a latent gift which is only discovered during group study. Therefore it is important to be on a continual look-out for potential Tutors to lead new study groups.

The best introduction is to involve potential Tutors as students in well-run groups, so that they experience it from the receiving end. Having had such an experience, it is far more likely that would-be Tutors will know what is expected of them.

Another possibility is to organize a work-shop, mounting a series of mock tutorials in which a group of trainee Tutors, having done whatever prior preparation of a lesson/part of lesson may be necessary, sit round in a circle as if they were a tutorial group, and then take it in turns to be Tutor. Each should then submit to constructive evaluation from the others.

If you look up Appendix 9 you will find outlines and aids for organizing and running Work-Shops to select and train Tutors.

SEAN has produced a manual "How to be a Tutor", which teaches new Tutors on-the-job as they lead a study group through Book 1 of the Compendium. In fact, all SEAN courses have Tutor's Manuals with detailed guidance for every lesson and a number of general guidelines for improving tutoring skills.

## **10. DESIGN ATTRACTIVE FORMS AND DOCUMENTS**

To mount an effective programme you will find it necessary to design and print forms and documents to suit your local situation. For instance:

- a) Programme: informative brochures
- b) Promotional posters
- c) Student enrollment forms
- d) Study Group record sheets
- e) Student record sheets
- f) Awards (Certificates/Diplomas)

For promotion purposes it is vital that all the previous steps have been accomplished and that you can answer any questions people may have about your programme.

In a wide-ranging programme, involving numbers of congregations, a major requirement will obviously be the need to keep key leaders informed and involved. The issue of what relation TEE should have with long-established Bible institutes and Seminaries can be a delicate one, in that much of what may be proposed under TEE could seem to be threatening to the established order of things. In some respects it is, as is Christianity itself!

However, the very fact of TEE being different may be an attraction in itself, as the more elderly and established often have an inevitable tendency to resist too much change, while the young will tend to respond favourably to anything that looks different.

**Appendix 3** is the result of serious research world-wide on why SEAN courses have been so successful in building up people and churches. You may find it useful in promoting your programme.

In preparing the ground for a new TEE programme you will need to anticipate some of the likely objections.

**Appendix 4** sets out clear answers to some of the usual first-impression objections.

# **APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 Three Cases of Non-traditional Training
- Appendix 2 SEAN Courses Currently Available
- Appendix 3 Why SEAN Courses Work
- Appendix 4 Answers to Common Objections
- Appendix 5 How to adapt SEAN Courses for another culture
- Appendix 6 How to set up a SEAN project

# **APPENDIX 1**

## **NON-TRADITIONAL THEOLOGICAL TRAINING 3 CASES IN HISTORY**

### **1. THE METHODIST MOVEMENT**

In Britain, during the 18th century, John and Charles Wesley organized those converted in the Revival into “religious societies”, subdivided into class meetings of up to a dozen members, each with its leader, responsible for organizing mutual care and support within the class. From this pattern of close involvement and instruction for all, and opportunities for leadership for very many, came a continuous supply of lay preachers, who - in most cases - had very little secular education, but who were able thus to develop spiritual gifts and leadership qualities, which kept the Methodist movement growing, even when the number of university trained and episcopally ordained clergy was minimal.

### **2. IN NORTH AMERICAN HISTORY**

While the majority of North Americans still lived on the east coast, the principal churches were the Anglican, Congregational and Presbyterian, all of which insisted on well educated and paid clergy. But as large numbers of people moved west, living in scattered communities, often in poor circumstances, these churches were not able to provide and support the kind of clergy they considered necessary.

On the other hand, the Methodist and Baptist churches, used to meeting in small groups, and without the requirement of a highly educated and paid clergy, were able to flourish, so that in the end they became far larger than those churches which needed an educated and professional ministry.

### **3. IN SOUTH AMERICA**

The lively growth of Pentecostal churches in Latin America began and carried on with virtually no formal, academic training for their leaders. In Chile they speak of “training in the street” ie. by experience in street preaching, and practice in all the other responsibilities of ministry. In theory at least, the new convert can become the superintendent of the denomination if he perseveres, is faithful in the Lord’s work, and shows pastoral gifts and the ability to learn, without his education (secular or theological) or lack of it being an issue. A Superintending Bishop may earn his living as a gardener (an actual case), or be paid - but formal, academic training is not expected, or even desired. And yet nobody doubts the vigor and growth of such churches (even if TEE might make a useful contribution to their training, without changing their basic emphases).

# **APPENDIX 2**

## **SEAN COURSES (UK EDITIONS)**

### **Pre-foundation courses:**

- Abundant Life (The A, B, C of Christian Life).
- Abundant Light (A panoramic view of the whole Bible and its message)
- Union with Christ (A devotional study of Ephesians).
- Bible Encounter Manual (A dynamic group-study tool).

### **Main foundation courses:**

- Compendium of Pastoral Theology (an integrated programme in six three-month terms).
- Life and Letters of Paul (three 12 week terms)
- The Pentateuch (two 12 week terms)

### **Additional leadership training courses:**

- Students can elect from these courses according to their ministry:
- How to Preach (12 week term)
- How to Prepare and Lead Services (12 week term)
- How to be a Tutor (12 weeks while tutoring Book 1)
- How to use the Bible Encounter Manual
- How to teach children in the Church (Feed my Lambs)
- How to teach children Community Health
- How to set up mercy ministries (Mercy, Mission, Me?)
- Work for All (12 week term)
- Jeremiah, Prophet of Hope – an advanced course (12 week term)
- Hebrew, learn as you read (12 week term)
- Train & Multiply (A complete Church Planting learn-on-the-job programme).
- **Life of Christ: Index** - an alphabetical and topical index for Life of Christ books 1- 6
- **SEAN Extension College Certificate/s** - registration required
- **SEAN Extension College Diploma/s** - registration required

# **APPENDIX 3**

## **WHY SEAN COURSES WORK**

Most agree that SEAN TEE courses are successful because they:

### **1. ARE BIBLE BASED AND INTERDENOMINATIONAL**

SEAN courses have, since the very beginning, been written from a non-denominational perspective. The Bible is the basis for all subject matter and whenever a known controversial point arises, SEAN has sought to make a fair presentation of the differing opinions, leaving the interpretation open-ended for the study groups to make their own decisions.

This position has allowed well over 70 denominations ranging from historic churches to newer independent churches to use SEAN materials without major problems.

### **2. PROMOTE ACTIVE LEARNING**

SEAN courses go way beyond the simple information of facts. The programming, sometimes feared as brain washing, does all the opposite and is written to make the student interact with the text and thus be an active participant in discovery learning.

### **3. ARE SIMPLE IN METHOD BUT PROFOUND IN CONTENT**

SEAN courses have been written so any person who can read and write can study them. Nothing is taken for granted and the step- by-step approach ensures active learning. In fact the success in making the lessons simple has at times become a problem, as many potential users glance at the lessons and write SEAN off as an insult to their intelligence. This is an unfair judgment because the simplicity in method allows thousands of underprivileged students to study. The content however, is far from simplistic and many university graduates give testimony to the great amount they have learned from the courses.

### **4. ARE SELF PACING AND SELF CORRECTING**

One of the major defects of the teacher/lecture method is that if the teacher gears his class to the brighter students the slower ones get left behind. If he reverses the strategy the brighter students are held back and get bored. On the other hand SEAN courses, with their adequate programming techniques, allow the students to go at their own pace in the home studies, allowing all to meet on equal terms at the group meeting. Added to this, the Feedback given for each question ensures that students can continually check their work and avoid perpetuating errors.

## **5. ARE CHURCH BASED**

A major problem in Residential Seminary training is that students must leave their local churches for extended periods, to study in isolation from their everyday ministry. In many cases, rural or inner city students feel on graduating, that they are now beyond their brethren intellectually and frequently don't return to their original churches. SEAN courses, on the contrary allow students to be trained in their local church. The benefits are mutual since the student is immediately immersed in practical local ministry through which the church obviously is also blessed.

## **6. APPLY THE BIBLE**

SEAN courses don't only teach the Bible, Throughout, practical suggestions are given to encourage students to apply the truths learned to their personal lives as well as to their ministry.

## **7. PROMOTE LEARNING AND TEACHING SKILLS**

SEAN courses go far beyond teaching content, they also impart learning skills so students can apply these to the Bible or other subjects. Throughout, these skills are practiced repeatedly so by the end of the course students become proficient in their application.

## **8. ARE EASY TO HAND ON**

Another merit of SEAN courses is the fact that, once a programme has been well established, it is easy to pass on to others. The programmed courses are thoroughly tested and if used correctly ensure learning success. The Tutor's Manuals are easy to follow and can easily be entrusted to gifted students who are led to continue with this ministry.

## **9. PROMOTE TASK-ORIENTATED FELLOWSHIP**

One of the blessings most students comment on is the wonderful fellowship that develops between the members of a study group. Added to this, on many occasions study groups develop into work teams within the context of local churches. In many areas students, with the encouragement of their Pastors and local churches, have established home groups that in some cases have grown to become fully grown and reproducing congregations. In countries like Mexico and Colombia dozens of churches have been established in this way, some now numbering several hundred members.

## **10. PRIME STUDENTS FOR PREPARED DISCUSSION**

Frequently, simple group meetings become a sharing of ignorance. SEAN courses have been written to prepare students for fruitful discussion in the group meetings. Added to this the Manuals train Tutors in Group Dynamics and gradually all students within a group are encouraged to lead the discussions. In this way the very learning process becomes an effective on-the-job training process.

## **11. HELP IN IDENTIFYING GIFTS AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING**

To feel ignorant inhibits many Christians and hides many candles under bushels. Attending a study group sure that “you know what you know”, along with active participation in group discussion and practical team ministry, not only communicates concepts and teaches skills but also builds confidence. Not only this; within active participation in SEAN Study Groups many latent gifts become evident and SEAN has been blessed by many dramatic testimonies of shy or unfruitful Christians who now exercise important ministries in their churches.

# **APPENDIX 4**

## **ANSWERS TO COMMON OBJECTIONS**

### **1. THE BOOKS SEEM TO HAVE A LOT OF REPETITION**

This of course is true; that is how we learn everything in life, from the most basic (walking, talking) to the more advanced (learning to drive, use a word processor). In the case of programmed texts at least, it is not repeating for the sake of repeating - the number of times it is done within a lesson is carefully planned, and the amount of help given is gradually reduced with each repetition, so that whereas the first time, the student contributes only a small proportion, by the end he is responding with the whole of what the lesson has set out to teach him.

### **2. "THE LESSONS SEEM MUCH TOO SIMPLE"**

This is often said by those who either flip through a book without taking the trouble to study it, or who look at it from the ivory tower viewpoint of the seminary. Such a simplistic evaluation shows a sad lack of understanding of the low level of knowledge and understanding, and the disinclination to read and study of the population generally, and the low level of real understanding of the Bible and Christian teaching of the average church member. In fact SEAN courses have over two hundred hours hard research and field testing invested into each lesson in order to enable all to study.

### **3. "THIS APPROACH SEEMS TO MANIPULATE THE STUDENT"**

Some have objected, "Whatever the students may think, they always have to give the 'correct answer' ". If the study books were all that TEE consisted of, this might be a legitimate criticism. In fact the study books are only half of the total course. In the weekly tutorial, not only are students allowed to question or disagree with what the week's lesson has taught, they are positively encouraged to do so, provided, of course, that such questioning or disagreement is carried on in a sincere search for the truth and in a way that contributes to the learning process of all. So long as they doesn't overdo it, this kind of student can be a real stimulus to the group as a whole. Indeed, if such a student doesn't exist, it may sometimes be necessary for the tutor to become devil's advocate, to make sure all sides of an issue are duly considered.

In fact, one of the things that SEAN students have most appreciated (they say), has been the freedom they gradually developed in the weekly tutorial to say things which they would never have felt free to express in the ordinary fellowship of the church, but which were issues which they felt they needed to be able to air and talk through. If a lively group of students say they felt free, it is not for those who have only glanced through the written part of the course to say that they have been manipulated!

#### **4. THIS SYSTEM SEEMS TO BE THE “POOR COUSIN” TO REAL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION**

Many denominational leaders still consider traditional Seminaries as the ideal and look down on TEE as a poor substitute for the “real” thing.

In such cases, few resources are handed over to TEE and frequently students are made to feel ‘second class’. This being the case, it becomes important for the TEE organizers to do all in their power to ensure the programme is accepted as a valid alternative for ministerial training.

This can be done by:

- Making sure that the programme is notably efficient and produces good results.
- Designing and printing attractive and informative brochures.
- Organizing inauguration and award-giving ceremonies.
- Designing distinguished-looking Certificates and Diplomas.
- Organizing workshops to complement SEAN courses.
- Seeking to make TEE and Seminary complement each other.

Both TEE and Residential Seminaries have their place, and where both systems have been happily married the church has benefited enormously. In many areas, students are not allowed into the Seminary unless they have fulfilled TEE studies and practical ministry.

#### **5. THIS SYSTEM LACKS ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE**

TEE, by virtue of its flexibility, lacks the imposed discipline of the traditional teacher and class-room system. Thus many students, accustomed by their school habits, find it hard to adjust to the self-motivation and self-discipline demanded by TEE, and drop out. In one sense, this is good as it weeds out lazy workers who in the long run would be useless in the church. But on the other hand, many students if guided correctly, can learn to become self-disciplined and develop initiative.

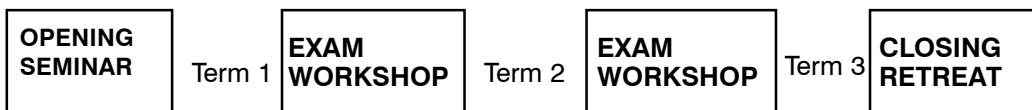
#### **6. THIS SYSTEM LACKS A PROPER LIBRARY**

In many areas there may be a shortage of libraries and materials for further reading. When possible it is important to supplement the TEE programme with regional libraries where students can do further reading if they so wish. If this can't be done through central funds, some have overcome the situation by forming a voluntary network of personal libraries to which students can refer.

#### **7. IN THIS SYSTEM STUDENTS LACK CONTACT WITH WELL QUALIFIED SPECIALISTS**

One major virtue of the Residential Seminary is living in personal contact with men and women who excel in key theological disciplines. As TEE usually can't reproduce this situation entirely, many serious TEE programmes do their best to supplement their home and group studies by organizing regular retreats and workshops to allow students to benefit from contact with such leaders.

For instance, one programme that uses SEAN materials operates in the following way, each year:



## **8. THIS SYSTEM HAS NO FORMAL ACCREDITATION**

A serious handicap to TEE is the lack of accreditation valid to continue on to further study. Most church-oriented programmes simply don't worry about this matter as their main concern is to train fruitful ministers. However, in certain areas where it is necessary for students to continue on to higher level study, the lack of accreditation can be serious.

In the early 70's there was a total divorce between Residence and TEE; both were seen as opposites. However, now in many areas there is a useful synthesis and serious consideration is being given by many Residential Seminaries to Extension Studies. As previously noted, several Seminaries are offering hours of credit to SEAN students who have done their studies as part of formally recognized TEE programmes.

## **9. TEE CAN BE WEAK IN PROVIDING FELLOWSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS OUTSIDE THE IMMEDIATE STUDY GROUP**

The answer to this problem is to create ceremonies, workshops and retreats that congregate students from a larger geographical area. These larger gatherings are great moral boosters as students enjoy the fellowship, benefit from the teaching and feel they belong to something important.

As a general summary of the points mentioned in this section a good rule for TEE programmes is to use every creative element possible to enhance the level of the programme and to make it more attractive and interesting to students.

# **APPENDIX 5**

## **HOW TO ADAPT A PROGRAMMED TEXT FOR USE IN ANOTHER CULTURE**

The original SEAN courses were produced with the thought that they might serve as a basis for similar programmed courses, for use in other parts of the world. But it needs more than mere translation to be of use elsewhere it needs total retesting and rewriting before it can be used properly. The person who is to do this needs:

- a) to be thoroughly fluent in the language to be used, and at home in the culture. If he or she is not a national, they should always check their work thoroughly with a national.
- b) to be aware of the special educational programming techniques used in the SEAN courses, which must be preserved in the translation. One way to ensure this is to get all the translators to work through Unit 1 of Book 1 of the Compendium in English, to get the feel of what is involved in the unique techniques used in programmed instruction. If at least one of the translators could do some previous reading on the subject, they could then guide the group in this exercise.

Books which might help include:

- “Programmed Learning, It’s Development and Structure”, Patricia Callendar, Longman’s;
  - “Good Frames and Bad, a Grammar of Frame Writing”, Susan Meyer Markle, John Wylie & Sons.
  - The Evangelical Missionary Alliance publish a leaflet describing others.
- c) to be able to give a lot of time to the work.

The **procedure** for adapting the SEAN material is as follows:

### **1. PREPARE FIRST DRAFT TRANSLATION**

Translate a course Unit by Unit in the following order:

- a) First translate the TEST of the Lesson. This test has the objectives of the Lesson. The Lesson itself has teaching sequences which are designed to ensure that the student reaches each of these objectives.
- b) Then translate the LESSON itself with its FEEDBACK simultaneously. That is after translating each Frame, immediately translate the Feedback for that Frame.
- c) On completing each Lesson, also translate any Supplements or additional material referred to in that Lesson.
- d) Add copies of the drawings or maps from the original text, with the captions etc. duly translated.
- e) On completing the Lessons of a Unit, then translate the corresponding Unit in the Group Leader’s Manual.

When translating, rewrite any parts which are obviously inappropriate to the new culture, type out (preferably writing each frame on a separate small paper to make it easier to alter single frames without retyping the whole lesson).

It is important to identify words or phrases which are given a special meaning within a Course, making sure that you keep to these throughout the course.

For example, in the Compendium of Pastoral Theology, the word “**Steps**” is reserved for the parts into which the Life of Christ is analysed: Infancy, Year of Preparation, Year of Popularity, Year of Passion, Risen Life (see Book 1, Lesson 3A). The word “**Stages**” is reserved for the special stages through which the body of Christ, as the Son of Man, passed or will pass. (See Book 1, Lesson 7B and Book 4, Frame 5B 24). It is ESSENTIAL to be consistent in the use of these domestic terms if you are to avoid confusion.

## **2. ADD THE ILLUSTRATIONS**

Most drawings are of Bible times and these should need no changes other than to translate the captions; the “teacher figure” and drawings of our times may need cultural modification.

## **3. FACE TO FACE TESTING**

- a) Take the first draft (the text complete with drawings etc.) to a national Christian, typical of those among whom it will later be used. Explain how to do it, and get him to work through it out loud in your presence. (N.B. He needs to be assured before starting and repeatedly that it is the **lesson** which is being tested, and not him. Mistakes he makes are the lesson’s fault, not his. If anything, you will be pleased at them rather than otherwise, because each genuine mistake he makes will show up a weak point in the lesson). Note down, in detail, every mistake, misunderstanding or query which he makes, in each case with the relevant frame number. At home, rewrite the lesson, altering each frame where his mistake seems to be significant. (Some will be due to simple lack of concentration, distraction, etc. and it may be better to see how others cope before rewriting such frames).
- b) Repeat the whole process with another national Christian typical of those who will use it when ready, and rewrite accordingly. Don’t use the same person.
- c) Continue retesting and rewriting, each time with someone new, until the testers are able to answer most of the Frames correctly and get good marks in the Test at the end of the Lesson (e.g. above 80%) though without going to the extreme of oversimplifying so that it no longer requires effort. This may mean testing and rewriting 6 or more times, depending on how big are the differences in culture, and on the skill of the person doing the rewriting.

## **4. MAKE A NUMBER OF COPIES (say 6)**

To test the lessons as they will be used. Give the lessons to a sample study group to do on their own at home, and then later meet together in a typical weekly group meeting, thereby providing further feedback on how the lessons function when used as they will be eventually in the field.

- 5. AFTER ANY FURTHER REWRITING AS A RESULT OF STAGE 4,** the lessons can finally be mimeographed or printed for widespread use. It will still be important to gather in answer sheets etc. and comments from tutors, for future revisions. This has now been done many times with the present published SEAN courses.

## **6. POSSIBLE WAYS OF SPEEDING UP THE TRANSLATION PROCESS**

If there is sufficient time available, the translator should continue with the procedures laid out in 1 to 4 above, until the task is finished. However, in the real world, and with the pressure of getting books finished to meet deadlines in a fast growing Extension Programme, it may be admissible, after a while (on completing Books 1 & 2 of the Compendium of Pastoral Theology for example), to cut corners, once the translators have really grasped what is involved. In this case, on completing the first face to face test of each Lesson, as described in 2a) above, it may be sufficient to replace steps 2b), 2c), 3a) and 3b) above by the translators working in pairs and testing out their translated lessons on each other. Once they have become familiar with the kind of mistakes which can be made, they can often identify and correct these in each other's work.

With lessons which present special difficulties, one should revert to the more rigorous face to face testing, as described in 2a), 2b) and 2c).

- 7. FINALLY, THE WHOLE TRANSLATION MUST** be submitted to an overall EDITOR of some standing who must work through the whole translation, including the final drawings. He is responsible for actually doing the whole course, Lesson by Lesson and Unit by Unit, to make absolutely sure that everything runs on smoothly and that there are no inconsistencies of word or phrase.

# **APPENDIX 6**

## **HOW TO SET UP A SEAN PROJECT IN A NEW LANGUAGE OR COUNTRY**

By PROJECT we mean a definite plan to use SEAN material in a new language or country in an organized extension programme and initiated by Christians of that area.

1. First contact SEAN to see if someone else has already translated the courses into the language you require. If so, you should first endeavour to cooperate with the existing programme.
2. If not, the project will normally begin by ordering the books from SEAN UK in English (which is the latest improved version) or another “bridging” language such as Spanish if this is available, although the UK English version should always be used as the final quality control if at all possible.
3. These books are under copyright. Permission should therefore be sought to reproduce or translate, obtaining an Agreement signed by the Director of SEAN and the applicant.
4. The books should be used in the “bridging” language with a group of potential leaders, who will then be able to use the SEAN material in their own language when available.
5. Concurrently start the translation, and begin to test this also, with a group. Follow closely the steps laid out in Appendix 5.
6. Form a small committee or consortium. This may be new or linked to an existing college or TEE programme or a church, but must undertake to sell the SEAN courses they produce to any other Christians who have a serious extension programme in the geographical or language range, regardless of denomination, according to the Agreement made with SEAN. This consortium will take responsibility for the on-going work of SEAN.

This will include the following:

- a) Each member should study and master the principles laid out in SEAN’s Manual entitled “How to use SEAN courses effectively” (SEAN’s “Starter Manual”).
- b) Make plans to inform churches etc. in the local area of the availability of this material.
- c) The preparation of a budget (see Points 7 and 8 below).
- d) Check and oversee translations.
- e) Take responsibility for production of the material, considering the method (e.g. duplication, printing, computer, offset, printing etc.) and estimate the number of copies required.
- f) Advise on storage of printed materials and appoint someone to monitor the work, e.g. registration of students and awarding of certificates etc.

**7. BUDGET ... Expenditure.**

In making a budget, the following costs must be considered:

- a) The method of production (see 6.e) above).
- b) The number of copies you are likely to be able to sell and produce economically.
- c) Payment of translator, artist, proof-reader, editor and any other staff needed.
- d) Any initial office equipment that may be needed and the cost of books, from SEAN, in the bridging language.
- e) The cost of paper, printing, storage etc.

**8. BUDGET ... Income.**

- a) Consider how funds may be raised locally or through aid programmes known to the applicant.
- b) Later, income will be received through the sale of books. Estimate how much you will charge for the books. This should cover production costs, and should also include the tithe which is due to SEAN according to the Agreement (i.e. 10% added to the selling price of each book, payable to SEAN at the time of printing, unless specifically waived by SEAN in the Agreement). No prices should be set for personal or institutional profit but should be what local people can reasonably afford.
- 9. While at present SEAN cannot offer any financial help towards production, it can sometimes help to find donor agencies. If, therefore, financial help is required, submit the project to SEAN stating:
  - a) Your AIM: In what country and language, what areas or churches you expect SEAN to be used, explaining the need and what other training may or may not be available. If you plan to use SEAN as a training course, say who will benefit.
  - b) The stages by which you will hope to fulfil these aims and their likely dates.
  - c) Your budget. This would include items in 7 above and should preferably cover 3 years' expenses, by which time the aim should be to be self-supporting (i.e. money from the sale + donations from personal supporters should be sufficient to re-print all books required). If there is an unforeseen expansion (for example, the need to add new titles etc.) a new appeal should then be made to the funding agencies, explaining the altered circumstances.
  - d) If for any valid reason, you will not be able to pay the tithe to SEAN, this amount should be added as a separate item in your budget submitted to donor agencies so that SEAN may be able to obtain this amount from these agencies. SEAN depends on these tithes to continue in production. The cost of books required from SEAN initially and the cost of transportation should also be included clearly as a separate item in these budgets.