

## **Best Practice in Theological Education: Practical Experience from Egypt**

Best practices are used to achieve superior results and to help an institution achieve its mission. However, best practices can seem too mechanical or corporate, and in the realm of education and transformation, methods cannot always be repeated verbatim. How do we evaluate best practices for our own contexts? Are there best practices that should be applied universally to ensure effective theological education? If so, what biblical ideological shifts are required to implement these best practices?

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### **I. Introduction**

- A. Definition: “best practice” is a method or technique that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means, which leads to using it as a benchmark.
- B. Challenges of seeking best practices in the realm of theological education
- C. Advantages of best practices
- D. The right starting point in “best practices”: Always start with institution’s mission statement. Everything else of objectives, goals, plans, programs, etc. will then follow easily and logically.

### **II. Best Practices and Effective Theological Education**

- A. “Theo-oriented” (i.e. helps knowing and experiencing God).
- B. Educationally directed (i.e. concerned with the learner’s formation rather than knowledge transmission).
- C. For this to happen, the following elements of good practice should be considered

1. All subjects and activities should serve the institution's mission: "Equipping leaders to serve the church and society".
2. Good theological education should lead not only to students' growth in knowledge but also to their growth in character and skills.
3. Good theological education is a holistic system that includes student, teacher, curriculum and methodology.
4. Good theological education should share core subjects and elements offered by similar institutes, it should not, however, dispense with the distinctiveness of the context.
5. Learning to perceive critical, daily life issues through the lenses of *Biblical teachings* and *Kingdom values* is an important component of a good theological education.

### **III. Best Practices require ideological shifts**

- A. Moving from monologue to dialogue
- B. Moving from mere orthodoxy to orthopraxy
- C. Shifting from the general to the particular
- D. Shifting from the abstract to the concrete
- E. Moving from pedagogy to andragogy
- F. Moving from surface curriculum to hidden curriculum