

Sharing Your Dream:

Developing Vision and Mission Statements

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Mission or Vision: Which Comes First?

- If you don't already have a strong mission, it may make sense to start with your vision, or future state.
- If you have an established organization with a strong mission, then your mission can guide your vision statement and strategic plan.
- Either way, it's important that you keep the end or desired result in sight from the start.

Mission vs. Vision

- A **mission** statement tells you the fundamental purpose of the organization.
- A **vision** statement outlines what the organization wants to be, or how it wants the world in which it operates to be.
 - It concentrates on the future.
 - It is a source of inspiration.

mission

vision

What is a vision statement?

- An **inspiring** one-sentence statement or phrase clearly describing the **long-term change** that should result from your organization's work.

A Vision Statement...

- Articulates your shared dreams and hopes for your organization.
- Reminds you of what you are trying to build.
- Captures your passion.
- Sets the direction for your strategic planning.
 - That's why it's important to let your imagination go and dare to dream.
- Doesn't tell you how you're going to get there.

Effective Vision Statements include...

- Clarity; lack of ambiguity
- Vivid, clear picture
- Description of a bright future
- Memorable and engaging wording
- Realistic aspirations
- Alignment with organizational values and culture

What is a mission statement?

- ▶ A one-sentence statement or phrase that concisely tells you the **fundamental** purpose of an organization or program; its reason for existing

A Mission Statement...

- ▶ Articulates **what** the organization is and what it does,
- ▶ **Why** it exists,
- ▶ **Who** benefits,
- ▶ And **how** they benefit.

Why create vision and mission statements?

- ▶ Helps focus on what's important
- ▶ Gives a snapshot of your current and future states
- ▶ Binds you together

How do you create vision and mission statements?

▶ Learn

- ▶ what's important to people in your community.

▶ Decide

- ▶ on the general focus of your organization.

▶ Develop

- ▶ your vision and mission statements.

Learn what's important to people in your community

▶ How?

- ▶ Listening sessions or public forums
- ▶ Focus groups
- ▶ Interviews

▶ Action:

- ▶ Write down some questions to ask your focus groups or interviewees.

Decide on your organization's general focus

- ▶ Topic

- ▶ What is important to your organization?
- ▶ What is important to your community? (What did you learn?)

- ▶ Scope

- ▶ Neighborhood? City or County? Regional? Statewide? National?

- ▶ Write Down:

- ▶ 10 or fewer key things that are important to your organization.
- ▶ Three short phrases you think best characterize your organization.
- ▶ The scope of your organization's focus.

Develop your vision statement

▶ *A vision without a task is but a dream, a task without a vision is drudgery, a vision and a task is the **hope of the world**.*

- *from a church in Sussex, England, c. 1730*

Think about...

Catalytic Questions to Invite Creativity

1. What do you hope will be most strikingly different about your *organization* in five years?
2. What do you hope will be most strikingly different about your *community* in five years?
3. What news headline about your organization would you most like to see?
4. What is the biggest gap between what your organization claims to be and what it actually is?

What words, phrases, or ideas from
your answers stand out as:

Examples of Vision Statements

- Equality for Everyone (*Human Rights Campaign, 3 words*)
- A world where everyone has a decent place to live. (*Habitat for Humanity (10 words)*)
- Cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma, and improve the quality of life of patients and their families. (*Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, 18 words*)
- To transform communities by inspiring people throughout the world to open their minds, accept and include people with intellectual disabilities and thereby anyone who is perceived as different. (*Special Olympics, 28 words*)
- **ACTION:** Write three different vision statements for your organization, from long, to medium, to very short.

Compare and Discuss

- ▶ Which one(s) do you like and why?
- ▶ Choose your favorite.
OR
- ▶ Blend parts of different statements to create a favorite.

Develop your mission statement

Describe your organization's fundamental purpose in five sentences or less.

- What
- Why
- Who
- How

what

Examples of Mission Statements

- Celebrating Animals, Confronting Cruelty. (*The Humane Society, 4 words*)
- To build healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke. (*American Heart Association, 10 words*)
- We help moms have full-term pregnancies and research the problems that threaten the health of babies. (*March of Dimes, 16 words*)
- To feed America's hungry through a nationwide network of member food banks and engage our country in the fight to end hunger. (*Feeding America, 22 words*)
- To enhance quality of life for all as we age. We lead positive social change and deliver value to members through information, advocacy and service. (*AARP, 25 words*)
- **ACTION:** Write three different mission statements for your organization, from long, to medium, to very short.

Compare and Discuss

- ▶ Which one(s) do you like and why?
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Next Steps

- ▶ Obtain consensus on your vision and mission statements.
- ▶ Decide how you will use them.
 - ▶ Letterhead
 - ▶ Website
 - ▶ Giveaways
 - ▶ Press kit
 - ▶ Interviews
 - ▶ Annual report

QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU

MISSION STATEMENT (WHY YOU EXIST)

A one-sentence statement describing the reason an organization or program exists

This should be a practical, tangible tool you can use to make decisions about priorities, actions, and responsibilities?

NEEDS TO...

- ...be clear and simple (most aren't)
- ...avoid elaborate language & buzz words
- ...easily explained by others
- ...not be confused with a **vision** statement
- ...be recognizably yours

1-5 WORD ANSWERS

What type of entity/program? Is this important?

(e.g. a nonprofit, volunteer program, event, business, etc)

Why do you exist? (problem/needs)

(e.g. Millions lack access to safe water)

What's the broadest way to describe the work?

(e.g. Providing clean drinking water)

For whom do you do this work?

(e.g. To people without access)

Where do you work? (geographic boundaries)

(e.g. in developing countries)

EXAMPLE MISSION STATEMENTS

charity: water is a non-profit organization bringing clean, safe drinking water to people in developing nations.

HandsOn Network inspires, equips and mobilizes people to take action that changes the world.

View a list of 50 great mission statements

<http://topnonprofits.com/mission-statements/>

VISION STATEMENT (DESIRED END STATE)

A one-sentence statement describing the clear and inspirational long-term change, resulting from your work.

These should be practical, tangible tools you can use to lead your group or organization in achieving quality results

NEEDS TO...

- ...be clear and simple (most aren't)
- ...avoid elaborate language & buzz words
- ...easily explained by those involved
- ...not be confused with a **mission** statement

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER



What needs to be changed?

What are the major issues or problems?



Why should issues be addressed?

What are their costs to the involved parties?



What are the strengths and assets?

Both of org/program and those being served



What is your dream end-state?

In a perfect world, what would this look like?



What would success look like?

Specifically for this particular project/organization

EXAMPLE VISION STATEMENTS

No child in our city will go hungry to bed in the evening.

HandsOn Network's vision is that one day every person will discover his/her power to make a difference.

View a large list of example vision statements

<http://topnonprofits.com/vision-statements/>

CREATING A VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM A COLLABORATION BETWEEN



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