

Mission Statements & Vision Statements

Unleashing the Power of Purpose

Vision Statements and Mission Statements are the inspiring words chosen by successful leaders to clearly and concisely convey the direction of the organization. By crafting a clear mission statement and vision statement, you can powerfully communicate your intentions and motivate your team or organization to realize an attractive and inspiring common vision of the future.

“Mission Statements” and “Vision Statements” do two distinctly different jobs.



A Mission Statement defines the organization's purpose and primary objectives. Its prime function is internal – to define the key measure or measures of the organization's success – and its prime audience is the leadership team and stockholders.

Vision Statements also define the organizations purpose, but this time they do so in terms of the organization's values rather than bottom line measures (values are guiding beliefs about how things should be done.) The vision statement communicates both the purpose and values of the organization. For employees, it gives direction about how they are expected to behave and inspires them to give their best. Shared with customers, it shapes customers' understanding of why they should work with the organization.

Tip:

Mission Statements and Vision Statements usually refer to the business or organization.

First we look at creating mission statements. Then we create vision statements.

Mission Statement Creation

1. To create your mission statement, first identify your organization's “winning idea” or best business trait.
2. This is the idea or approach that will make your organization stand out from its competitors, and is the reason that customers will come to you and not your competitors (see tip below).
3. Next identify the key measures of your success. Make sure you choose the most important measures (and not too many of them!)
4. Combine your winning idea and success measures into a tangible and measurable goal.
5. Refine the words until you have a concise and precise statement of your mission, which expresses your ideas, measures and desired result.

Tip:

OK, so we're a bit glib here talking about the “winning idea” – this is a prime subject of the discipline of business strategy, and it can take some effort to find, shape and test, but it will be easy when you know your purpose.

Example:

Take the example of a produce store whose winning idea is “farm freshness”. The owner identifies two keys measures of her success: freshness and customer satisfaction. She creates her mission statement – which is the action goal that combines the winning idea and measures of success.

The **Mission Statement** of Farm Fresh Produce is:

"To become the number one produce store in Main Street by selling the highest quality, freshest farm produce, from farm to customer in under 24 hours on 75% of our range and with 98% customer satisfaction."

Vision Statement Creation

Once you've created your mission statement, move on to create your vision statement:

1. First identify your business or organization's mission. Then uncover the real, human value in that mission.
2. Next, identify what you, your customers and other stakeholders will value most about how your organization will achieve this mission. Distil these into the values that your organization has or should have.
3. Combine your mission and values, and polish the words until you have a vision statement ***inspiring enough to energize and motivate people inside and outside your organization.***

Using the example mission statement developed for Farm Fresh Produce, the owner examines what she, her customers and her employees value about her mission.

The four most important things she identifies are: freshness, healthiness, tastiness and “local-ness” of the produce. Here's the **Vision Statement** she creates and shares with employees, customers and farmers alike:

"We help the families of Main Town live happier and healthier lives by providing the freshest, tastiest and most nutritious local produce: From local farms to your table in under 24 hours."