

Vision Statement Definitions and Examples (compiled by Anna McGowan and Jan Sykes)

<http://www.timethoughts.com/goalsetting/vision-statements.htm>

A **vision statement** is a vivid idealized description of a desired outcome that inspires, energizes and helps you create a mental picture of your target. It could be a vision of a part of your life, or the outcome of a project or goal.

Vision statements are often confused with mission statements, but they serve complementary purposes.

Vision Statement Guidelines

The best vision statements for result areas describe outcomes that are five to ten years away, although some look even further out.

For projects and goals, the vision statement should focus on the desired outcome of the project/goal at its completion date. Here are some guidelines for writing compelling and powerful vision statements.

Summarize Your Vision in a Powerful Phrase

If possible, try to summarize your vision using a powerful phrase in the first paragraph of your vision statement. Capturing the essence of your vision using a simple memorable phrase can greatly enhance the effectiveness of your vision statement. This phrase will serve as a trigger to the rest of the vision in the mind of everyone that reads it.

Take for instance Microsoft's vision of "A personal computer in every home running Microsoft software." This simple yet very powerful phrase can be used throughout the organization (hallways, internal web pages, plaques, etc.) to remind everyone of the vision.

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_90.htm

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 an organization or an organizational unit. [Team Charters](#) can have a similar role when briefing teams.

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".

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).

2. Next identify the key measures of your success. Make sure you choose the most important measures (and not too many of them!)
3. Combine your winning idea and success measures into a tangible and measurable goal.
4. 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 a lot of effort to find, shape and test. See our articles on [USP Analysis](#), [SWOT Analysis](#) and [Core Competence Analysis](#) for starting points, and make sure you do the homework needed!

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 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."

This article draws on information from Mind Tools' "[How to Lead: Discover the Leader Within You](#)" course, which teaches the 48 key skills needed to lead effectively.

<http://humanresources.about.com/cs/strategicplanning1/a/strategicplan.htm>

Vision Statement

A vision is a statement about what your organization wants to become. It should resonate with all members of the organization and help them feel proud, excited, and part of something much bigger than themselves. A vision should stretch the organization's capabilities and image of itself. It gives shape and direction to the organization's future. Visions range in length from a couple of words to several pages. I recommend shorter vision statements because people will tend to remember their shorter organizational vision.

Vision Statement Samples

"Year after year, Westin and its people will be regarded as the best and most sought after hotel and resort management group in North America." ([Westin Hotels](#))

"To be recognized and respected as one of the premier associations of HR Professionals."
(HR Association of Greater Detroit)

Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategic_planning

Vision, mission and values

Vision: Defines where the organization wants to be in the future. It reflects the optimistic view of the organization's future.

Mission: Defines where the organization is going now, basically describing the purpose, why this organization exists.

Values: Main values protected by the organization during the progression, reflecting the organization's culture and priorities.

Strategic planning saves wasted time, every minute spent in planning saves ten minutes in execution.

The purpose of individual strategic planning is for you to increase your return on energy, the return on the mental, emotional, physical and spiritual capital you have invested in your life and career.

Every minute an individual spends planning their goals, activities and time in advance saves ten minutes of work in the execution of those plans -- or so claim several experts. Careful advance planning gives you a return of ten times, or 1,000% , on your investment of mental, emotional and physical energy. (The 100 Absolutely Unbreakable Laws of Business Success.) In any case, it is generally agreed that spending a meaningful period of time reflecting on strategy and goals before taking action is almost always a wise course of action for any individual or institution.

SLA Vision Statement, Mission Statement, and Core Values (Copied from SLA Internet Site)

SLA Vision, Mission and Core Value Statements (Adopted October 2003)

Vision

The Special Libraries Association is the global organization for innovative information professionals and their strategic partners.

Mission

The Special Libraries Association promotes and strengthens its members through learning, advocacy, and networking initiatives.

Core Values

Leadership

Strengthening our roles as information leaders in our organizations and in our communities, including shaping information policy.

Service

Responding to our clients' needs, adding qualitative and quantitative value to information

services and products.

Innovation and Continuous Learning

Embracing innovative solutions for the enhancement of services and intellectual advancement within the profession.

Results and Accountability

Delivering measurable results in the information economy and our organizations. The Association and its members are expected to operate with the highest level of ethics and honesty.

Collaboration and Partnering

Providing opportunities to meet, communicate, collaborate, and partner within the information industry and the business community.

SLA, Chemistry Division

Vision Statement

The Chemistry Division of the Special Libraries Association works to support the efforts of special, academic, government, research, and public librarians/information professionals to develop and deliver superior chemical information resources to their communities. The Division Membership encompasses all chemistry-related fields, including but not limited to, chemical technology, history of chemistry, chemical economics, and chemical engineering. We are committed to identifying and collaborating with strategic partners in chemical information delivery; attracting and retaining innovative and talented people to our Division; providing educational opportunities to our members through the Annual Meeting symposia and continuing education courses, informing and advising our members through programs, newsletters, discussion lists, and individual mentoring, and creating a technologically-advanced future for access to chemical information.

Vision statement from the Univ. Library at Univ. IL-Urbana-Champaign:
(<http://www.library.uiuc.edu/administration/librarian/vision.html>)

The Library develops and provides services and collections that meet the needs and contribute to the vitality of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the broader communities of which it is a part. In 2008, the Library will be even more thoroughly integrated into the fabric of the University through campus collaborations characterized by scholarly productivity and active engagement in instruction and public service. The Library's major strength is its people, the faculty and staff who bring their special skills, expertise, and talent to these collaborations and who are responsible for the Library's strong national and international reputation.

To achieve this integration into the academic enterprise, the Library will find a balance between its services and collections priorities, develop innovative ways to provide access

to resources and services, and become a more fully collaborative organization characterized by a challenging and supportive work environment that offers opportunities for experimentation and creativity. The Library also will expand continuing education for all personnel, build greater financial resources, and improve facilities. Specific efforts will include providing stable and reliable collections of owned or licensed content, offering an array of services that support current and lifelong learning, and organizing information onto meaningful and accessible forms. The Library also will provide well-equipped and functional workspaces for individuals and groups, manage sufficient space to store collections in suitable environments, and serve as a cultural repository of international importance.

Because of its outstanding services and collections, the Library will continue to be internationally recognized for its leadership among research libraries, its contributions to the University, and its role in the creation of knowledge and the development of an educated and informed society.

-----Another one from Rensselaer Research Libraries
(<http://library.rpi.edu/update.do?artcenterkey=1388>):
Library Vision Statement, Posted: Jan 31, 2008

As Rensselaer moves towards its goal of achieving prominence as a top-tier world class technological research university, the Libraries' vision is to support the Rensselaer Plan by providing seamless access to the widest possible spectrum of information resources relevant to Rensselaer's research and learning communities and to be a distinctive campus facility serving a variety of community needs.

----and Coca-Cola's Vision Statement (http://www.thecoca-colacompany.com/ourcompany/mission_vision_values.html)

To achieve sustainable growth, we have established a **Vision** with clear goals:

- **People:** Being a great place to work where people are inspired to be the best they can be.
- **Planet:** Being a responsible global citizen that makes a difference.
- **Portfolio:** Bringing to the world a portfolio of beverage brands that anticipate and satisfy peoples' desires and needs.
- **Partners:** Nurturing a winning network of partners and building mutual loyalty.
- **Profit:** Maximizing return to shareowners while being mindful of our overall responsibilities.

I also sometimes refer to a book review I read in the Paladium Group's Balanced Scorecard Report (Jan.-Feb.2008). The book is The Execution Premium by Robert Kaplan and David P. Norton with Edward A. Barrows Jr. They suggest that "if vision statements are to guide strategy development, they must be not only aspirational and inspirational--they must also be measurable." They also recommend a time line for execution--preferably the next 3-10 years.