

Creating a Vision and Mission Statement for your Organization

“Control your destiny or someone else will!” (Jack Welch)

One of the first things any organization or club should do when they gather is determine what it is they do and where they want their organization to go. A good way to plan for these objectives is by creating a vision and mission statement. Vision and mission statements are vital components to success because they keep an organization grounded on core values and objectives.

A vision statement sets forth the direction the organization, club, or individual is headed. Mission statements tell the world what it is the group or individual currently does. These statements provide both purpose and clarity. Without purpose, there is no reason for the group, team, or organization to exist. And without clarity, the group may lose focus of crucial objectives. These statements also help make organizational decisions easier by always keeping the aim, intent, and goals in mind.

Creating a Vision Statement

Creation of the vision statement is fun. This planning stage allows an organization to use its imagination, creativity, and passion to influence and inform how success of the organization looks and feels. Typically a vision statement is not more than a couple of sentences long. The shorter and easier understood the better. Some ideas to consider when creating you vision statements:

1. How can the organizations values be included?
2. How will the group grow in terms of size and effectiveness?
3. Would the world be better place if the organization was living out its mission?

An example of Microsoft’s diversity vision statement follows:

To establish Microsoft as a global leader in diversity and inclusion by driving global executive leadership, engagement, and accountability and by increasing workforce diversity at all levels, building value and commitment for work-life balance, and building capabilities for people and organizations.

Creating a Mission Statement

Conception of the mission statement is a little different. When developing the mission statement, it is a good idea to ask the following questions of the organization:

1. What do we do?
2. How do we do it?

3. For whom do we do it?

When answering these questions, it is important to consider the customer's or client's perspective of the club or organization.

A good example of a mission statement comes from the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, which reads:

The Mission of Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center is the elimination of cancer and related diseases as causes of human suffering and death. The Center conducts research of the highest standards to improve prevention and treatment of cancer and related diseases.

Having both a vision and a mission statement will bring the values and expectations of the club to the forefront, making strategic decisions easier and keeping the goals of the organization in mind. Of course while having these statements is good, they will not be completely beneficial to the group if they are not used and evaluated frequently. It is often said what you talk about most, is what you most value. Reminding stakeholders, and continuously reflecting on both the mission and vision statements, will increase the likelihood of organizational success.

References:

Ebben, J. (2007). Developing effective visions and mission statements. Retrieved December 1, 2007, from: <http://www.inc.com/resources/startup/articles/20050201/missionstatement.html>.