

DEVELOPING A MISSION STATEMENT

The mission statement is a broad description of what we do, with/for whom we do it, our distinctive competence in doing it, and WHY we do it (our ultimate end).

An effective mission statement addresses the following points:

- Broad description of what we do/are.
- With/for whom we do it.
- Our distinctive competence. (How we do it "differently", "better", "more effectively" than others)
- WHY we do it (Our ultimate end)

CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE MISSION

If a mission statement already exists, the focus of this step is on reviewing it in light of the emerging vision statement and if necessary revising the language. Here are some questions that can aid in the review of an already-existing mission statement:

1. Is the mission statement clear and on target in today's operating environment? Does it address the key following key points: Broad description of what we do/are; With/for whom we do it; Our distinctive competence; WHY we do it (Our ultimate end)
2. Do you have any specific questions or concerns with respect to the mission statement?
3. Does the mission statement duplicate the mission of any other organization? If so, what should we do about it?
4. Considering the answers to these questions, how, if at all, should the mission statement be changed?

DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC VISION WORKSHEET

A vision is an image or description of the organization we aspire to become in the future. It answers the question *“If we could create the organization of our dreams and have the impact we most desire, what would it look like in the Year 2003?”*

The vision focuses on what we intend to BE – our hoped for destination, not what we will be DOING in the Year 2003. It should also indicate in what significant ways we will be different from what we are today.

If the critical strategic issues represent our effort to express the big questions, choices and challenges facing the organization in the future, the vision is our attempt to communicate the big answers to these big questions.

Your Task:

First, review the following information:

- Key factors in the planning assessment summary - internal strengths & weaknesses, external changes & trends, emerging needs & service expectations of our constituents.
- Critical strategic issues facing the organization

Next, develop a list of core elements or components of a vision for the organization. *“If we could create the organization of our dreams and have the impact we most desire, what would it look like in the Year 2003?”* Use the two sets of questions below to stimulate your thinking.

- **Impact/Results:** What impact and results do we want to be achieving with our programs and activities in the Year 2003? How many and what kinds of people and groups will we be involving/serving and how? What impact will we have on the community, state, region? What will success look like for us?
- **Ideal Characteristics:** What will the organization need to look like in ideal terms to deliver the results and impact listed first? How will the organization act? What will its reputation be? Additional things to consider in listing elements of the vision statement: Organization size (revenues, facilities, paid staff, and volunteers); Nature and scope of programs and services; Member base; Market position/reputation; Use of technology; Management capabilities; Organizational structure.

➤ **Now Dream! List the core vision elements that are most inspiring to you:**

QUALITIES OF A GOOD VISION STATEMENT

- Presents where we want to go.
- Easy to read and understand.
- Captures the desired spirit of an organization.
- Dynamically incomplete so people can fill in the pieces.
- Compact -- can be used to guide decision-making.
- Gets people's attention.
- Describes a preferred and meaningful future state.
- Can be felt/experienced/gives people goose bumps when they hear it.
- Gives people a better understanding of how their individual purpose could be realized in the group.
- Provides a motivating force, even in hard times.
- Is perceived as achievable and at the same time is challenging and compelling, stretching us beyond what is comfortable.

From Organizational Vision, Values and Mission by Cynthia D. Scott