

Developing a Mission

The mission statement is a concise and clear statement or list of points outlining an organization's purpose and goals. It serves as a guiding tool for important decisions that impact the direction of the team or organization, and outlines the specific actions needed to achieve the vision.

A MISSION STATEMENT IS EXPECTED TO:

- Communicate your organization's fundamental purpose in a manner that encourages support and enduring dedication.
- The organization aims to inspire and encourage its members.
- Be clear and easy to understand in your communication.
- Use action verbs to describe one's actions.
- Avoid using technical terms.
- The sentence should not be rewritten as it already has a neutral tone of voice.

CREATING A MISSION STATEMENT

When developing a mission statement, it is important to consider the process as well as the end result. Taking time for brainstorming and creativity is crucial, so it is advisable not to rush the process. Here are five steps that can assist you.

Step 1 – Individual Preparation

Using a worksheet containing at least the following three questions, individuals are asked to list any words, phrases, or ideas that come to mind regarding the team/organization and these questions.

- Statement of Purpose: What opportunities or needs are we here to address? Who is our target audience?
- Statement of Strategy: How are we addressing these needs? What is our unique contribution?
- Statement of Value: What principles or beliefs inform our work?

Step 2 – Flip Chart Capture

During the worksheet activity, team members can contribute ideas related to each question using flip chart paper. All suggestions should be recorded until the energy level decreases or as time allows.

Step 3 – Identify Themes

Place large sheets of captured items around the room and allow everyone to examine each sheet. As a team, analyze patterns and themes that arise, focusing on common words and repetition. Engage in a discussion on how these themes can be integrated to create a mission statement.

Step 4 – Sub-team Drafts

Form sub-teams consisting of 3-4 members, and have each team write an initial draft of a mission statement for the team, based on the identified patterns and themes.

Step 5 – Large Group Draft

Gather the entire team to discuss and combine individual sub-team mission statements into one unified mission statement for the entire team.

Depending on availability, the team has the option to further discuss and refine the statement to reach a final version. Alternatively, a sub-team can be assigned to make revisions and present the statement at a later time for final approval from the entire team.

MISSION STATEMENT EXAMPLES

Apple is committed to bringing the best personal computing experience to students, educators, creative professionals and consumers around the world through its innovative hardware, software and Internet offerings. – Apple

To enable and inspire customers to enjoy the daily pleasure of Peet's coffees and teas by providing distinctive, superior products, superior coffee and tea knowledge, and superior service to every customer, every day. – Peet's Coffee and Tea

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. - The Nature Conservancy

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