

VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

The mission and vision statements are critical to the strategic planning process to provide clear, guiding principles that further define who the community is and why it exists. Mission and vision statements create the foundation for prioritizing and action planning and provide a basis for accountability with the community.

Vision Statement - The vision of the community coalition defines, on a larger scale, what it is trying to do. It depicts a sense of purpose and expresses what is important and why. It should be clear and concise, and create a visual image in the mind of the reader of what the coalition strives to do. It may be as brief as a few words or a more detailed collection of points. In general, vision statements should be:

THE VISION STATEMENT SHOULD
INSPIRE PEOPLE TO DREAM;
THE MISSION STATEMENT SHOULD
INSPIRE THEM TO ACTION AND
HOW TO REACH THEIR VISION.

- Understood and shared by members of the coalition and the community
- Focused on a better future, emphasize strengths, and state positive results
- Easy to communicate - uses pictures, images, and words to bring the vision to life

Mission Statement - The mission is the core purpose of the community. It is a statement that specifies a community's reason for being, sets the group's direction, and becomes a tool to communicate the group's purpose to others. In general, mission statements should:

- Be concise, usually not more than one or two sentences long
- Capture the essence of who the community coalition is
- Be realistic and contain clear and simple terminology
- Guide the activities and decisions of the coalition to accomplish its goals

THE MISSION IS THE WHAT,
WHILE A VISION IS THE WHY.

WHY CREATE VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

First of all, these statements direct the focus to the issues of concern. The vision and mission statements remind coalition members and communities of what is important.

Second, vision and mission statements let other individuals and organizations have a snapshot view of who the group is and what it wants to do.

In addition, they provide a basis for developing the other aspects of the action planning process: the goals, objectives, strategies, and action plans.

Finally, vision and mission statements keep members who are focused and dedicated bound together in a common purpose. Here are some key tips for creating great vision and mission statements.

- Learn what is important to people in the community. Keep vision and mission statements grounded in community beliefs and values.
- Define the issue(s) that matter. Determine what matters most to people in the community.
- Develop statements that will capture those ideas.



EXAMPLES OF VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

The following examples should help you understand what is meant by effective *vision statements*.

- “Vibrant rural economy driven by value-added agriculture.”
- “Healthy and happy communities for all.”
- “Safe and healthy neighborhoods.”

The following examples should help you understand what is meant by effective *mission statements*.

- “To create and facilitate the development of value-added agricultural businesses.”
- “Promoting community health and development by connecting people, ideas and resources.”
- “To develop a safe and healthy neighborhood through collaborative planning, community action, and policy advocacy.”

HOW TO USE THE VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

It is important to remember that while developing the statements is a major step, there is more work to be done. Determining the best use of these statements to benefit the coalition and drive its work is very important.

There are many ways in which the community may choose to share its vision and mission statements. Examples might include:

- Adding to a letterhead or stationary
- Using on a website and in presentations
- Give away T-shirts or other incentives that market the mission and vision statements
- Involving the media

CONCLUSION

Vision and mission statements are important because they are created through a common experience, drive, and support the work of the coalition. The statements can also convene stakeholders into a cohesive group who share goals working toward a common purpose.

Tools and Templates

Vision and Mission Statements Examples and Templates. Guides to assist a community coalition in writing their vision and mission statements.

Resources

The resources below offer more information and examples of vision and mission statements.

Vision and Mission Statements

Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives... Oh My!, University of Maine, Cooperative Extension Publications.

Proclaiming Your Dream: Developing Vision and Mission Statements. Community Tool Box, University of Kansas.

Creating a Mission Statement, Setting Goals and Developing Strategies. Iowa State University, Extension and Outreach.

References

1. Killam, D. (2004). Vision, Mission, Goals & Objectives...Oh My! Cooperative Extension Publications (Bulletin #6107). Retrieved from <http://extension.umaine.edu/publications/6107e/>
2. Nagy, J., Fawcett, S., Berkowitz, B. & Schultz, J. (2013). Chapter: Developing a Strategic Plan, Section 2. Proclaiming Your Dream: Developing Vision and Mission Statements. In The Community Toolbox, University of Kansas. Retrieved from http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/sub_section_main_1086.aspx
3. Hofstrand, D. (2009). Creating a Mission Statement, Setting Goals and Developing Strategies. Retrieved from <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/wholefarm/html/c5-09.html>

