

Development Suggestions for Vision

Activities

1. Create an effective and well-conceived vision by reflecting on and answering the following questions:
 - a. What does the organization stand for and why does it exist?
 - b. What are the organization's enduring values that serve to unify, guide, and inspire people?
 - c. What do I wish to achieve, aspire to, or create?

2. Use chart paper and colored markers to draw a picture or symbol that depicts your vision. Share your picture and be prepared to discuss it and what it represents with others. Use the following questions as "food for thought" to help you envision the future:
 - What is the purpose of our work?
 - What values are reflected?
 - What will the work environment look like and how will it feel?
 - How will employees look when they're working?
 - Who will our customers be and how will we interact with them?
 - What products or services will we provide?
 - How will these meet our customers' needs?
 - What will our customers say about us?
 - How will work units, departments, etc. be interconnected within the organization?

3. Use a SWOT Analysis to examine the internal strengths and weaknesses of your work unit, department, or organization and the external opportunities and threats that may positively or negatively affect your ability to achieve the vision. Use the following process:
 - a. List the major **strengths**.
 - b. Consider the major **weaknesses**. Focus particularly on those things which, if they could be corrected, would significantly improve the work unit or department.
 - c. Consider the external **opportunities**. Think about such issues as suppliers and current and future trends that may provide opportunities to achieve the vision.
 - d. Consider the **threats** that might impact the ability to achieve the vision.

Development Suggestions for Vision, continued

4. Use a strategic planning process that will help you translate the vision into everyday actions. Remember that strategic planning is not a one-time event, but an ongoing, reiterative process. Consider using the following process as a guide:



5. Create a statement that communicates your vision to your employees. Write an inspiring, short (4 to 8 words) statement that captures the essence of the vision you've created.
6. For a change that you are trying to implement, list the people and parts of the company who are in agreement with your vision and sense of urgency and who can become champions of the change and represent a significantly guiding coalition.
7. Attend open management meetings to understand the mission and strategic vision of the organization's leadership.
8. Visualize opportunities beyond what the organization is now engaged in.
9. Network with other executives on all levels of the organizational hierarchy to create and pursue the vision.
10. Collaborate with your employees in designing program objectives that support the shared vision for the organization.
11. Create a vision of where you would like to see the organization, evaluate alternative routes, and decide on the specific course to reach the chosen destination.
12. Generate a list of things you can do in the future to demonstrate your support for the organization's mission and goals.

Development Suggestions for Vision, continued

13. Stay abreast of the developments in Congress and the developments in policies and regulations that affect your work so that your vision reflects trends and changes in the broader environment.
14. Volunteer to help a community-based organization formulate a vision and strategic plan.

Tips

1. Participate in a planning session with other managers to envision what the organization should be doing 1 year, 5 years, and 10 years from now.
2. Network with other executives on all levels of the organizational hierarchy to create and pursue the vision. Brainstorm with them for ways to achieve the mission and vision.
3. Share your vision of your work team's goals with your superior to check for convergence.
4. Collaborate with your employees in designing program objectives that support the shared vision for the organization.
5. Share your vision with your employees and encourage buy-in by incorporating their input into the vision and the strategic objectives that flow from the vision.
6. Attend open management meetings to understand the mission and strategic vision of the organization's leadership.
7. Meet with people who are skilled in translating broad strategies into day-to-day activities to get their ideas on how to effectively communicate the organization's vision to your team.
8. Be open and available to discuss the organization's vision and direction with your employees. In order for them to support the vision, they must understand it.
9. Talk often about the organization's mission and goals.