



From Mission Drab to Mission Exciting

Inspire Your Team with a Purpose That Is Bigger than Any One Person

"This thing is bigger than the both of us."
John Wayne

What makes people want to go to work? It's not just the money. Paying the bills is only #3 on the list of employee motivators. According to the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, the prime motivator is the opportunity to do "important work [that] gives a feeling of accomplishment."

Source: Gregory Lamb, "How to build motivation in today's workplace. Christian Science Monitor, March 2003.

A key to inspiring people in your organization is having a clear, shared purpose – a (gulp!) mission statement.

I hear groans in the audience. Not another exercise in juggling words!

But we're not just talking about any old mission statement. It turns out that we humans are not very motivated when we're working drab missions without a large sense of purpose. But, most of us are HIGHLY motivated by projects that actually change the world for the better and that are bigger than what we can accomplish on our own.

An effective mission statement supports employees in understanding the whole process they're part of, not just their own little piece. When we **begin with the end in mind**, with the overall picture, we come up with better processes to achieve the mission.

The mission can't just come from the top, either. It has to come from the people who are doing the work to carry the mission out, and it has to be something that inspires them.

Example #1: There once was an R&D company whose mission statement was:

"We are the best research laboratory
in the world."

Vision, Mission & Values Definitions

Your vision, mission and values define who you are and what you choose to create in your personal and professional world.

Vision: A powerful mental image of what you want to create in the future. Your vision reflects what you care about most.

Every person and every organization has a destiny. What is the deep purpose that expresses your company's reason for existence?

NASA had a powerful vision in the 60's provided by John F. Kennedy:

"Put a man on the moon by the end of the decade."

Apple also had a compelling vision:

"A personal computer on every desk, at work and at home."

Powerful visions pull people like magnets. We want to be part of something bigger than ourselves - we want to make a difference.

Mission: What you do, who you serve and how you are unique.

"So what?" was the response of the employees. Everyone got more excited (and more productive) when they were involved in the re-write. The group ended up changing just one word in their mission statement, but it was significant.

"We are the best research laboratory *for* the world."

Can you feel the difference and the power of a meaningful mission statement when you read the employee's version?

Example #2: Teams On Target worked with a medical team that had invented a unique surgical device for doctors. At first their mission statement was implied. If they had spelled it out, it would have read something like this:

"Deliver a new, best in class product on time for surgeons and design it to make a profit for our company."

In order to craft the mission statement, I asked the project team members what inspired them most about this particular project and product. "The doctors told us that our device actually will save lives." THAT's inspiring.

Their new mission statement was simple (and inspiring): "We Save Lives."

Saving lives in surgery is not something any one of them could do individually, but they could accomplish this as a TEAM. A mission this important put the spring in their steps when they came to work each day. It also gave the team the extra juice needed when they had to push through the difficult testing and certification project steps.

Often there is a pull to skip over the essential step of clarifying your mission at the beginning of a new project. But it's well worth the time it takes to hash it out because you will save the money, time, and resources that are eaten up by people running in different directions without a mission.



Success Formula: Take time to clarify what you're doing before jumping in to do it.

Be sure your mission statement inspires you and keeps you on track.

Marilyn Laverty, President

My favorite mission statement is from Radio Shack:

"To Demystify Technology for the Mass Market."

Here is how they spelled it out further: "Our people are different because we get excited about helping people understand technology. We care about our customers, whether they're in our store for a \$3.00 or \$300.00 purchase. Every day, we give peace of mind to thousands of people who need help from someone. We're there to solve their problems and to connect them to the wonders of modern technology. We are about people helping people. When America needs answers, we're there at every turn."

Source: The Mission Statement Book by Jeffrey Abrahams.

Values: The core of a person or organization's system of beliefs, ideas and opinions.

Societies and organizations have values that are shared among their members. Values have deep roots, often from our childhood. Values are so important to us that we are willing to fight for them.

When organizations clarify their shared values, we notice that following are discussed early on:

- Respect
- Honesty
- Quality

Identifying shared values brings diverse people together to build on what they have in common.

Teams on Target, Inc.

P.S. Want help clarifying your vision, mission and shared values?

Call Teams On Target. We research high-performing teams and offer you proven short-cuts to jump-start your team and optimize profits and productivity. 877-252-6303 303-290-8989

mlaverty@TeamsOnTarget.com

We are happy to share our research on this. Write to us for a full list of corporate and individual values.

Teams On Target has talented facilitators that support you to update your vision, mission, shared values, strategic plans and annual goals. Our customized processes insure employee buy-in.

303-290-8989

Call us today for a free telephone consultation.

"This was the most productive meeting our team has had in a year. It was masterful to watch you orchestrate our agenda and involve us all in the ranking and voting."

Senior Product
Engineer
& Team Lead

www.TeamsOnTarget.com

Centennial, Colorado

303-290-8989

877-252-6306