

Successful organizations have common characteristics; the most basic of which are a shared purpose and direction (a mission and vision), and operating values. The mission, vision and values together create the foundation on which goals and actions are formed, and establish the most basic level of accountability for the organization.

A **VISION** gives direction rather than defining a destination. A vision is like a distant star, the organization may not be able to reach it, but it can still be used for navigational purposes and as a source of inspiration on a daily basis. There are two kinds of visions: organization focused and customer (or community) focused. Customer- or community-focused visions have a distinct advantage: they can establish common ground among many organizations and groups.

VISION STATEMENTS

Examples

<i>From Organization focused . . .</i>	<i>To Customer (or Community) focused . . .</i>
Our organization will expand its programming and become the center for homeless people.	Homeless families have shelter when they need it.
We will develop transportation and child care programs to support homeless people.	Families in need of transportation and child care in order to maintain their jobs will have that support.
We will develop the BEST community awareness media program in the Midwest.	The metropolitan community is aware of the problems of homelessness and, as a result, supports efforts to address these problems.

In contrast to a vision, a **MISSION** defines how the organization will achieve its vision. A mission is not a laundry list of programs and services, but the main purpose and function of the organization.

VALUES describe behavior and help people establish behavioral priorities in daily life. Again, a values statement is not a laundry list of all values, but of *key* values.

VISION, MISSION & VALUES STATEMENTS

Examples

VISION	MISSION	VALUES
All Mendocino County children will be born healthy, thrive in a supportive, healthy, nurturing and loving environment, enter school eager to learn, and become capable, contributing members of our community.	FIRST 5 Mendocino shall use its resources to establish, fund, coordinate, evaluate and advocate for programs that promote the health and development for young children in Mendocino County.	-
We are guided by our vision that one day all people will live, work, learn and play in a community based on abilities, not disabilities.	Ensure that all people with developmental disabilities have full access to their civil, legal and human rights.	-
Police and citizens together building a safer community.	The Portsmouth Police Department is dedicated to the protection and security of all people and, in partnership with our community, to providing quality public safety services while affording dignity and respect to every individual.	Respect Integrity Service Excellence