

Vision, Mission and Values

Having a vision can help any organisation to lead their team. It doesn't matter what sector you are in, what service you provide, how long your organisation has been operating or the size of your organisation. General practices are no exception. Companies that enjoy enduring success have core values and a core purpose that remain relatively fixed while their business strategies and practices endlessly adapt to a changing world.¹

It's important to note that these statements do not relate to financial goals and targets, but rather what the business stands for and why it exists, including core services and products.

Vision statement

organisation to have a sense of what could be.⁸ It is absolutely essential for people actualising their best potentials in a company. Vision sets a self organising attractor in the mind which pulls one into the future.²

For example, Microsoft was founded in 1975 with a dream of "a computer on every desk and in every home". At the time, this vision would have been seen as an extremely ambitious, however, it was not impossible and thus gave the organisation something to strive towards.

Mission statement

A vision statement is often underpinned by a 'mission' statement, which outlines how the organisation plans to achieve its vision. It covers the 'who', 'how' and 'why'.

In his book, 'Unleashing Leadership', Hall quotes the CEO of Servicemaster, a major service provision company in the United States on the importance of a powerful mission:

"As a person sees a reason for a task that is personally satisfying and rewarding and has the confidence that the mission of the firm is in alignment with his or her own personal growth and development, a powerful force is unleashed that results in creativity, productivity, service quality, growth, profit and value."³





Values

The third step in defining the vision and mission of your organisation is to develop a set of values. These will act as the principles that will guide the organisation and its team's actions and behaviours when carrying out its mission to achieve the vision.

Values are important because they give meaning to our lives, and meaning drives motivation. Higher order values such as beauty, justice, truth, fairness, contribution, trust, innovation, excellence, openness, learning, discovery, create the higher motivational states for employees. The higher motivation occurs when employees receive through their work what Abraham Maslow⁴ describes as “meta-pay” – working for compensation in terms of satisfaction and fulfilment of higher level needs wants and values – compensation that money cannot buy.

These meta-motivational values motivate people to authenticity and honesty, to be caring and supportive, to believe in themselves and others, and to create structures for a meaningful life and society and in their working environment.

EXAMPLE VISION, MISSION AND VALUES: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Vision: “A world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments.”

Mission: “In pursuit of this vision, Amnesty International’s mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of these rights.”

Core values: International solidarity, effective action for the individual victim, global coverage, the universality and indivisibility of human rights, impartiality and independence, and democracy and mutual respect.

“The very essence of leadership is that you have to have a vision. It’s got to be a vision you articulate clearly and forcefully on every occasion. You can’t blow an uncertain trumpet.”

– Reverend Theodore Hesburgh

How to develop your vision, mission and values

Creating a vision, mission and values for your practice can be an inspiring and bonding experience for your team. There are no rules for how you do it, but it usually works best by getting your team together and asking for their thoughts.

Here’s some pointers to get the discussion going:

- Why did they choose to work at the practice? What sets it apart from other practices? Why do they feel proud to work there? How can the practice do better?
- What is their vision for the practice? What’s the optimal scenario?
- How do they achieve this optimal scenario? What do they need to do every day? Who do they need to work with to do it?
- What standards and behaviours do they need to set for themselves and expect to see in their colleagues in order to reach their vision? What is not negotiable?



TABLE 1: VISION, MISSION AND VALUES ATTRIBUTES

Vision	Mission	Values
1. Defines the future you want to create.	1. Must be short, precise and easily understood.	1. Needs to be linked to a behaviour and applicable to day-to-day work.
2. Is not a prophecy.	2. Describes the who, how and why.	2. Guides decision-making.
3. Is a rallying call to team members.	3. Must be brought to life each day as you apply it's principles when making decisions.	3. Should eventually become part of the culture.

Adapted from makeadentleadership.com

“We aim to maintain the family atmosphere of a small regional GP practice and work actively towards this with our social program, ongoing education of all staff about important issues (Brodie’s Law, Confidentiality, Working with difficult patients).”

– Dr Ashley Hayes, GP Supervisor and Medical Educator at Creswick Medical Centre, Victoria

TABLE 2: EXAMPLE VISION, MISSION AND VALUES IN GENERAL PRACTICE

Vision	Mission	Values
1. For patients and their families to live long and healthy lives.	To inspire Mallee District residents to make positive health changes to their lives through focused care and tailored education that resonates.	Equality – all patients are equal. Affordability – anyone who comes to this practice will receive care. Adaptability – we go beyond a one-size-fits-all approach.
2. Be the most trusted and reputable family-run practice in Victoria.	To heal, nurture and comfort through clinical excellence and personal sincerity. Work with local health professionals to provide seamless service.	Personable – we see the person not the illness. Excellence – pursued for all patients. Inclusivity – our clinic is our patient’s clinic.
3. Provide the best care for everyone, always.	To provide and maintain clinical excellence and make daily personal and team contributions to best practice standards.	Creativity – we seek and are open to new ways to provide best care. Continuous learning – we regularly improve our knowledge and learning to benefit patients. Equality – all patients receive equal care.



Tip - keep it short!

Don't overcomplicate your vision by making it too wordy or long. If your team can't recite it, it's probably not quite there yet. If you can keep it to less than 20 words – good!

These organisations outlined their vision in just a few words.

A just world without poverty

Oxfam

Equality for everyone

Human Rights Campaign (US)

References

1. Collins, James and Porras, Jerry, 'Building your company's vision', Harvard Business Review (1996), 65-77.
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3. <https://makeadentleadership.com/developing-a-team-mission-statement>, accessed 1 August 2017.
4. Hall, Michael, Unleashing Leadership (Neuro Semantic Publications, 2009).
5. Maslow, Abraham, Maslow on Management, (Canada: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1998).

