

## Step by Step to Creating a Vision

### Vision!

In the dictionary it says the ability to see. In business we need to see, and we also need to clearly communicate and help others see the vision as well.

## Why do I need a Company Vision?

You **don't need** a vision to be successful. There are many ways to climb the mountaintop of success. However, keep this in mind; a vision is one of any number of tools that help you climb that mountaintop more easily.

Do you need rope to climb the mountain? It definitely helps, and so it is with a vision statement that you actually use! A very key point here is that a successful vision becomes a tool within the business. Like any other tool we have, if it is not used, and used properly, we tend to **not** get the results we expected to get. No different than a set of pressure gauges sitting in the truck while we try to decide if the pressures in a refrigeration system are proper or not.

A vision statement or a **Vision** is the leader's viewpoint, visualizing what the business will look like at some point in the future. It's the ability to see!

### Why should any business have a Vision? Simple:

1. Where are you and the business headed? A vision clarifies this question so the business, and the planning, and the operations, and everything you do has an acid test. This is what we want the business to look like.
2. Do you have employees who are mind readers? How do they know what the business is going to look like if you have this grand vision, stored inside your head (for fear of failure, laughter, can't communicate well, don't really have one etc.) without sharing it openly? A shared vision helps all the employees focus their efforts on accomplishing the vision.
3. Do employees want to know? No, they are just employees! Wrong! If this is your owners/leaders viewpoint, you are in serious trouble and don't know it yet! Of course they do, they care, you have to learn to let them be involved with your vision, and help you achieve it!

Having a vision gets everyone on the same page, or at least provides the framework for having all the personnel on the same page.

## We call this **Alignment**.

Alignment is a very cool thing. All the personnel in one company focused on one outcome can be immensely powerful. And is it ever rare. Why?

### Simple answer again.

1. We see lack of vision in many companies
2. We see a vision, and no one cares about it
3. We see a vision statement, and no one knows about it, not even the owners' wife.
4. We see varying interpretations of the vision, meaning the communication is bad, or worse, non-existent.

And of course every once in a while we see it. We see the leadership of a company have a vision that is clear and concise. The leaders communicate it. They go over it with passion because they really believe it matters. The leaders use it as a business tool to guide them in their planning, their employee hiring, development, and their own direction for how they run the business.

It is magical to walk up to a service technician, who you do not know, and ask them what the vision of the business is, and they can actually tell you what direction the business is headed and **why!**

### Here's why:

1. Because he understands the vision – he behaves in alignment with the vision, meaning he manages his actions in accordance with what the company vision is all about.
2. He feels great about his future. Why? Because he knows if he does his job, he trusts the leadership that he actually HAS a future at the company, because they have told him, and everyone else, this is what we **see!**

Do people work harder for you if they trust your leadership ability?

**Establishing a company vision is a leadership issue.**

How do we establish a Vision?

**There are two basic ways:**

1. Develop one as the leader and share it.
2. Develop a vision with your teams' involvement.

Speaking from direct experience, I have done it both ways. They both work, but here is some advice to consider. If you do not already have a vision established, you should gauge your situation before you choose to involve or not involve your personnel.

The situation the business is in has much to do with the option you choose.

One would always prefer to create involvement if possible. To have maximum buy-in by the employees is the best alternative, but in some cases, you may not have the luxury of time. Or, you may not have any employees. Either way, you should assess what the situation is, and then make the choice as to which method you may want to use. Remember, both methods require you to involve the employees at some stage.

If you develop a vision, and do not involve the employees and let them have an opportunity to influence their destiny, you are committing a felony offense in Vision Law! This is autocratic leadership, and while this style definitely has advantages in certain situations, over the long term, you will find the employees in your company will become those that respond to only autocratic styles, leaving you holding ALL of the decision making all the time.

Be careful what you wish for! The development of the vision, and ultimately the business requires more than any one person can contribute.

- Step 1.** Have your team meeting and discuss the need for a company vision an end point.
- Step 2.** Ask the employees to consider what they want their company to be.
- Step 3.** Reconvene, and review the ideas – There are no bad ideas, just ideas and opinions. Don't criticize. Collect the ideas and formulate what you believe is a proper direction.
- Step 4.** Take their ideas and formulate the vision, either privately, or with a small team.
- Step 5.** Share it with a few confidants and get their input on the draft version.
- Step 6.** Use the next meeting to outline the vision to all company personnel and get their reaction.
- Step 7.** Make any minor adjustments to the vision if you feel you should.

**Example Vision:**

**To become the dominant brand of choice in on-line learning for contractors.**

**This implies certain business and operational requirements to make it a reality!**

## How do we implement a Company Vision?

1. The first step in implementation was the development of the meetings and the process of creating the vision in the first place.
2. The use of a vision is very simple:
  - a. Start every meeting with the vision and why the company has chosen that as its vision.
  - b. Announce to all employees these meeting rules: those random selections will be made at the start of each meeting from now on, to discuss the vision, and what it means, and why it is critical to the success of the company. 2-3 minutes is all you need.
  - c. Have random selected employees get up in front of their peers and state what the vision is, and more importantly, have them tell their peers why they believe the vision is important to them, and the company.  
  
We hear all kinds of reasons why this is BAD! Don't embarrass your peers, and people don't like to speak in front of the group etc. well, those things may be true enough, however once thing is certain, your personnel will learn the vision, and they WILL think about why it is important to them.
  - d. Amazingly enough, after the first couple of management meetings, and company meetings, not only will everyone in the company know the vision, but they actually can speak about it! Meaning, they can relate their job, their behaviors with customers, and what they do for the company as the role they play, and how the vision is meaningful.
3. A vision can and should change over time. A vision is not necessarily static. Keep in mind as the company changes, as the leadership changes, as the market changes, so too must the leaders of the company adapt the vision as needed.
4. Remember, a vision is a hiring and firing tool as well. We use the vision, the mission, core values, and the operating philosophies as the first day with every new employee, no matter who they are. The leader of the company spends that day, with every new employee, to explain how the vision works, to explain the core values, why they were hired against the core values, the operating philosophies, and indoctrinate the employee into the culture of the company. This is very powerful business!

## Why is this Critical to Your Success?

- A vision is simply the picture you paint for the future of the company. People like to know they are better off tomorrow than they were today!
- A vision is a communication tool. No more, no less. It guides the employees to what you want the business to look like, and gives them the end game as to why they do what they do.
- Not having a vision makes for “No end game” creating opportunities for employees to create their own vision of your end game. This can be good or bad. Do you really want 15 different versions of your end game played out in front of customers? A vision clarifies the final destination and allows you to impartially correct behaviors using the vision as the independent standard that guides your leadership.
- A vision allows the leaders of a company to create operating practices that drive toward the end game.
- **A properly communicated and utilized vision can indeed improve Profits, and satisfy customer's needs!!**