



**YOUR PLANNING
PARTNERS**
get clarity. stay focused. take action.

How to Create a Powerful Mission Statement

©Your Planning Partners Ltd 2003-2015



The Company's Mission Statement is the reason the company exists. It describes in very broad terms "why" the company was formed. In general terms the Company's Mission Statement will tell us what the company does, who it serves and what sets it apart from the competition.

The secrets of a good Mission Statement:-

It is concise. This makes it easy to remember and opens up opportunities like printing it on the back of your business cards.

It is understandable. A Mission Statement must not be flush with incomprehensible techno gobble and/or business jargon. You want people to understand it!

It is known. Communicate your Mission to the world! Or at least to your employees, customers, suppliers, bankers, accountants and anyone else you do business with.

It is the focus. Whenever you are thinking of making changes to the company the Mission becomes the focus of the decision. Does this change fit our Mission? If it does not should we be changing the Mission (major impact) or changing the change?

It is memorable. You can never forget your company's Mission whether it is because you have it hanging on your office wall or because you have repeated it so many times that it is imbedded in your brain.

It is the centre of the universe. When developing the strategic plans the Mission is the centre of the universe around which everything else spins. The Mission comes first; the plans follow.

It is general in scope. At first this seems a contradiction; a clear concise statement being general in scope! What this mean is you don't want to be so specific that you are constantly changing your Mission or unnecessarily restricting your market. For example, "Our mission is to provide the home furnishing retailers of Toronto with the finest" should probably be restated "to provide home furnishing retailers with the finest" So that you don't restrict your market.

A Mission is NOT about making money. For example, it must not contain statements about profit targets or sales volumes to be achieved. These sort of statements belong in the Long Term Objectives because they are a fundamental condition of operating your company from one year to the next. They would also make your Mission much too specific requiring you to change it on a regular basis.

The following are examples of some Company Mission Statements:-

Your Planning Partners - Small Business Strategists

To be instrumental in Business Owners achieving the success they want for their business.

Happy Planet - Natural Juice Producers

Our Mission is to astonish your taste buds, nourish your body, unite you with the best sources of food and drink on this planet, and grow a business from which happiness flows.

Otis Elevator - Elevator Manufacturers

Our Mission is to provide any customer a means of moving people and things up, down and sideways over short distances with higher reliability than any similar enterprise in the world.

Google

To organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful.

Wal-Mart

We save people money so they can live better.

Marriott Hotels

To make people who are away from home feel they are among friends and really wanted.

Developing a Mission Statement

Let it be said right up front! Developing a Mission Statement is probably the hardest task in the entire planning process. So take your time and put in the effort because the results will be very worthwhile.

Also, at this stage do not concern yourself with writing eloquent phrases that brilliantly capture the very core of your mission that will come later! At this stage we are much more concerned with content.

And a final suggestion. Make sure all the key players in your business are involved in the creation of the Mission Statement. It goes without saying that this means you and your partners but you may want to extend the group to include

some employees or even outside people who play a major role in your company, for example, a business coach or mentor.

Answer these questions

When answering these questions just jot down key words and phrases. You may want to brainstorm the answers in a group meeting.

1. Why did you start the business?
2. What is your market place?
3. Who are your customers?
4. What is so special about you as individuals that adds value to your business?
5. What is so special about your business and your products?
6. How are you different from your competition?
7. How do you and/or your products add value to your customers?
8. What is your vision for the future?
9. What image do you want to portray?

Turn these same questions into “nots” (for example, who is NOT your customers) and answer them in the same way in order to identify boundaries to your Mission.

Think in terms of what your customer gets by working with your company. What is the experience she has when buying your product or service?

Now you can write it!

Go back through all the notes you have been keeping and highlight key words and key phrases. Copy the highlighted parts to another document. Stare at them and think! Can you see a pattern emerging? Discuss them together.

Take a first stab at turning them into a statement. Rewrite it and rewrite it and rewrite it, constantly referring back to the Secrets of a good Mission Statement on Page 2.

And remember:

In general terms your company’s Mission Statement will tell us what the company does, who it serves and what sets it apart from the competition.