

# OFFICE OF STUDENT WELLNESS

NH Department of Education

## COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT TEAM: DEFINING YOUR MISSION AND VISION

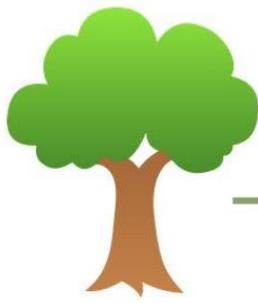
Mission and Vision Statements are standard and critical elements of any organization. Your Community Management Team is no different. Once in place, your Mission and Vision Statements will serve as the foundation for your goals, objectives, and activities. They will ensure that your group stays focused and will give you a benchmark by which to measure success.

### *What are they and how are they different?*

	Mission Statement	Vision Statement
<b>About</b>	A Mission statement talks about HOW you will get to where you want to be. Defines the purpose and primary objectives related to your customer needs and team values.	A Vision statement outlines WHERE you want to be. Communicates both the purpose and values of your business.
<b>Answer</b>	It answers the question, "What do we do? What makes us different?"	It answers the question, "Where do we aim to be?"
<b>Time</b>	A mission statement talks about the present leading to its future.	A vision statement talks about your future.
<b>Function</b>	It lists the broad goals for which the organization is formed. Its prime function is internal; to define the key measure or measures of the organization's success and its prime audience is the leadership, team and stockholders.	It lists where you see yourself some years from now. It inspires you to give your best. It shapes your understanding of why you are working here.
<b>Change</b>	Your mission statement may change, but it should still tie back to your core values, customer needs and vision.	As your organization evolves, you might feel tempted to change your vision. However, mission or vision statements explain your organization's foundation, so change should be kept to a minimum.
<b>Developing a statement</b>	What do we do today? For whom do we do it? What is the benefit? In other words, Why we do what we do? What, For Whom and Why?	Where do we want to be going forward? When do we want to reach that stage? How do we want to do it?
<b>Features of an effective statement</b>	Purpose and values of the organization: Who are the organization's primary "clients" (stakeholders)? What are the responsibilities of the organization towards the clients?	Clarity and lack of ambiguity: Describing a bright future (hope); Memorable and engaging expression; realistic aspirations, achievable; alignment with values and culture.

*Courtesy of [www.diffen.com](http://www.diffen.com)*





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## Getting Down to Business: Writing a Mission and Vision that Matter

By itself, your mission statement doesn't mean much. It's just words on a page. But if it's supported by a group of people who care about making a difference in the world, that's something else. Few things are as powerful as a shared mission. This exercise will help your team come up with a mission that matters, and then make the jump. It can take as little time as an hour. Below is one, tested way to get to the heart of the matter without needless wordsmithing and struggle.

### Get your group together.

What you will need: Paper and pens for brainstorming. A whiteboard or big sheets of paper. Coffee and bagels (optional) Who you will need: an impartial moderator (this may be you). 10 to 30 of the people who care most about your organization.

### Step 1: Storytelling.

Split your large group into several small groups of 3–5 people each. Make the groups as diverse as possible. Each member gets a few minutes to share a story about the organization. Ask them to consider: what it looks like when we do our best work Ask participants to write story details on paper. Next, ask participants to look at the stories they have written as a group. Ask them to place a circle around any specific place or person. Draw a square around any mention of your organization making a difference and taking action. Lastly, underline anytime something in the story changes for the better or results from your work.

### Step 2: Sharing

Now it is time to share the group's stories. Bring the group back together. The moderator should create the grid to the right on a whiteboard or large piece of paper. As each group shares their stories, have them placed identified words and concepts on the chart. Patterns and similarities will develop naturally—group similar ideas together. Then identify common ideas from your stories and label them "Big Ideas".

Our Cause Who? What? Where?	Circled items go here
Our Actions What we do	Squared items go here
Our Impact Changes for the better	Underlined items go here

### Step 3: Craft your statements

Move into original small groups. Each group will write a mission statement for your organization that incorporates the Big Ideas identified in Step 2. All mission statements should include: Cause, Actions, and Impact. Things to remember: Don't worry about word choice. Keep it short. (Possibly fewer than 10 words.) Keep it simple. Say it out loud. The disagreement test: If no one would disagree with your statement (things like "make the world better" or "act with integrity") then your statement is too generic. Don't hide behind clichés!

### Step 4: Sharing, take 2

Merge small groups back into one large group. The moderator writes each potential mission statement for everyone to see as each group shares it out loud. Identify the "Big Idea" in each. Remember: the Big Ideas can be implied—they don't have to be stated directly.

### Step 5: A dose of vision

Now that you have several strong, simple mission statement possibilities, the moderator will ask the groups to share why they know the statements are important. And most of all, how they know that the mission can be achieved together? This is the final, most important test.

### Step 6: Jump

You don't have your final mission statement yet, but you're close. Appoint a committee or final decision maker to finalize the wording. The final decision maker will present the final mission statement to your organization at a later date. A mission statement does two things: 1. Tells the world why what you're doing matters. 2. Leads your organization to do what matters. By itself, a mission statement isn't enough. You've got to make the jump. Make your mission a reality. Do work that matters.

*Courtesy of nonprofit hub*

