Vision Clarification

I was born with very poor vision. My grandmother showed me how, if I made a pinhole with my finger or if I looked through the hole in a cracker, fuzzy things would become clear.

Many years later, in graduate school, I learned about strategic planning. It occurred to me that the first step in strategic planning – clarifying vision - was sort of like the exercise of looking through a pinhole: extraneous details were left out and essential things became clear. Vision clarification allows one to filter out the extraneous and focus on what is important – one’s vision for an organization, a company, or one’s own self.
Is the vision clear? If not....
Clarify the vision.
Why Vision Matters

One of the key intrinsic human motivators is **connection to the purpose** of the organization where we work (or community where we live). Often the root of **challenges that groups face stems from fuzziness of vision**. WTF’s visioning session is not a replication of strategic planning but does complement that process and helps **people rally around an idea that is larger than themselves**. Whether you call it your “WHY”, your North Star or your Purpose – the activity of clarifying vision is essential.
Vision + Mission
What’s the difference?
Vision
Our envisioned impact on the world in the future.
It is the WHY.
Mission
What we do every day to help us reach our vision. It is the HOW or WHAT we do to get to the vision.
Your vision of where or who you want to be is the greatest asset you have.

- Paul Arden
Very few .... can articulate WHY they do WHAT they do. By WHY I mean your purpose, cause or belief – WHY does your organization exist? WHY do you get out of bed every morning? And WHY should anyone care?

- Simon Sinek
Headline Exercise
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It is 20 years into the future, 20XX. An article has just been published in an international newspaper about a change that has happened in the world. You know that this change came about because of your involvement with (insert organization/company) 20 years prior. What is the headline? What would be on the top half (above the fold) of the front page that would make you feel proud, that resonates with your own values? Working individually or in small groups, create a cover image, headline, photos/drawings, charts/graphs with captions and a short story. Use a piece of flip chart paper, turned sideways, or use a Power Point slide as your “newspaper.” The following slide is a guideline/template for you to reference – but use some artistic freedom – you do not need to follow the template exactly.
Headline on International Publication

Cover Story

Feature Article

Quotes/Charts

Photo

Side Bar
Vision Themes

Small groups are given 15 minutes to create their headlines. They then present their publications in front of the large group. After everyone is done presenting, we look for common themes and threads that run through the pages.

In a very large group, instead of presenting, people review the flipcharts by walking around the room and then report out the common vision themes they noted. This exercise can also be done virtually by having small teams work together and using a Power Point or other slide program to create their front page.

The point is not to see who can draw or create the most impressive front page. Talking and sharing ideas in small groups, then sharing all ideas and finding a common thread or themes will allow the larger group to clarify their vision. A final distillation of the thoughts into one succinct statement is often best assigned to one person or a very small group. Otherwise, wordsmithing will kill you. The statement should be very brief – a sentence or phrase that anyone can recite without having to read off of a screen or paper.
for more info, resources, questions – contact:
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