



Mission Statement vs. Vision Statement



Diffen › Business

Organizations summarize their goals and objectives in **mission and vision statements**. Both of these serve different purposes for a company but are often confused with each other. While a mission statement describes what a company wants to do *now*, a vision statement outlines what a company wants to be in the *future*.

The Mission Statement concentrates on the present; it defines the customer(s), critical processes and it informs you about the desired level of performance.

The Vision Statement focuses on the future; it is a source of inspiration and motivation. Often it describes not just the future of the organization but the future of the industry or society in which the organization hopes to effect change.

Comparison chart

| | Mission Statement | Vision Statement |
|-----------------|--|---|
| About | 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. |
| Answer | It answers the question, “What do we do? What makes us different?” | It answers the question, “Where do we aim to be?” |
| Time | A mission statement talks about the present leading to its future. | A vision statement talks about your future. |
| Function | 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 | 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. |

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| | the leadership, team and stockholders. | |
| Change | 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. |
| Developing a statement | 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? |
| Features of an effective statement | 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 organizational values and culture. |

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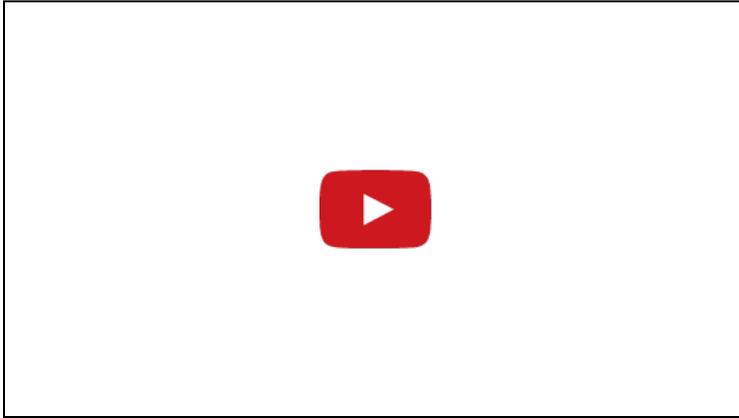
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Purpose

The mission statement guides the day-to-day operations and decision-making of the organization. It helps in tactical planning and "rallying the troops" around a common near- to medium-term goal. The mission statement helps members of the organization get on the same page on what they should do and how they should do it.

The vision statement is, in a sense, loftier. It outlines the worldview of the organization and why it exists. It attracts people — not just employees but also customers and vendors — who believe in the vision of the organization.

Video explaining the differences



What's in a Vision Statement?

When developing a **vision statement**, it should be seen that the following questions are answered:

- What do we want to do going forward?
- When do we want to do it?
- How do we want to do it?

Features of an effective vision statement include:

- Clarity and lack of ambiguity
- Paint a vivid and clear picture, not ambiguous
- Describing a bright future (hope)
- Memorable and engaging expression
- Realistic aspirations, achievable
- Alignment with organizational values and culture
- Time bound if it talks of achieving any goal or objective



Vision Statement of the Toronto Zoo

What to Include in a Mission Statement

When developing a **mission statement**, it should be seen that the following questions are answered:

- What do we do today?
- For whom do we do it?
- What is the benefit?

Features of an effective mission statement are:

- Purpose and values of the organization
- What business the organization wants to be in (products or services, market) or who are the organization's primary "clients" (stakeholders)
- What are the responsibilities of the organization towards these "clients"
- What are the main objectives that support the company in accomplishing its mission

The following Slideshare presentation by [Alar Kolk](#) – [Visions & Missions of Fortune Global 100](#) – includes the vision and mission statements of companies in the Fortune 100: