

How Leaders Create a Vision that Inspires

By Ann N. Gatty, Ph.D.



In business, the need to create a vision that inspires others is a central component to building a successful company. A leader is responsible for painting a picture, or vision, of what the organization will achieve in the future. This vision provides the organization with purpose. In order to create a vision that inspires others to follow, the leader must identify a purpose that is impactful and bigger than any one person in the company. Here are examples of vision statements from recognizable companies:

- Google – To organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible and useful.
- Amazon – To be the world’s most customer-centric company.
- Nordstrom – To give customers the most compelling shopping experience possible.
- Netflix – Helping content creators around the world to find a global audience.
- TED – Spread ideas.

You can see that the vision statement is the organization’s ultimate purpose and conveys the over-arching long range goal. It’s the reason why the organization exists, and it also sets the forward trajectory for the entire company. The examples illustrate how the vision statement is a short declaration or a single sentence that establishes the foundation of a broader strategic plan. Yet, each of the statements create a vision that inspires.

In today’s socio-economic climate, leaders are finding that businesses can do more to help the average person than they have in the past. When leaders create a vision that inspires, most often those businesses have the ability to serve more than the stockholders and owners. A growing number of businesses are developing the capacity to serve society in a variety of meaningful ways.

[Here are three tips for leaders to create a vision that inspires.](#)

Dream big

The vision statement must be compelling to the organization’s workforce, and it must inspire them to look forward to showing up at work each day. There needs to be a sense of connectedness between the organizational vision and the team members who make it happen. These individuals need to feel drawn to the big, over-arching picture that you, the leader, are painting. The picture needs to be big—something that can’t be accomplished in one calendar year. The picture needs to be so big that it may take years to achieve, keeping the workforce continually looking forward.

Consider Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. as examples of leaders who defined very clear and very big, long-range visions of what they were aspiring to achieve. Their visions of a better life for others motivated these leaders to keep dreaming big as they endured struggles to achieve that vision. In doing so,

the leaders became powerful role models which, in turn, inspired others to follow them and join their journey. Their dreams were big and their message enduring.

Be clear in explaining the purpose

As the leader, you'll need to explain the over-arching purpose that the vision depicts. The vision might represent slightly different meanings to the members of the organization, but by being able to make the vision relatable to the workforce no matter the diversity, you can achieve their buy-in and support. When the members of the organization believe in the positive impact of the vision, they are willing to work toward accomplishing the vision.

People, especially this millennial generation, want to be a contributing part of something bigger than themselves. Leaders who can consistently explain the trajectory that the organization is following to achieve the long-range vision are more likely to retain their talented workforce members rather than seeing them walk out the door.

Be inclusive

Individuals, collaborative team, customers, and society as a whole, all possess different viewpoints on the many issues you deal with daily. These diverse points of view are healthy because they offer different perspectives that can be used to make more balanced, informed decisions. Your employees will respect you more when you show that their opinions, concerns and values are being recognized. This diversity is a valued asset in the organization, providing an antidote to always doing things the same way and resisting innovative change. When you create a vision that inspires, change is an inevitable part of the process.

The vision is the destination the organization is hoping to achieve, and the strategy is the journey you and your team take to get there. Having a vision that has a pull factor, drawing people into following on the journey, gives you a willing, motivated group of individuals who will drive to get the results you wish to achieve. The execution of the strategy pushes people to keep moving forward. Leaders who create a vision that inspires are more likely to have an organization that is inspired by the results.

About the Author

Dr. Ann Gatty is a business development strategist. She helps her clients clarify the vision for their businesses, boost their leadership capabilities and add quality talent to help the clients reach their goals. Through a collaborative mentoring process, she and her clients create workable strategic business plans and success initiatives, while improving their workplace processes. Dr. Gatty is a frequent writer and contributor www.AllBusiness.com, www.MarketingInsiders.com, and www.WomenOnBusiness.com. Her interactive speaking engagements assist participants in discovering new-found talents and skills that they can immediately apply in the workplace. Join her [Facebook Group, Strategic Thinking Summit Elites](#) for strategies you can implement to grow your business success and enjoy camaraderie with others entrepreneur members.