

Mission Statement Assessment

A good mission statement answers two fundamental questions about the organization.

1. What is the good your organization does?
2. Who benefits from your organization?

We call this: "What good?" and "For whom?"

Take a look at your mission statement and identify the two fundamental parts. Write them in the space below.

What good?

For whom?

What else do you have in your mission statement? Name the other parts. You may have descriptions of your activities, territory, or values.

As an exercise, try rewriting your mission statement using only "what good" and "for whom" type statements. Then, judiciously, add back in any information necessary to create a strong and memorable statement.

Mission Rewrite

ATTRIBUTES OF A USEFUL MISSION STATEMENT

A useful mission statement is clear, focused, descriptive, accurate, and plausible.

Rate your mission using the following self-assessment. Identify which attributes you need to work on to improve your mission.

Attributes	1	2	3	4
Clarity	A lay person would be completely confused by the language. The mission is filled with jargon or vague language.	A lay person would be a little confused by the language. The mission includes many instances of jargon or vague language.	A lay person would mostly understand the language. The mission includes some jargon or vague language.	A lay person would completely understand the language. The mission is free of jargon or vague language.
Focus	The components of the mission feel completely scattered, disjointed, or unrelated. There is no clear message.	The components of the mission feel a little scattered, disjointed, or unrelated.	Most of the components of the mission work together to create a fairly clear message. There are few extraneous components.	All of the components of the mission work together to create a clear message. There are no extraneous components.
Description (What good?)	The organization's purpose is missing or completely vague and/or confusing .	The organization's purpose is a little vague and/or confusing .	The organization's purpose is fairly specific and uses some outcome language.	The organization's purpose is very specific and uses outcome language.
Description (For whom?)	The organization's audience is completely vague and/or confusing .	The organization's audience is a little vague and/or confusing .	The organization's audience is fairly specific and recognizable .	The organization's audience is completely specific and recognizable .
Accuracy	The mission is a completely out-of-date for the organization's current work.	The mission is a little out-of-date for the organization's current work.	The mission mostly reflects the current work of the organization.	The mission completely reflects the current work of the organization.
Plausibility	The mission is completely implausible for the organization. It would be nearly impossible to succeed given the context and resources of the organization.	The mission is mostly implausible for the organization. It would be a stretch to succeed given the context and resources of the organization.	While perhaps aspirational, the mission is mostly plausible for the organization. Some parts may be a stretch, but it is likely it could succeed in achieving most of the mission.	While perhaps aspirational, the mission is completely plausible for the organization. It is very likely they could succeed in all of the mission.