




Management Concepts Series – 2010

** Common-Sense Guidelines for Successful Organizations **

	Management Concept #14 <i>It's Bigger than Me (and I'm okay with that)</i> <i>Mission, Vision, Values and the Next Generation</i>
<p>Active Management Pillar Applicability</p> 	<p><i>Let's get one thing straight: you can succeed and even thrive without a stated mission, vision or values. But be aware:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>They are there somewhere, even if only in someone's head; and</i> 2. <i>Without them, your organization will probably dwindle in the second generation of management and die in the third</i> <p>There have probably been more consulting dollars spent on Mission and Vision Statements than on any other single item, with the possible exception of failed IT projects. Mission and Vision statements provide the perfect storm for the paid facilitator:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No one agrees on what they really are meant to do or be 2. If they can agree on what a mission or vision statement should do, they can't reach consensus on the content 3. We seem perfectly content to debate them throughout an entire three-day retreat 4. People want to review them every year or two 5. The clock is ticking <p>Important? Actually: Yes</p> <p>Mission, Vision, and Values are the context for the enterprise. They provide the basis for everything the organization is now, will become, and the way it operates. They are the foundation documents. Imagine the United States without the Constitution and Declaration of Independence. They are guide posts for decisions. They allow the organization to be self-renewing and larger than the founder. The common trait of organizations that successfully move beyond the founder is the ability to transition power from one leadership generation to the next. Corporate failure between generations is shockingly high with over 80% failing by the third generation. Although there are no guarantees, there are three things that will improve your odds of success in both the short term and the long term:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have Mission, Vision, and Values that are organizational in nature rather than tied to the individual at the helm 2. Actively plan for succession at all levels and particularly at the top. Undue concentration of drive and decisions at the top is an invitation to failure 3. Select, retain, and reward on merit and results. Families <i>can</i> run businesses through generations. Ford and Nordstrom prove that. But birth alone is not a qualification.

Mission: Don't get hung up on it. Use a simple definition. A Mission Statement should say who you are, what you do, and what you are trying to achieve at a basic level. You should be able to hand your Mission Statement to a stranger on the street and they should be able to tell you what your organization is about. Within that, you have a lot of freedom.

Vision: Where are we going? A Vision should be a statement of achievement. What state are you trying to attain? It should be measurable.

Note: If your Mission and Vision get intertwined, don't worry about it. Does it provide the things mentioned above? Fine!

Values: What's at our core? What is important enough, from a human perspective, that it will be part of your decision process?

What to avoid

A committee-developed Mission Statement usually sounds like exactly that. Leadership decisions are necessary for a crisp, usable Mission.

Ask yourself why you are in business. If you are a Human Resources Department, you are not in business to develop people. You provide a workforce that can support and execute the business of the organization. If you are a stock company, it is unlikely your mission involves employee teamwork and unity. Both of these, however, might be fundamental mechanisms by which you achieve your mission.

Mission Statements – The good and the . . . well, you decide.

The Good:

Amazon: To build a place where people can come to find and discover anything they might want to buy online. (*Got it!*)

Scandinavian Airlines: To become the best airline in the world for the frequent business traveler (*That makes decisions easy*)

CVS Pharmacies: We will be the easiest pharmacy retailer for customers to use (*Way to carve out a niche! On every block. Easy parking. I'm not driving to Wal-Mart.*)

You decide:

AOL: To inform, entertain and connect the world (*One of many over the years*)

American Standard: Be the best in the eyes of our customers, employees and shareholders (*How's that working out for you?*)

Chevron: At the heart of The Chevron Way is our Vision to be the global energy company most admired for its people, partnership and performance. (*Just a guess, but I bet if you timed it, the number of minutes spent on "Admiration" in the CEO's meetings is less than you'd expect from it being the key point in the Mission*)

Dollar General Corp: Serving Others: For Customers – A Better Life; For Shareholders – A Superior Return; For Employees Respect and Opportunity (*Serving is good – I'll take two helpings of a better life*)

About Agovia Consulting

Agovia is your partner in crafting common-sense plans, execution governance, and management practices that are laser-focused and, by design, create your results and your success. We help you solve your problems today and help assure your success tomorrow through management practices built on outcomes, results, and achievement.

Managing to Success

Success requires the alignment and coordination of many factors. Enterprises must be competent at, not only the elements of their core mission, they must also have the ability to create and maintain the infrastructure that surrounds and supports that mission.

What We Do

Agovia is a management consulting firm. It's what we do. Picture us a management fitness coach. We help you develop and strengthen the skills you need to succeed. We have provided consultation and solutions to multiple industries including: Information Technology, Insurance, Universities, and Homeless Services. We bring you the support, advice, and driving facilitation that allow you to stop "planning" and start getting results.

Services

- ❖ **Positioning for the Win**
- ❖ **Identity Development (Mission & Vision)**
- ❖ **Team Effectiveness Coaching**
- ❖ **Strategic and Tactical Planning**
- ❖ **Planning and Governance Training**
- ❖ **Organization Turn-Around**
- ❖ **Retreat Facilitation**
- ❖ **Runaway Project Services**
- ❖ **Problem Solving – A Cultural Effective Approach**
- ❖ **Conflict Mediation**
- ❖ **Team/Function Start-Up**

Trust yourself

Experience tells us that most of the time you do know what you are doing. You are the expert in your core domain area. The challenges businesses often encounter are nuts & bolts issues: organization, clear vision, discipline, management infrastructure, and communication. Sometimes you just need a catalyst.

We can help.

We listen.

We pay attention.

We work with you

