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## Business vision - introduction

### What is a vision?

Behind everything we achieve - in business, career, sport or family life - there's a vision. Visions help us to innovate, guide, lead, direct and inspire ourselves and others.

A vision is your preferred future state - where you'd be if your business is doing the best you can imagine.

In a dynamic and vital business:

- Everything its people do is driven by the vision that managers share with their teams.
- Visions and guiding principles are clearly articulated and widely understood.
- Everyone works hard to ensure the vision is shared and turned into real-life actions.

A business vision should:

- Paint a picture of the long-term outcomes you want to achieve in your business.
- Say where you want to take it and how you plan to get there.
- Determine overall direction for the actions you take and the services you provide.
- Describe how we'll work together, not just about what we'll work on.

### Why have a vision?

A vision can help you, your employees and customers to better understand and maintain your business focus. When shared by management, employees and customers, a vision can have a positive influence on the business culture.

However, simply stating your vision won't automatically deliver business improvements. It is important that the vision is relevant, appropriate to your business, and that it can be translated into action, and shared with staff/teams. Managers, employees and customers should be able to relate to the vision and find it useful in guiding their efforts.

### Shared vision and culture

Visions, and the values that go with them, also create culture - the prevailing 'mentality' in your workplace - that governs what people think, how they behave and how they treat your customers.

When managers and employees create a "shared vision" together, along with guiding principles, practices and values to get them there, it provides common focus, a sense of commitment and mutual purpose.



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Shaping a shared vision together helps managers and employees to:

- Define what they're here for, where they're going and how to get there.
- Identify what the business targets and performance challenges really are.
- Make decisions, solve problems and set improvement priorities.
- Guide how you'll work together and relate to each other.
- Better identify the bottom-line results you want to achieve, and the working climate and culture you want to create on the way.

The challenge isn't writing a vision. It's how to turn it into a real working vision in terms of the following impacts on managers, employees and customers:

- Accountability - do they feel personally responsible for making your vision work?
- Inspiration - are they energised and motivated by your vision?
- Relevance - do they think the vision helps them achieve performance they're proud of?
- Challenge - do they regard the vision highly and put in extra effort to achieve it?
- Committed Action - do they apply energy creatively to make the vision happen?

## Further information

The following fact sheets provide further information on these issues:

- Business image
- Business planning
- Business values
- Develop a mission statement
- Develop and implement a business vision
- Effective work teams
- Gain employee commitment
- Help groups make decisions
- Improve your interviewing skills
- Maintain a business vision