

Seven Steps to Develop a Compelling Vision

Soon after a merger between two large organizations, our newly formed group was infected with infighting and chaos. I remember one group member constantly stirring the pot, continually criticizing our manager, team, and work. She never provided solutions. When something went wrong, she'd "dog pile;" jump on top, joining in to criticize others.

Her attitude began to spread; it's like what happens when you put an apple and an onion in the refrigerator together. The apple, although initially sweet, will begin to taste like the onion if they are left together long enough. Bad attitudes are contagious. Anyway, everyone began pursuing selfish agendas, jockeying for position, which resulted in a disjointed and non-cooperative group.

We also suffered a credibility gap with our internal client. The new group wasn't sure of our role and how we added value to the business. Our lack of clarity became a fog in our client's mind.

I was very uncomfortable and unsatisfied with our circumstances. Then I remembered what the Bible says, "Where there is no *vision*, the people will perish" (Proverbs 29:18 King James Version). Meaning, people will experience chaos, division, unproductiveness, and scatter without vision. If there is an idea of a preferred future, people will thrive with direction, passion, and focus. They will experience the hope of a better tomorrow and accomplish great things.

Where there is no vision, the people will perish

Proverbs 29:18 KJV

Reflecting on the scripture, I grew even more discontented with the group's interaction and knew something had to be done. I prayed that God would grant me wisdom and the ability to influence the team positively.

During a one-on-one meeting with my manager, I asked him if he had a vision for the group and what he wanted to accomplish. He said, "nope." No surprise. He confirmed what I could clearly see; without vision, our team wouldn't ever be productive, useful, or considered our client's strategic partner.

We talked about the challenges the newly formed group was experiencing. I shared with him that I had a burning desire to make our new organization and the team a great place to work. To help be part of the solution, I asked him if I could help develop a team vision statement – articulate who we want to become, create an idea of our preferred future. He told me, "I'm no good at vision stuff and not sure it will help. But I'm fully supportive if you can help me turn the ship around."

Over a period of weeks, I connected with my peers and asked them what was on their hearts and minds. I asked them if they saw the same challenges and problems that I did. Then, I asked them what they wanted to become as a group. They all told me they wanted to become a collaborative team, be valued as strategic partners, make a positive difference and deliver strong business results.

Based on their thoughts, we crafted the below vision statement:

To win the hearts of our teammates, customers, and consumers and positively influence our company's future by:

- **MOLDING** world-class commercial strategies through distinguished collaboration.
- **ENABLING** exceptional execution that delivers winning results.

- **BUILDING** an authentic team that trusts one another and takes pride in its work.
- **NURTURING** and equipping our people to lead in the future.
- **CELEBRATING** wins frequently to build momentum.

Over time, we embraced the vision, and it made all the difference. The ship turned around. We became a collaborative, thriving team, valued as strategic partners, and delivered outstanding results.

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How do you change the game as we did? Follow our example and apply the below seven steps to develop a compelling vision.

1. **Start with prayer.** I sought God's insight, wisdom, and discernment on developing a vision.
2. **Look Inside.** My passionate desire was to make our team a destination, a great place to work where people grew, produced superior results, and found meaning in their work. I envisioned a future where we were a collaborative team and considered an indispensable business partner.
3. **Take ownership.** I approached my manager and asked how I could help. I intentionally volunteered so I could shape our team's future.
4. **Define the problem.** Our division and unproductiveness were a result of no vision; we didn't know who we wanted to be, to be known for, or to accomplish; all undefined. We needed to become a team and then add value to our business partner, solve problems, inspire superior execution and become a trusted resource.
5. **Collaboratively develop a solution.** Through the interviews, I listened to others, sought common ground, and understood where the team wanted to go. Through this process, the vision became shared among the team members.

6. **Gain Commitment.** Partnering with my manager, I explained why we should pursue the vision and instilled a sense of urgency.
7. **Tell Stories.** Every week, we shared examples of how the vision was being brought to life – allowing the team always to refer back to the bigger picture, share stories – learnings, successes, and failures. This simple act moved the words written on a page to being written on our hearts. The vision became real to us.

I'll end with one of my favorite vision parables:

Three bricklayers are asked: "What are you doing?"

The 1st says, "I am laying bricks."

The 2nd says, "I am building a wall."

And the 3rd says, "I am building a cathedral."

The 1st bricklayer has a job to do. The 2nd lays bricks for a living. The 3rd has a VISION and builds with purpose.

Which bricklayer are you? Do you aspire to move beyond bricklaying to cathedral building? Do you want to become a visionary leader? Follow the *Seven Steps to Develop a Compelling Vision*. If you do, you'll lead well, positively influence your culture and change your world.

Want to discover more about becoming a leader others will gladly follow? Visit my website, prestonpoore.com, today!

Cheers,

Preston