

MISSION FOR SUCCESS

DO I NEED A MISSION STATEMENT?

Donald was a skilled surgeon. Like his father before him he had graduated from Harvard Medical School and had gone on through surgical residency. Many doors had been opened for him to carry on the esteemed family name and tradition.

Now four years after completing resident training Donald's life was in chaos. He was repeatedly late at the office and frequently failed to show up at all. He was living alone and spent hours in front of the TV with the blinds pulled shut. Having tired of all forms of oral self-medication, Donald had scarred most points of vein entry for needle injected heroin. By the time his parents admitted him for psychiatric evaluation, he was using his heels and toes as needle entries.

How could someone so intelligent, skilled and gifted get into such a mess? Donald had taken a common path down life's road. Attending the "right" schools, participating in the "right" events, and driving the "right" cars, he had been guided by circumstances, tradition, and others' expectations into a life of misery, stress and defeat.

How is it possible for the Donalds, Maries, and Toms to end up in situations perhaps even envied by others and yet to be feeling such despair and frustration?

It is that God instilled the desire in each of us to have a sense of Mission rather than just a job. Although others around you may be quick to judge you by your job, your own sense of peace, fulfillment, and accomplishment comes only as a result of having a clearly defined Mission.

"God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other, passing on to others God's many kind of blessings." 1 Peter 4:10

YOUR FORMULA FOR A MISSION STATEMENT

- A. Your Skills & Abilities
- B. Your Personality Traits
- C. Your Values, Dreams & Passions
- = Your Mission Statement

How did Donald violate this formula for a Personal Mission Statement?

A. Skills & Abilities

Donald was very intelligent and skilled in surgery
(The most commonly measured characteristics of a surgeon were in fact present.)

B. Personality Traits

Donald detested the intense personal and emotional involvement required with patients and staff. He preferred a lighter social atmosphere with many people.

C. Values, Dreams & Passions

Donald dreamed of open spaces, of crossing the country, and of fishing, hiking and camping.

Successfully matching 1 out of 3 of the elements of the formula does not lead to happiness and satisfaction.

Some things cannot be measured. We do not think of a ton of truth, a bushel of beauty, or an inspiration a mile long.

Every successful organization has a clear Mission Statement. Every activity in that organization should then compliment and carry out that Mission.

Here is an example of a clearly stated Mission Statement. This happens to be the Mission Statement of a large Ford Automobile agency.

All dealership personnel will treat every customer as a potential lifetime purchaser, communicating a professional image that embraces honesty and concern for customer wants and needs.

Now, there is a concise one-sentence statement that can be memorized and implemented by every employee. Each key ingredient, “lifetime, honesty and concern, wants and needs” communicates a clear pattern for every employee. Whether in sales, parts, service, body shop, or office, there is a clear pattern for responses and interactions.

You as an individual need to view yourself as a successful organization. A clearly stated Mission Statement will allow you that same instant frame or reference, not only for an appropriate career choice, but also for every activity in your Wheel of Life.

Let's add a visual picture:

MISSION STATEMENT



As you can now see, the Mission Statement is a large concept. You will want to be moving toward excellence in each of these areas with each being a source of peace, fulfillment and accomplishment. The result will lead to a balanced life. You may also recognize that there will be a buffer if you temporarily experience difficulty or frustration in one area. Trying to achieve all meaning and worth from any one area would obviously put you in a dangerous position. Furthermore, notice clearly that with this as a model, job or career may change without affecting the overall Mission Statement.

Peace comes from a balanced life and a clear Mission Statement

Begin to define yourself in terms of Mission rather than job. Your job is something you **do**. **It is not who you are.** A Mission Statement gives you identity in a way that even if you lose your job, you do not lose your identity. Don't confuse (1) vocation, with (2) career, and (3) job. They are three very different concepts. Your vocation should encompass your calling or mission. It will stay fairly constant. Career comes another word from which we get "career". You can go around and around having several careers within one vocation or Mission. Job is the smallest component. Knowing that the average job is now 2.3 years in length, we know the average person will have 14-16 different jobs in his/her working lifetime. But the vocation or Mission is the gyroscope in that process of constant change.

The Mission Statement of my senior pastor is, in essence, to be peacemaker and a bridge builder. That is his most effective role in dealing with individuals, families, churches, denominations, cultures, or countries. If for some reason, tomorrow morning he were no longer senior pastor of his church, his Mission Statement would not change. He would continue to a peacemaker and a bridge builder. He may even find more effective ways to carry on his Mission than in the career or position he currently holds. A clear sense of Mission will also provide you with a feeling of continuity and contentment to carry you through those inevitable career transitions.

He who has no fire in himself cannot warm others

Having a sense of purpose and direction is why establishing a Mission Statement is so vitally important. Many of your friends and acquaintances will continue to evaluate their lives in retrospect, always looking back, but having little sense of destiny, control or purpose for the future. Don't live a life of regrets – rather, look to the future with excitement and eager anticipation. A Mission Statement is what will make your life successful. It is a map to guide you so you can look back with peace, satisfaction and the confident assurance that “I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.” Like the football player on the 3 yard line of a tied Super Bowl game, a clear personalized Mission Statement will provide inspiration, energy and direction beyond your abilities as you align yourself with God's resources for a life of purpose and power.

Progress always involves a certain amount of risk. After all, you can't steal second base with one foot on first

CREATING A PERSONAL MISSION STATEMENT

By following the steps below you will begin writing your own personal Mission Statement. Be aware that this process is more discovery than creation. Don't rush this process; move slowly and proceed through each step only as you think deeply about its meaning for you. The writing process gives you ownership. It makes this become part of you in way that no hearing or seeing can possibly do.

STEP 1 -- YOUR SKILLS & ABILITIES

List your skills and abilities here:

Examples: Can you teach, organize, supervise, plan, develop systems, sing, construct, etc.?

STEP 2 -- YOUR PERSONALITY TRAITS

Examples: Creative, Theoretical, Studious, Analytical, Expressive, Verbal, Adventurous, Dominant, Cheerful, Playful, Solemn, Outgoing, Calm, Logical, Etc.

STEP 3 -- YOUR VALUES, DREAMS & PASSIONS

A. A helpful way to focus in on your values, dreams and passions is to identify 2 or 3 individuals who have been influential in your life or have contributed to your life in some significant way. You may consider these individuals to be mentors. They may be a parent, friend, work associate or teacher. Choose people you have known personally rather than public or historic figures.

Who are 2 or 3 of the most significant people in my life?

What qualities do I remember and admire most in these people?

What have I gained from being around these people?

The things you identify as significant in these people will likely be a reflection of your own values, dreams and passions.

*It is what we value, not what we have,
that makes us rich*

- B. Another way to tap into your values, dreams and passions is to remember back to meaningful times in your growing up years. Think back to activities, times or events when you felt a great sense of happiness and personal accomplishment. Remember, this is a process of discovery. Finding our Mission and Purpose is not some mystical and secretive process but primarily a process of looking at what God has already revealed to us. Usually, by the time we are 12-14 years old, we already have a great deal of information available about how God has equipped us with special, unique talents and desires. Many times those early indications of God's leading in our lives are pushed aside and buried as we deal with the "real world".

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him, but God has revealed it to us by His spirit"

This is a great time to reach back and remember:

What was a time when you felt happiness and a sense of accomplishment in?

1. Grade school years (6-14 years old)?

Examples: Having a drawing shown at the county fair
 Raising Calves for 4H
 Working with Grandpa on the farm
 Designing electric motor for science project

2. High school years (14-18 years old)?

Examples: Secretary of Student Council
 Ad sales for school yearbook
 Winning spelling contest
 Buying first car

3. College years (18-22 years old)?

Examples Debate team participation
Study of history and law
Volunteering in retirement home
Organizing sorority or fraternity parties

What are the things in common in all these meaningful experiences? What qualities were you expressing? How did others see you at these times?

Examples: Working with people (individuals or groups)
Working with things
Working with ideas
Leading, nurturing, teaching, creating, organizing, analyzing, managing,
Persuading

You're probably finding some consistency in the things that bring you pleasure. God does equip us in unique and different ways. It was never His desire that we all be identical. Find your uniqueness and experience the joy of operating in that area of uniqueness. You may have grown up with the distorted idea that God is more pleased when we suffer and are miserable. *However, it is clear that God designed us so that when we are fulfilling His specific purpose for our lives it will create an incredible sense of joy and peace.* God will never quench your dreams and visions but rather He will enhance them, stretch them and give you the means to accomplish them. That is, you push them down and go on to other things you or others feel you *should* do.

When you know what your values are, making decision becomes easy

STEP 4 -- WRITE YOUR MISSION STATEMENT

STEP 5 -- EVALUATION

Now that you have a working draft of your Mission Statement, it is important to evaluate it regularly, reworking it every 2-3 years. Your skills, abilities, dreams, passions and every personality traits will continue to develop and mature. Thus, as with a successfully progressing organization, your avenues for accomplishment will change and grow. Reviewing your Mission Statement will keep you in touch with your own development and allow you to reach for new dreams. Ask yourself these questions now, and again every six months.

1. Does my Mission Statement agree with God's Mission for the rest of the human race – to know God, to enjoy Him forever, and to help others know Him?

2. Does my Mission Statement agree with the generic Mission of all mankind to make this world a better place?

3. Does my Mission Statement use my best gifts and abilities?

4. Does my Mission Statement provide ongoing challenges for me?

5. Does my Mission Statement provide inspiration, energy and direction when I review it?

The secret of success is focus of purpose

STEP 6 -- IMPLEMENTATION

Carry your Mission Statement with you where you can refer to it frequently. Memorize it so that the vision and values become part of your daily awareness.

People who are unable to motivate themselves must be content with mediocrity, no matter how impressive their other talents. Andrew Carnegie

Remember Donald from the early part of this chapter? There is a happy ending. He shifted his medical responsibilities from the intense day to day involvement of private practice surgery to working weekends in a hospital emergency room. Here his contact with individual patients was brief but he was still able to excel in his trained area of specialty. Donald moved to a small home in the country and spent his workweek driving a grocery delivery truck. He has been drug free and stress free for three years and at least is truly living the “good life.”

Now you too have completed a major step toward living a full, meaningful life. You have put yourself in that category of people who clearly understand God’s purpose for their lives and where they are going. You have set yourself apart for accomplishment, peace and satisfaction so that you will not be in that group, “who, like the masses, go to their graves with their music still in them.”

EXAMPLES OF MISSION STATEMENTS

- ◆ I will maintain a positive attitude and a sense of humor in everything I do. I want to be known by my family as a caring and loving husband and father; by my business associates as a fair and honest person; and by my friends as someone they can count on. To the people who work for me and with me, I pledge my respect and will strive every day to earn their respect. Controlling all my actions is a strong sense of integrity which I believe to be the most important character trait.
- ◆ My Mission is to provide service, products, and benefits with integrity and honesty to the medical community. I will look for opportunities to help hurting individuals and assist other professionals in a win-win manner. I will not knowingly harm or take advantage of anyone. I will use my knowledge and abilities in organizing and structuring in ways that provide income and pleasure for my family and blessings to those around me.
- ◆ My Mission is to exercise my creativity and innovative ideas by developing songs, books and products, which change lives and society for the better. I will use my talents and abilities consistently. I will not hide them simply because they will not always be immediately recognized. I want all of my work to be a product of God's inspiration and a blessing to the world. I will be loyal to family, friends and to God.
- ◆ For myself, I want to develop self-knowledge, self-love, and self-allowing. I want to use my healing talents to keep hope alive and to express my vision courageously in work and action. In my family, I want to build healthy, loving relationships in which we let each other become our best selves. At work, I want to establish a fault-free, self-perpetuating, learning environment. In the world, I want to nurture the development of all life forms, in harmony with the laws of nature.
- ◆ My Mission is to use my skills and experience in design to help people realize their dreams for their homes and themselves. In order to do this with increasing effectiveness, I will study and expand my own knowledge in God's Word, design, finance, sales and social skills. I will strive for loving relationships with my immediate and extended family and many friends. I will invest love, service time, patience, encouragement, example and creativity into those relationships. I will listen more than I talk and be transparent in sharing personal insights and struggles. From now on I will strive for excellence in all of the above and in my hobby of music.