Practice Paper:

On Mission, Vision and Value Statements

Highlights

Addressing FAQs on mission and value statements

Creating or strengthening staff's buy-in

Case example of envisioning and strategic planning

Literature digest on why mission and value statements, common problems, how to develop a mission statement, application on the World Wide Web, etc

Local examples of how organizations communicate their mission and value statements

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[Part B – Case Example]

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How can I create or strengthen staff's buy-in of our mission and values?

We recommend a participative approach to create or strengthen staff member's ownership or buy-in towards the organization's mission and values. The participative or team work approach has three fundamental components as follows:

Component A: Communicating the mission and values statement
A senior manager or company representative who was directly involved in writing the mission statement should lead the communication. The rationale, contents and development process behind the mission and values statement should be communicated and discussed.

Component B: Translating the mission and values into behavior indicators
Every staff member or team is encouraged to ask questions to clarify the meaning or implications of the mission and values statement on his/her own job. An output of this discussion or soul searching is a clear statement of what current or future behaviors and work examples are required to live a particular value.

Component C: Practicing the value-driven behaviors or work practices
The team commitment in practicing the value-driven behaviors or work practices is critical to sustaining the momentum to maintain or try out desirable behaviors. In addition to voluntary practicing of desirable behaviors, supervisors and managers play a critical role in modeling and coaching new standards or behaviors. The organization should provide them extra training on how to model, monitor and coach value-driven behaviors or practices.

Based on the framework suggested above, LRT Consulting helps organizations develop a Mission and Values Ownership Facilitation Guide for their team leaders. The purpose of this Facilitation Guide is to help unit heads create or strengthen the buy-in and ownership toward the mission and values of the organization. The Guide is composed of six parts as follows:

The 6 Parts of the Mission and Values Ownership Facilitation Guide

PARTS	TITLES	OBJECTIVES
Part I	Statement of Vision, Mission and Values (VMV)	• To serve as quick reference for unit heads on the organization's VMV statement. • To capture VMV statement at divisional or unit level, if any.
Part II	Values and Behavior Indicators – Individual Planning	• To facilitate Unit Heads or individual team members to identify the STOP, START and CONTINUE behaviors in order to practice the five core values. • To identify the expected support and perceived obstacles for such behavior changes.
Part III	Values and Behavior Indicators – Team Commitment	• To list the committed and endorsed list of behavior indicators. • To serve as a check list for behavior change tracking
Part IV	Trying Out and Observing New Behaviors	• To encourage team members to try out the desirable behaviors as agreed. • To capture and record specific examples of behaviors so as to support the coaching process.
Part V	Coaching New Behaviors	• To serve as a checklist for conducting coaching sessions with team members.
Part VI	Strengthening Team, Division and Organization Culture	• To encourage unit heads and team members to continuously contribute ideas on strengthening the culture in the long run.

How do I lead a focus group to discuss our company's mission and values?

It is strongly recommended that team leaders use focus groups as more in-depth communication and dialogue channels between management and team members. Assuming the organization has developed a Mission and Values Ownership Facilitation Guide for their team leaders, some ideas or procedural guidelines on how to conduct a focus group are suggested:

1. Thank team members for coming.
2. Use some ice-breaking activities to create an open and participative atmosphere.
3. Share the history and recent information about the VMV initiative of the company or department.
4. Explain 'why' this wave of VMV ownership and discuss potential benefits. Summarize the benefits by departmental level, divisional level, unit level and finally individual level such that team members can visualize the ultimate benefits to themselves.
5. Some team members may perceive the VMV as something additional to their daily operation. Share with them that the VMV is intended to help the company or department create a shared mindset and alignment among its members. Successful following of VMV will affect the culture and effectiveness of the organization.
6. Explain the primary purpose and expected outcome of the focus group meeting which is to solicit their contribution on behavior indicators and to discuss possible obstacles and necessary support to practice the desirable behaviors.
7. Distribute copies of Part II and III of the Guide to each member.
8. Allow enough time for the completion of Part II. Remind them that an effective behavior indicator will let staff know what to do exactly such as 'answering the phone within 3 rings', 'greeting the customer with gentle smile and say xxx', etc.
9. Encourage each member to present and explain the suggested behaviors. Discuss and consolidate a list of agreed behavior indicators. Examples of value based behavioral indicators are provided after explaining the procedures.
10. Transfer the agreed behavior indicators to Part III of the Guide.
11. Collect all suggestions for questions of Part II. These suggestions may require action ideas from you in order to address the team members' concerns. Jot down any action ideas in Part VI of the Guide after the focus group meeting, and reflect and discuss with your senior when appropriate.
12. Thank team members for their contribution and promise to keep them informed after getting endorsement from senior level on the agreed list of behavior indicators.

Examples of Behavior Indicators Related to PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

- Speak with assertiveness and certain tone
- Try to handle the enquiry instead of referring clients to dial the hotline for information
- Provide expert advice and consultancy
- Develop code of practice
- Conduct research and development
- Be punctual to work
- Make suggestions instead of complaints
- Be systematic in reporting
- Be more ready to share experience with colleagues through meetings, discussions
- Conduct self-evaluation for continuous improvement
- Enrich knowledge and upgrade skills by e.g. attending more training
- Share experience with fellow practitioners in overseas conference
- Set realistic performance targets, e.g. balance between quantity and quality

Remarks: Courtesy to the anonymous participants who suggest and debate different examples of behavior indicators related to their organizations' value statements

Examples of Behavior Indicators Related to BEING PRO-ACTIVE

- Refer client to appropriate and specific sources for assistance
- Provide accurate and update information to both internal and external customers
- Respond to public immediately instead of keeping customer or complainants to wait
- Start using a telephone referral chart
- Prepare Q & A handbook as a guideline for answering enquiry
- Start applying new technology to provide quality service
- Refer complaint directly to process or case owner(s)
- Update information handbook regularly
- Be proactive in providing necessary information in anticipation of management needs
- Be alert to and anticipate the needs of "customers" in planning and organizing activities
- Think outside the box instead of blindly following traditions e.g. by reviewing existing work procedures
- Be ready to accept responsibilities and senior officers should role-model proactive attitude in accepting responsibilities

Examples of Behavior Indicators Related to
CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

- Meet performance pledges
- Always wear name badge
- Greet and be polite, sincere, patient and friendly to service users
- Be competent in handling customers' requirements
- Answer enquiries in details as necessary
- Provide updated information relating to the service
- Always identify customer's needs instead of assuming customer's needs
- Be efficient in attending service by e.g. greeting public at counter within 3 minutes, handle enquiry as soon as possible, answer telephone within a certain number of rings
- Extent warm welcome to public by enhancing customer reception facilities and areas
- Provide convenience to the public (e.g. telephone, toilets, etc.)
- Consider less prosecution but more advice
- Be friendly and assertive in explanation during enforcement action
- Prepare samples how to fill in different kinds of application forms and reports
- Encourage two-way communication with public by providing contact details
- Provide more training on Putonghua for front-line colleagues

Examples of Behavior Indicators Related to
PARTICIPATION

- Take more initiative
- Give more comments during office meeting instead of being passive
- Actively participate and contribute views and ideas through various channel
- Contribute constructive ideas to improve office procedures
- Being active instead of passive in receiving assignments
- Ready to accept responsibility and do not avoid difficult tasks
- Be more involved in team assignments
- Be participative in staff suggestion scheme, experience sharing, briefing seminars, and informal communication occasion
- Be ready to render help and assistance to other colleagues when necessary

Remarks: Courtesy to the anonymous participants who suggest and debate different examples of behavior indicators

related to their organizations' value statements

How should I coach my team members when they try out the newly defined value-driven behaviors?

Supervisors are in good position to shape subordinates' behaviors according to the agreed lists of behavior indicators and VMV.   In doing so you are encouraged to use more of a simple and yet powerful management technique – giving performance feedback.

Part V of the Mission and Values Ownership Facilitation Guide offers some tips and reminders for an effective coaching session particularly for the purpose of driving positive behavior change to live the mission and values at work. Unit heads are encouraged to start with something positive before moving onto feedback on improvement opportunity. In shaping desirable behaviors, it is commonly believed that a more effective and less painful approach is to use more of 'catch people doing something right' rather than 'catch people doing things wrong'. The following example is offered for your reference.

Staff made a decision on the number of leaflet to be printed for a coming event.   His decision was based on recent experience of similar event.   The experience was that not many customers would actually show up and therefore staff insisted to print less.   However, supervisor believed that more customers would be interested in the coming event.   Staff refused to take the advice from supervisor.

Instead of being straight to the point by commenting staff's insensitivity and instructing him to take your decision, you can start with something positive by saying, 'I appreciate your problem ownership reflecting that you are really cost conscious.   And it is correct for you to make reference to previous experience before making decision.'

To further feedback on improvement opportunity, supervisor may say, "At the same time, I believe that you have also experienced the huge number of enquiry about the coming event recently.   Therefore, we (*use 'we' instead of 'you'*) can be more pro-active by anticipating more customers to come and therefore print more leaflets this time."

In case staff contributes ideas that are not practicable from your point of view, do not forget to provide reasons when turning down suggestions. When you practice more of 'managing by giving feedback', you are sending out signals to team members that you are interested in their job, work effectiveness and being supportive. In most of the cases, your team members will appreciate it.

How can I make the desirable changes more sustainable?

Effective culture change programs are normally supported by two strategies. One is called training related solution i.e. educational efforts to develop the necessary mindset and skills. The other is called non-training related solution i.e. changes to the current organizational systems and performance conditions.

Whenever you or your team members have insights on how to strengthen team, division or company culture, capture their ideas as the following example. Make reflection on them and discuss with your seniors and team members regularly. Implement the suggestions when appropriate.

Action Ideas on How to Sustain the Culture Change

Voices of the Team Members of a Case Example

- Supervisors can join staff's field work so as to enable proper coaching.
- It is better for management to clearly spell out what is expected from unit head.
- Must have guidelines as staff reference of what is VMV and how to live with VMV.
- Use professional trainer to help conveying the message to front-line staff.
- VMV training to all staff, more experience sharing session, more activity-centred training like VMV camp.
- Training to be delivered to top management also.
- Set up working group, VMV Division, or divisional VMV committee of members coming from all ranks within each division.
- Management shows support by role modeling.
- Strengthen the linkage and consistency of requirements and changes between different levels of the organization.
- More promotion, e.g. message from the CEO through intra-net, slogan, cash prize, competition, newsletter, poster, screensaver, wallpaper, book marks, etc.

Remarks: Courtesy to the anonymous participants who suggest and debate different action ideas on how to sustain the culture change brought about by the mission, vision and value statements

It is important to realize that culture change is a long journey made up of small steps. The department's VMV is not something additional to the daily operation but a set of direction, beliefs, core values with behavior indicators which is so important for all members of the organization to go towards the same direction and manage the ever-increasing demand from different stakeholders.

Case Example: Envisioning and Strategic Planning Exercise

LRT Consulting was commissioned by a Government Department to develop and conduct an envisioning and strategic planning exercise. A core consulting deliverable was a series of workshops on Vision Building for its service units in March 1999. This series of workshops was a result of an earlier cycle of similar workshops for hundreds of managers and professional staff from Department headquarters.

A total of 182 participants attended the morning session of the one-day workshop while 178 attended the afternoon session, revealing that most participants completed the one-day workshop. At the end of the workshop, participants were encouraged to attend a sharing meeting scheduled in May on a voluntary basis. Two half-day sharing sessions were conducted with 10 participants attending the morning session and 9 in the afternoon session.

The Vision Building workshop was designed to achieve the following:

- To help the participants identify the importance of having clear vision, mission and values to the long range development of the Department.
- To provide a strategic framework how to achieve the vision systematically.
- To identify the key issues and challenges associated with implementing the vision and departmental strategies.
- To practice how to create a more lively vision statement and presentation.
- To practice how to set priorities and plans to achieve the vision by using a Vision-Direction-Path-Action Model.

The learning experience and subsequent application at work was focused around four building blocks of the visioning and strategic planning framework as follows:

- **Strategy 1: Envisioning**
- **Strategy 2: Simple SWOT Analysis**
- **Strategy 3: Vision-Direction-Path-Action Model**
- **Strategy 4: Action Planning and Encouraging Participation**

Based on the feedback from participants and consultants' observation, these workshops effectively aroused positive awareness of participants on the subject matter. Extracts of comments and feedback are highlighted as below:

- 160 out of 165 participants (97%) who filled out the evaluation form agreed that the Visioning Workshop should be conducted again (Question 11)
- 122 out of 165 participants (74%) rated the top 2 boxes on 'Question 10 - Overall evaluation of the workshop'
- 143 out of 165 participants (87%) rated the top 2 boxes on 'Question 5 – Relevant Knowledge of the Speaker'
- 156 out of 165 participants (95%) rated the top 2 boxes on 'Question 6 – Presentation of the Speaker'

Perhaps the most important piece of evaluation was the value and benefits achieved as perceived by the participants themselves. In response to 'Question 9 – Benefits of the Workshop', the participants reported the following top five most frequent comments:

- Gained a clear picture of how to establish our vision and how to turn it into realities.
- Gained a better understanding how to establish vision for local service units.
- Exchange of experience.
- Developed a more specific understanding of the seemingly rather vague visioning concept.
- Gained a new perspective of strategic planning and management, beyond the conventional practices used by the sector.

In addition to the participants' evaluation, the workshop designer and facilitator reported the following observations.

- The majority of the participants expressed that **the workshop was impressive, innovative, and valuable**. Many of them showed very positive support to the facilitator by approaching him during breaks and expressing appreciation of his style of facilitation. Some even asked how the facilitator could help if individual schools wanted to organize similar workshops.

- **Participation** of the majority in the games, visioning exercise, discussion and presenting real life issues was high and vigorous most of the time. Some who showed less participation might be discouraged by the large size of audience or less chance of intensive discussion.

- In terms of **awareness**, many of them expressed positive value of the Workshop. Some examples of their remarks are: 'Now I understand more what is a vision, mission and value as well as their implications to us.', 'VMV adds value to our working atmosphere.', 'More people should be briefed and involved in similar kind of activities.', etc.

- The **positive perception** on the subject can further be reflected from their recommendations to either improve similar workshops or provide longer-term follow-through activities.   Some of them indicated that the workshop was too short to cover everything in details.   Some even suggested more seminars, courses, follow-up of any kind, to further promote the subject.

- Judged from the relatively small number of participants attending the post-workshop sharing session and the expressed difficulties of transferring the messages and learning to other members of the local service units, it seems that there was a gap between 'knowledge' and 'application' in a manner expected by the consultant. Some participants explored the opportunities of inviting the consultant to conduct similar workshops for individual service units during and after the workshops, which may be another signal of their positive reception of the benefits of similar workshops.

In conclusion, it was agreed that the workshops had successfully created a positive awareness on the subject matter.   **If the objectives of the next phase were to sustain the momentum, expand the exposure of the theme to other members or take actions on many of the suggestions raised during the workshops**, the following suggestions could be considered:

- To follow through what has been achieved, more change leaders or agents in individual service units need to be fostered. The service units may consider to set up a small scale **task force** with members who have strong beliefs in VMV could be formed to initiate, co-ordinate and oversee the on-going VMV initiatives within the organization. One indicator of efforts is clear documentation of the Department's vision statements and specific plans to achieve those in the next two-three years.

- Supervisors are in good position to **continuously communicate, formally or informally, with staff members on the Vision and Mission and reinforce positive behaviors.** For example, when giving out job instructions

or solving problems, supervisors may need to refer to the VMV and discuss implications on the issues concerned. In some cases the supervisor may need to re-direct behaviors which are not in-line with the spirit of VMV.

- Supervisors can also **identify and list the specific behavior indicators** they are looking for, and communicate with their staff accordingly. Definitely, **role-modeling** from supervisors and principals is a must to demonstrate by action management's commitment and support. **More change agents need to be created** to come up with improvement strategies, initiate actions, mobilize the mass, maintain the change momentum, review effectiveness, etc.

On Why Organizations Should Have Mission Statements

<u>Quotes from Forest R. David and Fred R. David</u>

Business Week reports that firms with well-crafted mission statements have a 30% higher return on certain financial measures than firms that lack such documents. In addition, a number of academic studies suggest there is a positive relationship between mission statements and organizational performance.

Christopher Bart and Mark Baetz suggest that a well-crafted mission statement can provide the following advantages or benefits to a company:

- insure unanimity of purpose
- arouse positive feelings about the firm
- provide direction
- provide a basis for objectives and strategies
- serve as a focal point
- resolve divergent views among managers.

Source: It's Time to Redraft Your Mission Statement, by Forest R. David and Fred R. David, The Journal of Business Strategy; Jan/Feb 2003; 24, 1

<u>Quotes from Patricia Jones and Larry Kahaner</u>

"A recent study of twenty-five "corporate tools" such as customer surveys, pay-for-performance, total quality management, and reengineering, which showed that managers used mission statements more than any other tool. The 1994 survey by Bain & Company and The Planning Forum also noted that when managers were asked to list tools in which they were "extremely satisfied," mission statements had more votes than any other tool… Managers like mission statements because they make a difference in whether a company succeeds or fails."

Source: Say It and Live It: 50 Corporate Mission Statements That Hit the Mark, Patricia Jones and Larry Kahaner, Currency Doubleday

Quotes from Jeffrey Abrahams

There's another way of perceiving what a mission is all about. Consider a mission as part of the set of fundamental principles by which a business operates. The rest of the set could include a vision, goal, slate of objectives, ethics statement, an environmental policy, operating policies, and a basic business philosophy – among many other statements.

Pfizer produces a large booklet entitled "Our Vision" that details the company's mission, purpose, and values. In the introduction, company Chairman and CEO William C. Steere Jr. explains what the company's vision means, "Our Vision is not a new focus for Pfizer, but rather a restatement of the principles that have brought us tremendous success and will serve as our guideposts in coming years."

Source: The Mission Statement Book, 301 Corporate Mission Statements from America's Top Companies, Jeffrey Abrahams, Ten Speed Press

On What a Mission Statement Should Contain

Quotes from Forest R. David and Fred R. David

In writing a mission statement, prior research by John Pearce and Fred David suggests that the document should include the following nine components:

1. Customers (the target market)
2. Products/Services (offerings and value provided to customers)
3. Geographic Markets (where the firms seeks customers)
4. Technology (the technology used to produce and market products)
5. Concern for Survival/Growth/Profits (the firm's concern for financial soundness)
6. Philosophy (the firm's values, ethics, beliefs)
7. Public image (contributions the firm makes to communities)
8. Employees (the importance of managers and employees)
9. Distinctive Competence (how the firm is different or better than competitors).

Source: It's Time to Redraft Your Mission Statement, by Forest R. David and Fred R. David, The Journal of Business Strategy; Jan/Feb 2003; 24, 1

Quotes from Jeffrey Abrahams

Some companies compose a mission that's intended for all audiences. Others purposefully create a mission for employees' eyes only. Still others post their missions in annual reports, where they'll seen only by stockholders or prospective investors.

The target audience has a significant impact on the length, tone, and visibility of the mission statement.

Sometimes the target audience is specifically mentioned in the mission statement itself. This is true for Kmart, which states, "Kmart will become the discount store of choice for middle-income families with children by satisfying their routine and seasonal shopping needs as well as better than the competition."

Source: The Mission Statement Book, 301 Corporate Mission Statements from America's Top Companies, Jeffrey Abrahams, Ten Speed Press

On Common Problems with Mission Statements

Quotes from Forest R. David and Fred R. David

David and David collected and studied the contents of 95 mission statements across three industries to determine the extent to which those statements include nine important components proposed by Pearce and David. Based on the study results as tabulated below, David and David concluded that that the mission statements from all three industries were incredibly insufficient.

Table 1. Mission Statement Content Analysis Across Three Industries

Component	Computer Firms (n=27)	Food Firms (n=36)	Bank Firms (n=32)	AVERAGE (n=95)
Customer	**2.1481**	2.1111	2.1250	2.1280
Product/Service	2.0741	**2.3056**	2.1875	2.1890
Market	1.7037	**1.8056**	1.4375	1.6489
Technology	**1.9630**	1.1667	1.2813	1.4703
Survival/Growth	1.4074	**1.7222**	1.6562	1.5952
Philosophy	1.5185	1.3889	**1.6875**	1.5316
Self-Concept	**2.4815**	2.1667	2.1563	2.2681
Public Image	1.4444	1.5278	**1.6875**	1.5532
Employees	**1.8889**	1.7778	1.6562	1.7743
AVERAGE	**1.8477**	1.7747	1.7638	

Note: Scale is   1 = statement does not include the component
  2 = statement includes the component in vague terms
  3 = statement includes the component in specific terms
Table gives average values for each component within each industry
Values in bold are the highest for each component and firm type

Source: It's Time to Redraft Your Mission Statement, by Forest R. David and Fred R. David, The Journal of Business Strategy; Jan/Feb 2003; 24, 1

Quotes from D. Keith Denton

In his article titled "Mission Statements Miss the Point", Denton asserts that "Research on mission statements has show considerable variability in their value as well as equal disagreement about their value. Mission statements and strategic objectives are often created in the hope that they can help push the organization

toward some desired destination. Every person and every organization needs to have a clear destination for their group or organization, but it will require finding better vehicles than simple mission statements."

Denton further cautions on having a lifeless mission statement. Denton concludes in the abstract of his article, "Asking good questions is a fine start, but it also takes hard work and continual feedback; otherwise, you end up with a lifeless mission statement. It may not be essential for the entire group to think as one or to reach a complete agreement or singularly about what they are supposed to be about, but the process of continually monitoring and evolving this process is essential."

Source: Mission Statements Miss the Point, D. Keith Denton, Southwest Missouri State University, Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 22/7 [2001] 309-314

On How to Develop a Mission Statement

<u>Quotes from Patricia Jones and Larry Kahaner</u>

Six rules for writing and implementing your own mission statement:

Rule #1: Keep the statement simple. Not necessarily short, but simple.
Rule #2: Allow companywide input.
Rule #3: Outsiders can bring clarity and a fresh perspective to your statement-writing process.
Rule #4: The wording and tone should reflect the company's personality or what the company would like to be.
Rule #5: Share the mission statement in as many creative ways as possible and in as many languages as necessary. Keep it in front of people constantly.
Rule #6: Rely on the mission statement for guidance. Challenge it continually, and judge employees by how well they adhere to its tenets. Management must say it and live it.

Source: Say It and Live It: 50 Corporate Mission Statements That Hit the Mark, Patricia Jones and Larry Kahaner, Currency Doubleday

<u>Quotes from John W. Graham and Wendy C. Havlick</u>

Based on an extensive review of the literature and discussion with several people who have developed mission statements, we believe writing a MS involves five steps after securing management approval for this task.

1. The first step is to gather as much information about the organization and its goals as possible, including seeking real and meaningful input from employees.
2. The second step is to produce a rough outline of the proposed MS.
3. The next step is to get feedback on this draft. Feedback should come both from top management and lower level employees.
4. After receiving feedback, the fourth step is to revise the MS. This includes not only tinkering with the language but considering layout and format.
5. Getting management approval and support is the final step in the process.

Source: Mission Statements: A Guide to the Corporate and Nonprofit Sectors, John W. Graham and Wendy C. Havlick, Garland Publishing, Inc.

On Values and Being Value-Driven

<u>Quotes from John Peters</u>

Values are meant to create a structure of common purpose between different divisions and departments. To do so, they must have been: identified; defined; prioritized; and communicated… A values statement is only truly worthwhile and effective if every employee can state what actions are really valued, how they are prioritized if there is a conflict, and how their performance fits into what the organization is trying to achieve… Establishing value-based objectives is a necessity to turn intention into action.

On how to help an organization become more value-driven, Peters quoted the following six steps suggested by Ginsburg and Miller as essential to becoming what they call "value-driven":

- Senior management must identify, define and prioritize values.
- The perception of people in the organization about those values and possible conflict areas must be measured.
- Measure the perceptions of customers, shareholders, suppliers, and any other major stakeholders as to how far the company's actions conform with these values.
- Audit current management practices to determine how far they directly support and reinforce these values.
- Management systems and leadership styles must be modified to close the gap between what happens now and what should be happening, as dictated by the stated values …
- A reward system which reinforces these stated values and confronts and acts on lack of conformance must be introduced.

Source: On Vision and Values, Peters, John, Management Decision; 1993; 31, 6

On the Application of Mission Statements on the World Wide Web

<u>Quotes from Christopher K. Bart</u>

Mission statements are considered to be one of the most popular management tools in the world – and also one of the most frustrating. To secure their success, it has been recommended that mission statements be communicated and disseminated to as many internal and external stakeholders as possible. One means for doing this is through the Internet and the posting of an organization's mission statement on its company Web site.

To explore the application of mission statements on the World Wide Web, Bart's preliminary study sought to answer the following:

Who's putting their mission on the Web?
Who's on first? Where mission statements are found within Web sites?
Why mission statements are posted – or not?

Who's putting their mission on the Web?

Bart's Google search engine investigation into the types of firms that post their mission statements on the Web can be found in Table I as below.

Table I Google search engine results

Mission category	n	Per cent
For profit corporations	16	23
Educational institutions	26	38
Religious organizations	7	10
Government agencies and departments	6	9
Not-for-profit associations	14	20
Other listings	31	n/a
Total listings	100	100

Who's on first? Where mission statements are found within Web sites?

Bart's study went further to investigate the Web sites of 100 corporations listed in the Fortune 500 company rankings for the year 2000. The results of Bart's analysis of the mission statements' location within the sample of Web sites are summarized in Table II as below:

Table II A mission statement's location within its company's Web site

	n	Per cent
Front page – page one	2	
After first click through – page 2	4	
After second click through – page 3	19	
After third click through – page 4	11	
After fourth (or more) click through – page 5+	7	
Companies with a mission statement officially posted to their Web site		45
No mission statement listed (official Web master response)	12	
No mission statement could be found (with no response from Web master)	43	
Companies with no mission posted to their Web site		55
Total Web sites investigated		100

Why mission statements are posted – or not?

Based on the limited response received from five Web masters (out of the 45 companies with mission statements) concerning the reasons for posting their company's mission on the Web site, it appears that some of the possible reasons are:

- To reinforce the importance of (non-changing) company values;
- To give broad exposure to the mission;
- To publicly state (and be held responsible for) the company's "commitment" to all important stakeholders; and
- To attract and reassure customers.

Bart also reinforced the following in his article:

- One of the major findings concerning ways to make a mission more effective was the discovery that a positive relationship existed between the total number of methods used to communicate and disseminate a mission and firm performance (Bart, 2000)

- Another reason supporting the communication-performance connection, however, appears to be that the more effort that is put into disseminating a mission statement, the more all stakeholders will believe in and identify with it.

Source: Exploring the application of mission statements on the World Wide Wed, Christopher K. Bart,
Internet Research: Electronic Networking Applications and Policy, Volume 11 Number 4 2001 360-368

On Critical Success Factors How the Missions and Visions Can Be Used to Enhance Performance

Quotes from John V Mullane

Based on the study of the two firms, Mullane suggests five critical processes or success factors how the missions and visions can be used to enhance performance as follows:

1. Top management commitment
2. Identify and communicate key concepts of mission
3. Involve all management levels
4. Involve all functional areas
5. Set specific targets from the mission

Mullance concludes, "The usefulness of visions and missions is found in the development and implementation processes, not the final product."

Source: The mission statement is a strategic tool: when used properly, by John V Mullane, Middle Tennessee State
University, Management Decision; 2002; 40, 5/6

Local Examples of Good Practices in Communicating Mission and Value Statements: The CLP Group

For a comprehensive review, please refer to source: **http://www.clp.com**

Local Examples of Good Practices in Communicating Mission and Value Statements: The Fire Services Department

FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
Mission Statement 2003

Our Vision
To serve Hong Kong by making it a safe place to live and work.

Mission
To protect life and property from fire or other calamity.
To give advice on fire protection measures and fire hazards.
To educate the community and to promote the public awareness on fire safety.
To render ambulance aid to the sick and the injured and convey them to hospital.

Values
Upholding high standards of integrity.
Striving for professionalism and continuous improvement.
Dedication and commitment to providing quality service.
Readiness in meeting challenge and accepting accountability.
Maintaining high spirit and esprit de corps among staff members.

Our Core Functions
Fire Suppression
Respond rapidly to fire calls and carry out effectively both land-based and marine fire-fighting operation.

Rescue Services
Provide effective and efficient rescue services on land and at sea.

Fire Protection
Advise the public on fire protection measures; promote public awareness on fire safety and enforce fire safety requirements.

Emergency Ambulance Services
Respond expeditiously to ambulance calls and provide effective, efficient and advanced emergency ambulance services.

> The Department's Mission Statement is composed of Our Vision, Mission, Values and Our Core Functions.

Fire Suppression and Rescue Services
To provide efficient and effective fire suppression and rescue services to the community.
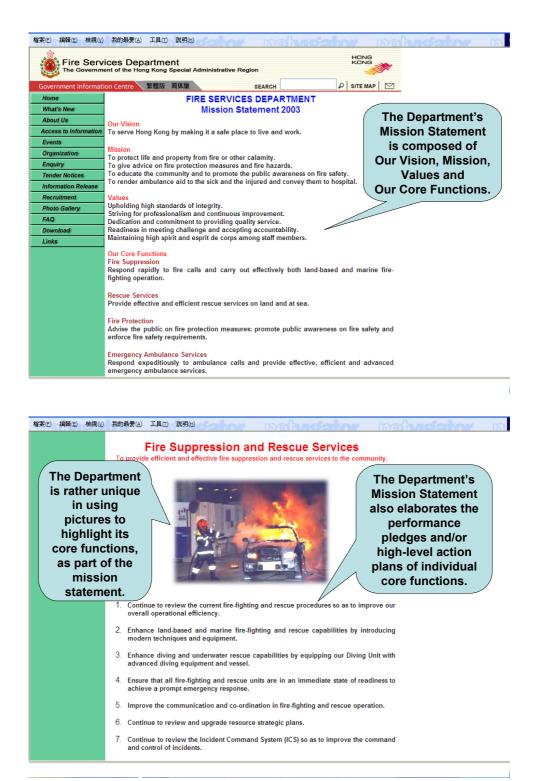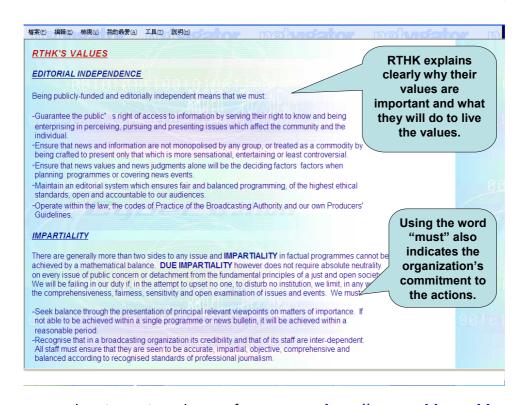
> The Department is rather unique in using pictures to highlight its core functions, as part of the mission statement.

> The Department's Mission Statement also elaborates the performance pledges and/or high-level action plans of individual core functions.

1. Continue to review the current fire-fighting and rescue procedures so as to improve our overall operational efficiency.

2. Enhance land-based and marine fire-fighting and rescue capabilities by introducing modern techniques and equipment.

3. Enhance diving and underwater rescue capabilities by equipping our Diving Unit with advanced diving equipment and vessel.

4. Ensure that all fire-fighting and rescue units are in an immediate state of readiness to achieve a prompt emergency response.

5. Improve the communication and co-ordination in fire-fighting and rescue operation.

6. Continue to review and upgrade resource strategic plans.

7. Continue to review the Incident Command System (ICS) so as to improve the command and control of incidents.

For a comprehensive review, please refer to source: **http://www.hkfsd.gov.hk**

Local Examples of Good Practices in Communicating Mission and Value Statements: RTHK

RTHK Vision, Mission and Values Statement starts with an overview of the organization's vision, mission and values.

RTHK explains clearly why their values are important and what they will do to live the values.

Using the word "must" also indicates the organization's commitment to the actions.

For a comprehensive review, please refer to source: **http://www.rthk.org.hk**

About LRT Consulting

Using a performance improvement approach, LRT Consulting focuses on our clients' organizational 4Ps: POSITIONING, PERFORMANCE, PROCESSES and PEOPLE. Our consultants and business partners are experienced in implementing customized **Organizational Effectiveness (OE), HRM, Service Quality and Change Management** projects. To deliver impact on our clients' performance and learning needs, we put trio emphasis on the DIAGNOSIS, INTERVENTIONS and EVALUATION phases of the consultancies commissioned by our clients since 1993.

Stanley Chak is founder and Managing Director of Learning Resources & Technologies Ltd., a leader in helping organizations strengthen their organization effectiveness, people quality, productivity and customer loyalty. With over 20 years of people and organization development experience, Stanley has consulted to a wide range of local and multinational organizations such as Underwriters Laboratories, Mattel, Nike, Levi Strauss, Citibank, Shell, Whirlpool, JUSCO, CLP Power, Nortel, Seagram, HSBC, GAP, PCCW, JOS Technology, AIA International, Kirin, Hongkong Post, Trade Development Council, government departments and non-government organizations. In addition to his consulting role, Stanley also initiatives study in the areas of paradigm principles, breakthrough strategies, organization defensiveness, dialogue practices, and the use of technologies in performance improvement.

Patrick Lui, co-founder and Director of Learning Resources & Technologies Ltd., has over twenty years' experience in the areas of strategy development and implementation, human resource management and development, and organizational effectiveness. During July 1995 to March 1999, Patrick was commissioned by the Civil Service Bureau to serve as an in-house Human Resource Management consultant of the Hong Kong Government. The aim of the assignment was to promulgate a more open and accountable culture within the civil service in response to the changing demands of the society. With the support of other consultants, Patrick leads the Human Capital Practice and provides practical solutions helping clients develop Strategic HRM Plan, Competency Framework, Performance Management System, Performance Based Reward, etc.

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