

# The 2003 Annual

## Volume 2 Consulting

Jossey-Bass  
Pfeiffer

## 751. READ ALL ABOUT IT! WRITING VISION STATEMENTS

---

### Goals

- To discover how others see the organization's or team's vision for the future.
  - To reach agreement on the team or organization's vision for the future.
  - To learn how to create vision statements.
- 

### Group Size

Eight to twenty members of management from the same organization or members of an intact work team.

### Time Required

An hour and a half to two hours, depending on group size.

### Materials

- Blank paper and pens or pencils for participants.
- A flip chart and felt-tipped markers for each subgroup.

### Physical Setting

A room with tables for writing and with movable chairs for breaking into discussion groups.

### Process

1. Explain that sometimes an organization or team can go off track simply from having different visions of where they are headed. Say that they will

have the opportunity to work together on the vision and goals of their own organization or team.

2. Break the participants into small groups of three or four participants each and give everyone blank paper and pens or pencils.
3. Have each person, as an individual, write a headline and lead paragraph describing the organization or team in "X" years, including the ways in which it has changed since "today." Tell them to indicate the importance of the each of their ideas to the future of the organization. (Ten minutes.)
4. Now tell the participants to share their "visions" within their small groups and to make a consolidated statement of where the team or organization will be in X years. Give them more paper and a flip chart and markers for recording their final headline and vision and tell them to choose a spokesperson to present it to the total group. Tell them to include everyone's ideas and to be sure that the vision reflects the desires and input from each group member. (Twenty-five minutes.)
5. Bring the entire group together and have each small group spokesperson introduce his or her team members and then read the headline and paragraph representing their vision for the future. (Twenty minutes.)
6. On a flip chart, capture any recurring themes from the groups—what they are seeking in the future. Use the summary to come up with an outline of a vision for the future of the organization or team. (Ten minutes.)
7. Ask whether anyone's ideas were left out and if it is important to include them. If others agree that an idea should be included, find a way to fit it into the vision as it is written on the flip chart. (Fifteen minutes.)
8. Debrief by asking the following questions:
  - What did you learn about the future of your organization as seen by those present today?
  - How satisfied are you with the vision you have created for your team/organization?
  - What do you believe you need to do next to be sure you can live out your vision for the future?
  - Do you feel personally committed to living out the vision as written? Why or why not?
  - What have you learned about writing vision statements?(Fifteen minutes.)

9. Give everyone about five minutes to write down some action steps they will take to help the new vision come alive back on the job. (Five minutes.)
10. Ask everyone to share their ideas and create an action plan on the flip chart identifying those who are responsible and a completion date. Say that you will have the results reproduced and distributed to them. (Fifteen minutes.)
11. Wrap up by checking how everyone feels about the future and how committed they are to making it a reality.

---

Submitted by Kristin J. Arnold.

*Kristin J. Arnold, M.B.A. C.P.C.M., specializes in coaching executives and their leadership, management, and employee teams, particularly in the areas of strategic and business planning, process improvement, decision making, and collaborative problem solving. An accomplished author and editor of several professional articles and books, as well as a featured columnist in The Daily Press, a Tribune Publishing newspaper, Ms. Arnold is regarded as an expert in team development and process improvement techniques.*