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**Mission: How Leaders Create The Greatest Version Of What You Can Be**

**By Eric Garner**

A statement of mission is one of the most powerful things you can do, whether you are running a major corporation or a small team. It expresses the purpose for the organisation's existence, its raison d'etre, and becomes the rallying point around which everyone can unite.

Often managers create mission statements because they think they should and then leave them gathering dust on the shelf. But this is to mistake the real power and purpose of mission statements. If put together with real understanding of what a group of people can achieve, they can act like irresistible magnets drawing everyone in the same direction.

It is one of the core roles of leaders, whether at the top of the organisation, or anywhere within it, to confirm, verify, communicate, and live the mission statement. Here are some of the ways that can happen.

- Write your Mission Statement down. Although it can be used for promotion purposes, it should never be seen purely as a promotional tool but as the group expressing the best version of itself.
- Think first about how the group benefits others. These could be those who work for it, those who are its customers, the wider community, or future generations.
- Think in terms of being sent on a mission by a higher power. If you see the organisation as fulfilling a role at some profound level, beyond perhaps your immediate understanding, then the Mission Statement becomes easier to write. Your mission will have far more power if you get a sense of the business's unique and special purpose, rather than simply re-stating its aim to make money for its stakeholders.
- Tie in your Mission Statement with your goals, aims, and visions.
- Use language that everyone can understand. The best Mission Statements are simple monosyllabic one-liners.

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· Don't worry about getting it right first time. Just like our own understanding of our purpose on this earth, understanding the mission of your organisation is a work in progress. So keep at it and revise it as you go.

Of course, it is easier to state these high-sounding aims, another to find the right words. So, take a look at some famous mission statements used at various times by well-known companies.

1. Reebok: "Our purpose is to ignite a passion for winning, to do the extraordinary, and to capture the customer's heart and mind."
2. Walt Disney: "To make people happy."
3. Wal-Mart: "To give ordinary folk the chance to buy the same things as rich people."
4. The Body Shop: "Tirelessly work to narrow the gap between principle and practice whilst making fun, passion and care part of our daily lives."
5. Marks and Spencer: "Our mission is to make aspirational quality accessible to all."
6. Sony: "Our mission is to experience the joy of advancing and applying technology for the benefit of the public."
7. Coca Cola: "The basic proposition of our business is simple, solid and timeless. When we bring refreshment, value, joy and fun to our stakeholders, then we successfully nurture and protect our brands."
8. 3M: "To solve unsolved problems innovatively."
9. Glaxo: "We are an integrated, research-based group of companies whose corporate purpose is to create, discover, develop, manufacture, and market safe effective medicines throughout the world."

And here to top these statements is the mission statement of Ringland Bros circus, penned in 1899:

"To be good, mankind must be happy. To wreath the faces of humanity in smiles for a time, to loosen the chains that hold man captive to his duties and return him to them better fitted for his obligations, is the mission of amusement. Amusement unfetters the mind from its environs and changes the dreary monotony of the factory's spindles to the joyous song of the meadowlark. It softens the wrinkles of sorrow, makes smiles of frowns. This is the mission of amusement – and the circus with its innocent sights of joy for the children and its power to make all men and women children again for at least one day, comes the nearest of any form of amusement to fulfilling this mission."

We can of course write our own mission statements. Doing our own statements makes writing them for our organizations much easier. Here is the mission statement of a working mother:

"I will seek to fulfil my duties towards both my work and my family since both are important to me. My

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work is the place where I aim to achieve service towards others, the expression of my technical knowledge and the building of harmonious and satisfying relationships. My home is the place where I aim to find happiness, peace, contentment and joy. Despite all the challenges, I aim to balance work and home and the genuine needs of those who look to me to help them."

Let the last word be with Paul Beeston of mission-coach.co.uk: "To live your mission is the most generous thing you can do. Your mission is always going to make a major contribution to your life, the lives of others and the planet. Humankind and the planet needs you to live your mission. Your mission is part of the tapestry of life and without it there are stitches missing. Is there anything more important for you to do?"

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### **The Sink Or Swim Approach To Leadership**

**By Lora J. Adrianse**

Looking around in most corporate environments today you'll find mission, vision and values statements proudly displayed on the walls, in print materials and even engraved in granite. Often, they've invested a great deal of time; effort and expense in crafting just the right message to best describe the foundational principles of the company. I can't help but stop, take notice; and then wonder how this foundational wisdom is incorporated into the day-to-day operations. What's in it for the operational leaders to carry out the mission in ways that align with the vision and values? How are they taught to walk the talk?

Many operational leaders today were developed and promoted from inside the ranks of the organization. In fact, most internally developed leaders were promoted without consideration of the potential to lead and inspire others. They're "crowned" with a title and thrown into the corporate waters to sink or swim. Those that swim have enough stamina to figure out what it takes to stay above water. Those that sink are simply in over their heads and can't find a way to surface for air.

I can't help but wonder how the "sink or swim" approach fits into those mission, vision and values statements. The new leaders who are trying to learn on their own without a coach or a trainer take longer, make more avoidable mistakes and often lose their motivation and enthusiasm. Multiply that by the number of their direct reports and the equation becomes an issue that's costing the organization dearly.

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If your organization is one that values development and promotion from within the ranks, make a commitment today to establish a new process, and most of all provide the support and training to ensure success. The future leadership within your company depends on it.

Lora J Adrianse is the owner of Essential Connections. She is a Coach, Consultant and Facilitator who specializes in the development managers and business owners. She recently left a long-term corporate career to focus on her passion for helping others bring out the best in themselves through the use of Emotional Intelligence. She can be reached through her website

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The Sink Or Swim Approach To Leadership  
How To Create A Mission Statement  
Roman Marketing ... or,  
Being a leader in network marketing  
Living Your Life Mission

Monsters From Hell – Game  
How to Use Your Mind for Study  
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